



interactive games & entertainment association

Submission to Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA)

Response to the 2025 Core Skills Occupation List (CSOL) Consultation

September 2025

IGEA acknowledges and pays respect to the past and present Traditional Custodians and Elders of this land and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We would like to extend our acknowledgments to the indigenous people from countries overseas & recognise their strength, wisdom and creativity.

Introduction & Overview

The Interactive Games & Entertainment Association (IGEA) welcomes the opportunity to provide this submission to the 2025 Core Skills Occupations List (CSOL) consultation.

In our previous submission in May 2024, we highlighted the need for a standalone occupation code that accurately reflects the specialised roles within the video game development industry. We are grateful for the consultative approach taken by government agencies, which has since led to the introduction of the dedicated OSCA code for Digital Game Developer (273131), an outcome that was well-received by our industry. This submission builds on that progress, outlining why this new code must now be considered by JSA to be included on the CSOL, and addressing its current limitations.

About IGEA

IGEA is the industry association representing and advocating for the video games industry in Australia, including the developers, publishers and distributors of video games, as well as the makers of the most popular gaming platforms, consoles and devices. IGEA also organises the annual Games Connect Asia Pacific (GCAP) conference for Australian game developers and the Australian Game Developer Awards (AGDAs) that celebrate the best Australian-made games each year. IGEA has over a hundred members, from emerging independent studios to some of the largest video game companies in the world.

Significance of the Australian video games industry

The video game industry is a major contributor to the Australian digital economy. According to our data, video games are worth around \$3.8 billion a year in Australia,¹ while Australian-made games brought in \$339 million in largely export revenue last year.² Moreover, because the video game sector uniquely sits at the intersection of entertainment, the arts and technology, video game companies hire a wide range of artistic, technical and professional roles and are thus a wellspring of high-quality sustainable careers, and are an engine for growth in the Australian national economy.

The Australian Government well recognises the economic and cultural significance of the local video games industry, and supports the growth of our industry through generous incentives. This includes the bipartisan support for the passage of the Digital Games Tax Offset (DGTO), and more recently, with the support of the Australian Government, IGEA launched *Game On Australia*³ at the World Expo in Osaka, which is a digital showcase highlighting Australia as a world-class game development destination.

While we are grateful for the Government's investment in promoting Australian game development to international audiences, such efforts are undermined if there are no practical pathways to support the talent pipelines that underpin industry growth. Our ability

¹IGEA, 'Australian Video Game Consumer Sales Results 2024' (Report, 2025): <https://igea.net/2025/07/2024-australian-video-game-consumer-sales-results/>

²IGEA, 'Australian game development survey', (Report, 2024): <https://igea.net/2024/12/australian-video-game-development-industry-stays-steady-generating-339-1-million-for-the-economy/>

³ IGEA, 'Game Engine', (Webpage, 2025): <https://gameonaustralia.com/>

to compete globally relies on access to skilled visa pathways, and it is essential that the Jobs and Skills Australia process gives serious consideration to the inclusion of video game professions within Australia's migration system.

1. Skills shortage persists for senior roles

While high-level data might suggest no shortage of talent in the video games industry, this view lacks granularity because it does not account for the seniority of vacant roles. Australia has a steady supply of graduates for junior positions; however, the vast majority of demand is for advanced skills, with 90% of all vacant roles aimed at experienced staff, seniors, or managers. This analysis is based on over two years of IGEA's monthly job reports.

This specific talent is difficult to source locally, forcing Australian studios into global competition. The shortage of senior leadership is a critical bottleneck and a major business blocker, sometimes leading to the cancellation of multimillion-dollar projects. Without experienced mentors, studios cannot support the hiring and development of local graduates. As one member studio noted, despite a team of 40, they employ only one junior because they are struggling to maintain a specialised leadership team.

2. The challenge of occupation classification

Due to the highly specialised nature of many video game professions, not all roles map neatly to an existing ANZSCO/OSCA code. While the introduction of the dedicated Digital Game Developer (273131) code was a significant step forward, gaps remain due to its current technical definition. For example, it is unclear which code would accommodate a 'technical artist' a crucial role bridging artistic and programming teams. This ambiguity prevents the accurate measurement of our industry's workforce and skills shortages. IGEA is actively engaging with the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to broaden the code's description to be more inclusive of the diverse artistic, audio, narrative, and production roles essential to game development.

3. Recommendations

To address the industry's immediate needs, immigration is an essential mechanism for securing a sustainable talent pipeline. To facilitate this, we recommend the following:

- **Include the Digital Game Developer (273131) occupation on the Core Skills Occupations List.** This is the most crucial step to allow our industry to use the migration system to fill the well-documented shortage of experienced and specialised senior talent.
- **Ensure alignment between international promotion and talent policy.** Government promotion of Australian game development internationally must be backed by migration settings that allow studios to bring in global talent when required. Without this alignment, investment in promotion risks being undermined by talent bottlenecks.

- **Support the ongoing work to refine the Digital Game Developer (273131) code.** We ask that JSA recognise that this code is still evolving. An accurate, broad classification is essential for tracking and addressing skills shortages effectively, and IGEA will continue to advocate to the ABS that the code's definition be updated to capture the diverse technical, artistic, and commercial roles vital to our industry's growth.

Should you have any questions regarding this submission, please contact 