

South Australian  
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# Community Building in the 21st Century

Collaborative gaming to build connection,  
confidence and creativity

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## Why this report?

Communities constantly juggle the physical, social, arts and cultural interests and needs of their citizens. Building strong communities that engage and involve a broad range of citizens is key to cohesive and inclusive societies.

With approximately 265,000 young people aged 12-24 years in South Australia, a large proportion of what local and state governments spend on strategies, plans and services impact on young people. One way of ensuring if these plans are relevant to young people today, is to ask them what they want.

As Commissioner for Children and Young People, I advocate for the priorities of children and young people to ideally be placed front and centre in policy, practice and service delivery. This includes inviting children and young people to be involved in the co-design of services relevant to them, and expanding current programs and services into new areas of interest.

Local communities have responsibility to develop youthful infrastructure and opportunities that are relevant to the interests of today's young people a generation with different interests from previous generations.

In my extensive conversations with young people, I have heard that gaming and esports is an area in which they would like to see more resources provided at the local community level. Young people often speak to me about the value gaming offers them as a 'connector' to their social community, as a confidence building opportunity and a way of expressing their creativity.

Given the importance young people place on gaming and esports as a recreational activity, it is not surprising then, that they want to see more schools and communities establish formal gaming clubs, organised and operated in the same way as clubs for other recreational activities.

Gaming and esports provides new opportunities for local communities to deliver engaging cultural and recreational activities for young citizens. In addition to the recreational value gaming and esports offers young people, many have told me how important it is for them to have their own spaces in which to meet friends and game together.

Advances in technology and game access via the Internet means game competitions and tournaments can be easily 'stitched together' in local community centres and youth friendly places and spaces.

Community investment in gaming and esports has potential to bring young people into closer contact with a range of local health and community services, events, workshops and initiatives delivered by local organisations. This can support a variety of pathways and opportunities.

For many young people, gaming is a way to build self-confidence, form friendships and connect with their peers and networks. It is increasingly becoming a mobile activity that is more public than private.



Augmented reality games now invite players to find reference points using their mobile phones outside. No longer are gamers content to play on their computers at home. They want to come out into the community and play and/or compete with other gamers in public.

Bringing young people together through gaming has benefits for young people of diverse abilities, genders and backgrounds.



Just as with traditional sporting activities, competition gaming has a role for competitors, organisers, promoters, communicators and audiences. And like other community clubs, at their core is community spirit, having fun, improving skill development and achieving recognition.

The most dedicated gamers see potential for a future career in gaming, with prize money available in esports that is already considerable, and increasing year on year. These gamers wish to pursue esports in the same way those who are interested in soccer, tennis or football pursue professional careers. They play whenever and

wherever they can. They join high school esports leagues and are often 'headhunted' to play in teams internationally. Anatham 'ana' Pham, for example - an Australian gamer from Melbourne - earned AU\$4.62 million in prize money in 2019 after winning the Dota 2 International final in Shanghai.

Whilst esports at the elite level is dominated by male gamers, there are efforts to diversify the sport to ensure female gamers are encouraged into professional leagues.

It is becoming increasingly clear that esports and gaming offers future employment opportunities not just for professional players, but also for those interested to become game developers, sound engineers, broadcasters, commentators, referees and competition organisers and promoters, to name a few of the roles this burgeoning industry is creating.

The rewards that participation in gaming and esports offers includes the potential to build positive relationships with adults in their lives and create more positive experiences of school.

Supporting the development of community gaming requires a fundamental shift in thinking around the value that organised gaming and esports offers. The challenge is to start seeing gaming and esports as a healthy, fun activity, that builds resilience, communication, teamwork and self-discipline.





## What is happening in South Australia?

According to Newzoo, the world's leading provider of market intelligence covering the global games, esports, and mobile markets, there are now more than 2.5 billion gamers across the world. Combined they spent US\$152.1 billion (approx. AU\$218 billion) on games in 2019, representing an increase of +9.6% year on year.<sup>1</sup>



Gaming is much more than a passing phase or a casual recreational activity for many young people. Like many adults who began playing video games when they first emerged back in the mid-1970s, young people are likely to continue to enjoy gaming and esports as a recreational activity for many years to come.

SuperData, a gaming and technology research firm, estimated that ads and worldwide direct consumer spending on game video content would reach \$4.6 billion.<sup>2</sup> Here in South Australia, a staggering 98% of households have computer games, and it's a similar picture right across Australia. In fact, more people are watching online video game play than major cable networks and subscription entertainment services, with an estimated 380 million viewers worldwide tuning in on DIY platforms such as YouTube Gaming and Amazon's Twitch. These figures put gaming at the heart of the entertainment business.<sup>3</sup>

Many young people in South Australia want opportunities to pursue their individual passions outside formal systems or institutions, but with support and guidance from adults still available to them. Within this context, young people have asked for more structured competitions and pathways to gaming and elite gaming related careers.

This call has been echoed across the breadth of South Australia. In regional areas due to the relative lack of activities and recreational options generally available to young people, it has been even more pronounced. Several major esports tournaments have been operating for some years in metropolitan capitals across Australia. They include the Australian Esports League, Australian High School ELeague, META High School Esports and amateur Flaktest High School Esports tournaments such as League of Legends, Overwatch, Rocket League, Dota2 and Counter Strike.

These tournaments are well sponsored and well attended with players and viewers growing year on year.

Modelled around traditional sporting tournaments esports competitions acknowledge the importance of building players and team profiles to attract audiences that bring with them the stream of revenue the industry is capable of attracting. Adelaide Football Club was an early entrant to esports. They acquired Legacy Esports in 2017, establishing a successful esports arm to its AFL offerings. The vision of the High School League is 'to see every school in Australia and New Zealand provide opportunities for students with a passion for esports to succeed.'

Gaming and esports is gaining in popularity and is clearly very important to many young people. As leaders responsible for supporting young people to be successful it is important to make the effort to understand what young people are playing, and encourage a healthy relationship with gaming and

esports. Leaders are required to develop services and initiatives that connect to the diversity of young people and support inclusive participation. Whilst this includes traditional sports and recreational activities, increasingly it could also include gaming and esports.

In 2019, in collaboration with the Australian Esports Association (AESA) and RMIT University my office undertook an online survey directed at parents/ carers and educators, to explore how much is understood about esports within the secondary school environment. Esports as distinct from recreational gaming, refers to gaming practices that have the characteristics of organised competition, regular training, rules and regulations, record-keeping, and individual or team skill development coaching.<sup>4</sup>

The collaboration was designed to support development of appropriate policy, planning, infrastructure and initiatives for esports in Australia.

**'From the eighth generation of home consoles, to the latest dedicated handhelds, to ever more powerful personal computers, to mobile phones and tablets, to the rapid spread of virtual reality components, interactive games are woven into the fabric of our culture – a culture more nuanced and capable of enjoying the benefits of the digital economy than ever before.'**



The research study provided information about esports players and suggested players tend to be from backgrounds where access to the latest technology, Internet speeds and infrastructure is not a barrier. This revealed a need for more infrastructure in gaming to foster inclusiveness and diversity, particularly for children and young people living with disability, those from indigenous backgrounds, and those from less advantaged backgrounds.<sup>5</sup>

Analysis of the survey responses showed parents/carers and educators felt there was a strong need for greater oversight of the industry to protect the interests of children and young people, and support for young people in schools and local communities to have the same access to the positive social benefits of gaming that traditional sport enjoys.

In recognition of the economic potential the gaming and esports industry offers, in November 2017 the South Australian government established the co-working space Games Plus. The idea behind this co-working space was to grow the Australian gaming industry here in South Australia.

According to the Minister for Innovation and Skills, David Pisoni, 'Game development is one of the largest and fastest-growing industries in the world, estimated to be worth almost \$200 billion globally. South Australia's Creative Industries are well recognised the world over, and this new fund allows South Australian ingenuity and creativity to shine on a global stage, while generating new revenue streams for our local game-makers.'

South Australia has a growing international reputation for game development with a number of award winning businesses already based here. They include Ratbag Games, Team Fractal Alligator, Foxie Games, Team Cherry, Mighty Kingdom and MonkeyStack, to name a few. Some of these are solo or small business operators while others

like Mighty Kingdom and MonkeyStack have workforces which at peak times employ between 50 to 100 staff. Such examples support the view that there is potential for young people to build professional careers in gaming and esports right here in South Australia.

Governments and communities have a responsibility to find ways to support this potential through investment in infrastructure and by developing programs, initiatives and events that formalise pathways from entry level to elite levels. There are already examples of this in place at the South Australian Film Corporation with their gaming fund specially devised to support those interested in developing gaming products.

Over time, the worldwide interest and sophistication of gaming is likely to see esports included as an Olympic sport, particularly as more and more people understand and acknowledge the discipline required to achieve the skill levels needed to compete at the elite level.<sup>6</sup>

There is no reason why professional gaming and Esports careers cannot be enjoyed by young talented South Australian gamers, who given the opportunities to advance their skills and compete at local, state, national and international levels are likely to do as well as their counterparts in more traditional sports. In fact Australian esports teams have placed in the top ten around the world since esports began in 2017. Australia is home to two of the best Rocket League teams in the world in the Chiefs and Ground Zero.<sup>7</sup> Neither is there any reason to think that South Australian young people could not be leaders in the design of games for the wider community with track records in this area that are already turning heads in national and international entertainment gaming industry circles.

For many community decision makers taking this step requires a fundamental shift in thinking around the value that gaming and esports offers.

The challenge is to start seeing gaming and esports as a healthy, fun activity. One that can play a significant role in building life skills such as resilience, communication, teamwork and self-discipline.

Gaming and esports opportunities have great potential as a youth engagement strategy. Small scale investment in the community infrastructure delivered via existing youth development and community development resources would enable development of gaming and esports in communities.

Promotion and support for gaming and esports can attract criticism, consequently there are issues to be considered that are not generally associated with traditional sport. Gaming may for some individuals have a harmful impact on behaviour and mental wellbeing. The research community is divided on the impacts of video games on young people and the possible link between exposure to games translating to violent behaviours. There are however real concerns regarding addiction to gaming, or gaming that blurs the lines between online and offline realities and socially aggressive online behaviours. Others have concerns about particular game narratives or poor gaming experience, including being trolled, bullied or villified by peers.

Like other activities that young people engage with, adults consider the associated risks, discuss these with players and develop risk management approaches. This may require adults to take actions, including taking an interest in who and what children and young people are engaging with online, noticing negative behaviours that appear to be linked to online gaming, and ensuring young people know where to seek support. It also includes educating players to self-identify if they find themselves engaged in gaming in ways that have become aggressive, negative and/or harmful, or if their health and wellbeing, and education and social commitments are being impacted by gaming.

Gaming in teams and organised competitions that have codes of conduct provides a significant risk management approach and support for behaviour online. It also opens up the opportunity for greater regulation. In turn this should increase participation by young people who are female, and/or living with a disability.

When organised gaming is legitimised as an opportunity for youth engagement, community development and sports and recreation through gaming and esports will follow. This sends a strong message to young people that their interest in gaming and esports is being taken seriously.

In the following pages you will find insight into the benefits of gaming from the perspective of gamers, plus a basic guide to equipment, setup costs and ongoing annual costs associated with presenting a gaming club room in a local community setting. You'll also find a basic guide to running an esports tournament at the community level.

Some of the initial barriers and questions local groups might have in relation to what it takes to establish a gaming club or esports tournament within their local community will also be identified. Through ongoing discussion, gaming can be demystified and local communities can be encouraged to engage with young people in a new and relevant way.







# The Benefits of Gaming for Young People and Communities

## Connection

Gaming events held in existing community infrastructure provides an easy, inexpensive, flexible way to build connections between young people and their community. Gaming offers young people the opportunity to try different things, and imagine different ways of 'doing'.

Being in a youth friendly space with peers, engaged in something they enjoy, presents young people with a real opportunity to use their imaginations and to express their creativity.

Staging community esports events encourages players, supporters, friends and families and event organisers to combine their knowhow, energies and skills toward a common goal. Working together they create an eco-system of connection.

This exchange of technical skills includes equipment setup, programming, coding, and editing, scheduling, networking, problem solving, designing, promoting and marketing of gaming and esports competitions on a small or large scale.

Competitions usually have referees or officials to enforce rules, while 'Shout casters' provide game commentary, offering insight and interpretation on choices being made by

players. And as gaming events get larger and more complex, there is also potential for them to create contemporary volunteer roles that move beyond traditional volunteering opportunities into areas that are more relevant and attractive to young people.

Creating roles for them that promote community connection and which utilise their creative and technical skills and interests offers young people tangible benefits to participation. Not every person has to be a gamer. They can support gamers as they fulfil roles as lighting and sound technicians, stagehands, scorers, event managers, commentators, console managers and/or referees, gaining valuable development opportunities as they do so.

They will simultaneously be building communication skills, networks and workplace capability, all the while being supported by peers and adults who are interested to see them succeed.



**‘They not only mean a chance to play some of my favourite games and potentially win prizes, but also to meet like-minded people and enjoy some friendly competition.’**

With advancement in internet technology and the rise of online multiplayer and video streaming has seen the sport grow exponentially. Running a collaborative gaming event is a relatively inexpensive and simple way to deliver youth infrastructure into communities.

A non-competitive gaming option known as ‘LAN parties’ – brings people with computers or gaming consoles together where they establish a local area network (LAN) connection between devices, and use a router or ‘switch’ to enable multiplayer video games to take place. The host supplies the place, switch, internet and power, and participants bring their own gaming devices and equipment.

Whether the focus is competitive or collaborative, gaming events are a great way to build community and to connect with young people. It enables adult organisers to find out what young people are thinking and determine if they need support

in any other areas of their lives, connecting them to opportunities and services which might be of interest or assistance to them.

Gaming events create ‘occasions’ where young people connect both online and offline simultaneously. They provide opportunities to build a network of young people who have a shared passion for gaming; one they want to influence others to participate in, in ways not dissimilar to those drawn to more traditional sports.

“ *‘I enjoy working at these events as they give me experience and open opportunities I wouldn’t find easily on my own. I have built skills that I never thought I would have and I am always looking for chances to improve these skills.’*

## Confidence

An important part of a young person's sense of their own value, is feeling as though they have a place in the world. Self-worth and wellbeing are inextricably linked to feeling confident, experiencing a sense of belonging and having opportunities for skill development and achievement regularly available.

Building this sense of belonging in local communities comes from investment in the things young people care about. When young people see investment of this kind being made by their community, they see it as validation of their own worth and rightful place within it.

Being physically, emotionally and virtually connected to peers is a critical part of the way young people build their relationships and connections. Hosting collaborative gaming events in partnership with young people helps achieve this.

The vibe at a community gaming event is energizing. Young people are challenging each other and working collaboratively. By participating as players and/or organisers and promoters, they contribute to something they care about, in a place where they feel welcomed and supported.

Gaming events held in public spaces transform them into youth centric places. They bring young people of varying abilities, genders, cultures, ethnicities and ages together in one space. They become places that support young people from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, simultaneously building their sense of optimism and positivity for the future.

Creating spaces where young people have shared ownership and control over how things are organised, is critical to building their confidence. Supporting young people to organise their own gaming events, enables them to experience what being connected and respected feels like. They learn that they are part of a broader community that not only accepts who they are, but which supports them to pursue their interests in ways that matter to them.

**'I learnt how to manage time and work with my team, to get stuff done before and during the event.**

**Gaming events are important to me because they help me with social anxiety while also helping [me to] understand how an event is run.'**



## Creativity

Studies have shown that there is a clear relationship between use of information technology and development of creativity in young people.

In one study undertaken in 2011, four types of information technology were considered; computer use, Internet use, video game play and mobile phone use. A multi-dimensional measure of creativity was developed for the study and based on well-established creativity tests devised by Sternberg and Lubart (1999) and Subrahmanyam et al. (2006).<sup>8</sup> The study tested almost five hundred 12-year-olds against the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking, which examines problem-solving and story-telling skills.

The results showed that video game play increased creativity regardless of gender or race, or whether the videogame was violent, non-violent, educational, interpersonal, or interactive. It also showed that general computer use and the use of mobile phones and the Internet did not lead to increased creativity. The first significant study to look at creativity and technology use, also found that children who play video games have better 'visual-spatial' skills - considered important in developing skills in science and engineering disciplines in later life.

Video games present so many options for creative expression. Not only are there those who create the game narratives and design the story worlds within them, but there are those who create the programs that allow this creativity to be explored and expressed. Powerful game engines such as Unity, Maya and Unreal are changing the way video game design is done. These programs are opening up possibilities that enable entire virtual universes, capable of connecting people from all over the world, to be shaped from a basic desktop computer by anyone interested to learn how to do so. This combined

with increasing bandwidth and Internet speeds has enabled rapid growth in consumer interest in Australia and around the world.

Disruptive technologies and emerging platforms are creating new venues for interactive entertainment and this is changing the definition of what a video game can be. The lines between education and entertainment are continuously blurring. 'Indie games' are popping up everywhere, and it's not just developers and entrepreneurs who are designing these new games - it is players themselves. As with the music and publishing industries, there is an entire marketplace that caters to those who are 'modding', extending and shaping content to share with others.

These young people embrace a progressive, 'open-source ip' view of the world. This worldview is less about content ownership and more about leveraging engagement through fan enthusiasm, where IP originators become sole gatekeepers.

There is every reason to believe that through this 'democratization' of creativity, young South Australian gamers could be at the forefront of this emerging pattern of video game design, expressing their creativity in ways not yet imagined. Supporting their potential at the grassroots community level will provide the stepping stone some of these future video game creators will need. It also ensures that this kind of learning is not reserved for just those who can afford it but is made available to all regardless of socio-economic background, gender or ability.

## Next Steps

As community leaders we must take an active interest in gaming and esports. This involves, becoming more familiar with and aware of the different kinds of video games available, and educating ourselves on their potential impact, both positive and negative.

My hope is that this report sparks some ideas and assists local communities to consider more closely the many benefits there are to supporting young people's interest in gaming and esports, while recognising the potential the sport offers to help build connections, confidence and creativity amongst young people in their local communities.

Their communities can also support young people interested in taking gaming to professional levels to find the pathways to do so. But while supporting talented gamers to participate in major league competitions is important, so is ensuring that gaming and esports becomes and remains an inclusive and accessible new sport at the community level .



The benefits that creating gaming hubs in collaboration with young people offers, particularly those aged 13 to 18 years have been outlined. We've also explored the potential to stage collaborative gaming events with minimal cost and infrastructure required.

Development of dedicated spaces in which young people can come together to participate in gaming and esports has been proposed and guides to setting up esports tournaments and community gaming hubs now follows.

Creating public places that are welcoming and youth friendly supports personal development and belonging. It does this during what we know are strong identity building years. A room at a local library, a regular slot at a neighbourhood centre, or a youth friendly place that involves young people in the design and setup, with some or all of the financial and material support provided by local communities – could be achieved. The reality is that many young people across our local communities will become increasingly more involved in gaming and esports as this burgeoning industry develops.

If you do decide to establish a gaming and esports community club and/or tournament in your local community, be sure to tell people about it.





## Case Study: City of Playford Local Community Esports Tournament

In 2019, the City of Playford lead a regional Esports competition involving four regional local councils; City of Playford, City of Onkaparinga, City of Port Adelaide Enfield, and City of Salisbury.

This regional Esports competition was designed to bring young gamers into view and strengthen opportunities for participation in a community supported gaming competition.

The local council league also gave young people opportunities to have input into delivery of the event, as well as participate as players. This meant they had roles as organisers and promoters, fulfilled technical roles and problem solved solutions with the support of adults.

It also provided an opportunity for gamers to compete with friends outside of school, bringing them together within their local communities through their shared interest in gaming and esports.

Tournament heats were held within each of local council area, with finalists coming together at the Northern Sound System venue within the City of Playford to compete in the competition finals.

A total of 195 people participated in the tournament, including 98 young competitors, 43 spectators, 38 gaming students and 16 staff/organisers. What the event demonstrated was the benefit esports offers at the community level in comparison to those who are participating in esports in the high school setting.

Rather than be restricted to representing schools, gamers were able to join teams that were formed across their community. Members of the local community support the competition through prize sponsorship and spectator attendance. Young people involved said that they felt that their interest in gaming and esports was being taken seriously.

“ Working at the event is important to me because it gets me closer to the gaming community in general, which allows me to further learn about how to handle events and how the people attending affect your jobs at the events. Another thing that I gained working the events was a betterment of my communication ability which will help when speaking to people I don't know.”

**‘Very good. Everything organised very well.  
Games went well. I think we should do it every year  
as I would definitely participate.’**

*Playford participant*

**‘I gained [...] a betterment  
of my communication ability which will help  
when speaking to people I don’t know.’**

*Onkaparinga participant*

	Playford Heat	Onkaparinga Heat	Salisbury Heat	Port Adelaide & Enfield Heat	FINAL @ NSS	Season Total
<b>Competitors</b>	19	24	9	16	30	98
<b>Spectators</b>	6	10	5	10	12	43
<b>Combined</b>	25	34	14	26	42	

	Playford Heat	Onkaparinga Heat	Salisbury Heat	Port Adelaide & Enfield Heat	FINAL @ NSS	Season Total
<b>Competitors</b>	6	6	10	6	10	38
<b>Spectators</b>	3	3	2	3	5	16
<b>Combined</b>	9	9	12	9	15	

Table 1: Local Community Esports League Tournament Heats and Finals



# A Snapshot Guide to running a local community esports tournament

Prepared by Matt Rix.

This guide may be used as a resource to stimulate community engagement through esports activation.

## Types of Events

Not all gaming is esports. The term esports is given to playing video games at a competitive level. Esports used to only happen online, but with the advancement in internet technology, the rise of online multiplayer and video streaming, it has grown phenomenally and now has massive potential for community engagement by hosting tournaments and events.

There are 3 main types of gaming events:

### 1 Casual gaming 'come and play'

The host will supply the gaming devices and gamers will participate in a variety of informal gameplay and small tournaments / challenges. These events are a great way to build your community and gain insight to what esports tournaments you should run.

### 2 LAN party

A LAN party is a gathering of people with computers or gaming consoles, where a local area network (LAN) connection is established between the devices using a router or switch, for the purpose of playing multiplayer video games together. The host will supply the switch, internet and power and participants will usually bring their own gaming devices and equipment.

### 3 Esports Tournament

This is where it gets serious. Esports tournaments are physical events that occur in front of a live audience. Competitions take several formats, but the most common are single or double elimination, sometimes with a group stage. Competitions usually have referees or officials to enforce the rules and Shoutcasters to provide commentary. Competitors can be single player or in teams, depending on the game and they will play to win prizes on PC or console platforms.

## Planning an Event

It takes lots of dedicated and capable people to successfully plan and execute an esports tournament. Here's what you need to consider:

#### – Get Organised

The first thing to do is to create a committee and/or assemble eager volunteers and staff. This may start off as being informal brainstorming sessions, but be prepared for it to grow as the ideas flow. Take notes and research trending games and how these events are run in their official capacity. AGFA esports may be able to assist in running your event (see 'Contacts' section)

#### – Dates

Select the date of the tournament so that you can finalise the venue

#### – Tournament Style

Decide on the type of tournament you want. Should it include multiple sports or a single sport? How many teams will be needed? Will it be round robin or single elimination-based? This will ultimately be determined by how much time you have for the event to run and the norms within that gaming community.



– **Equipment and Roles**

Make a list of items, equipment and roles that will be required for your tournament (See 'Requirements' section)

– **Promotion**

Advertise and promote your event. Make sure your community is aware of the tournament. Set up a Facebook event page (at least 6 weeks before the event) where interested gamers can register to participate. Invite teams or sports personalities, use social media - Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to distribute the flyer and answer questions, send out flyers or emails and advertise on online forums - Discord, Reddit, Ausgamers, Cybergamer. Contact local sports teams, High Schools and University's so that they can encourage their teams to participate. Have your committee members spread the word through their personal accounts. Print out flyers to hand out and leave them at local shopping centres in highly visible areas. Make sure the flyer is well styled and suits your audience and check the legal requirements of using gaming logos and images Matrix Design may be able to assist here (see 'Contacts' section).

– **Officials and Referees**

This will most likely be committee members. Officials and Referees must know all rules of the game and the tournament and not show any bias. Evolved Talent may also be able to assist here (see 'Contacts' section)

– **Sponsorship and Prizes**

If you are planning a massive esports event it could be worth sending out sponsorship proposals for high end prizes and support. Smaller events may attract some free merchandise like lanyards, key rings or beverages. Prizes are usually offered on a sliding scale of worth from 1st to 3rd places. Most Government departments cant give away cash so gift cards and merchandise are often substituted. A small fee may be charged to players to assist in covering costs of prizes.

– **Participants**

Finalise the teams or players participating in the tournament and send them the details of the event including the rules and regulations of the tournament. Make sure they know the event details and ask them to promote via their networks.

– **Review**

Go through all the details with the venue staff, organising committee, and volunteers so that everyone understands how the tournament will run. Assign all tasks beforehand and ensure everyone knows their roles and what you expect from them. A debrief after the event is a good opportunity to discuss improvements for next time.

## Requirements

esports tournaments cannot be done without considering the specific requirements needed in order to host an event.

Esports tournaments require a space with a main arena, such as a music venue, theatre or indoor sports stadium. There must be seating that faces the action and a projector screen for game-play. Shoutcasters will need a PA system with microphones to provide commentary for the viewing audience.

Technical items include:

- Gaming spec. PC computers up to 10 (2 teams of 5)
- Large-scale monitors
- Consoles and TVs
- Cables to connect all devices through a Local Area Connection
- Headsets
- Gaming Mice
- Gaming chairs for the participants
- Video projection system for the audience to see the in-game action
- Internet connection

The type of game played at the event will determine whether PC's or consoles are needed and what other peripherals—such as gaming mice, controllers, and monitors are needed. Depending on tournament rules, some gamers may bring their own equipment, which must first be inspected by tournament organisers to check for any modifications that may give that gamer an advantage.

Main staff roles include:

- Lead Technician
- Event Manager
- Game station Manager(s)
- Referees to settle any rule disputes
- Venue Coordinator

Other roles for volunteers or staff may include:

- Ushers
- Food and beverage attendants
- Security
- Door ticketing staff
- Scorers
- Stagehand
- Technical assistants - PC's, Consoles, lighting, sound.

In addition, esports events will have a host who will address the crowd, introduce players, and present awards. This person also works with the event/game manager to keep the event running smoothly. The host may also assist as a broadcaster or shoutcaster to provide commentary for the viewing audience.

Shoutcasters are often former or inactive players of the game played at the event and have the experience required to be able to relay the action to the audience. Casters serve an important role in all esports competitions as they are the ones that the audience relies on for game information, insight and interpretation.

## Internet Access

Many Government environments are designed to lock down access to the internet. As a result, you may need some IT help to allow esports events to run smoothly.

It is usually a simple process for your IT Department to give the access it needs to run games on your network.

You will need to consider the games:

- Firewall configuration details
- Bandwidth requirements
- Patching (updating)

Before running your esports event, it is a good idea to do some testing at the venue to make sure that the game is running properly. This is to ensure competitors don't experience any problems, updates or delays.

## Resources

- Discord is a real time in game chat app. (<https://discordapp.com/>)
- Challonge is a website that makes tournament bracket management simple and digital. (<https://challonge.com/>)
- Twitch is a live video streaming network for gamers. (<https://www.twitch.tv/>)
- Meta High School esports League Australia (<https://www.metahse.gg>)
- Australian Esports Association Governing body (<https://www.aesa.org.au>)







# A Snapshot Guide to establishing local community gaming activities

Prepared by Ed Thomas.

The following outlines a brief overview of required equipment, specifications and things to look for in a gaming setup.




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## PC (Personal Computer)

A good computer is integral to high performance gaming. A great gamer can quickly become an average gamer when using the wrong gear.

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### CPU (Central Processing Unit)

Often referred to as CPU or simply the 'Processor'. This is the main processor of the PC, commonly described as the 'brain' of the computer.

#### What to look for:

At this point in time, choose AMD over Intel. They are far more competitive than Intel right now. Look for something with an absolute minimum of 4 cores. The marketplace is ever changing but at the time of writing, you could use something like this: <https://www.pccasegear.com/products/46914/amd-ryzen-5-3600x-with-wraith-spire>

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## Motherboard

The motherboard houses and allows communication between the PC components.

#### What to look for:

Deciding on your form factor. This is the size of your motherboard and will determine the number of expansion slots you will have. It's recommended to stick to the standard size: ATX which enables plenty of expansion slots for any future hardware changes.

Selecting your processor socket needs to be considered. You need to ensure the motherboard processor socket is compatible with your processor. More often than not, AMD and Intel processors are not interchangeable, even between generations of CPUs!

Refer to <https://www.pccasegear.com/>

You'll notice if you look at the 'Motherboards' section that it is broken into different socket types: AMD Socket AM4 2nd Gen, AMD Socket AM4 3rd Gen, Intel 1151 8th Gen.

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### RAM (Random Access Memory)

RAM acts as the memory of running programs.

#### What to look for:

The sweet spot for RAM at the moment is 16GB running at approximately between 2600mhz - 3000mhz. Going any higher than this isn't particularly useful and you will reach diminishing returns with extremely high prices.

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### GPU (Graphics Processing Unit)

Commonly referred to as the Graphics Card, the GPU translates information into images and sends them to a display/monitor.

#### What to look for:

At this point in time, look for something like the Nvidia RTX 2060. This is more than capable running Esport titles at 1920 x 1080 at a desired 144hz (refresh rate) with plenty of headroom for any frame dips (when the frames per second drop substantially).

This will also help future proof for newer games. See: Peripherals: Monitor for explanation and understanding of the refresh rate.

All this being said, the GPU is one of the most important components to a gaming rig and new GPUs are being announced over the course of the next few months. The recommended GPU will likely change in the very near future as performance goes up and prices come down.

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### Storage (SSD Solid State Drive / HDD Hard Disk Drive)

Stores and saves data and information. Solid state drives have come down dramatically in price recently and are substantially faster. Stick to SSDs and avoid HDDs.

#### What to look for:

You can't go too wrong here, just avoid HDDs and ensure the SSD has enough storage for its intended use. To give you an idea, below are file sizes of some common games and Windows 10. An SSD with 256GB should be enough but to play it safe, I would recommend 512GB.

- Windows 10: 32GB
- Fortnite: 17.5GB
- CS:GO: 16GB
- Overwatch: 13GB

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### Power Supply Unit (PSU)

Pretty straight forward here. As the name suggests, it supplies power to the PC.

#### What to look for:

Your power supply can never have too many watts but it can have too few.

The power supply you require depends on your components. Some draw more power, some draw less. As a rule of thumb, the more high end a component is the more power it draws. Installing a power supply with too many watts is unnecessary and you should be aiming for one with just the right amount. Think 'Goldilocks' - you're looking for the sweet spot! You can use a power supply calculator to figure out how many watts you will need located here: <https://www.bequiet.com/en/psucalculator>

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### Case

Houses all components of a PC and typically includes several fans.

#### What to look for:

For the most part, cases are an aesthetic choice although some are better at keeping your components cooler than others. Most cases cooling capability and airflow will be adequate but it is



still something worth considering. Ensure your case is big enough for your selected motherboard size (a.k.a form factor) and your GPU. These include: ATX, micro-ATX and mini-ITX. But as mentioned previously, stick to ATX.

In summary, many PC gamers opt to buy separate components and put them together in their own configuration. This comes at the risk of compatibility between the components and bottlenecking the PC without enough knowledge on the ins and outs of the industry. You can put together a high end build and spend thousands of dollars on the components but ultimately bottleneck it with one poor decision.

An experienced PC builder will go into a build understanding what games they want to play at what resolution and refresh rate they want to achieve. (See: Peripherals: Monitor for explanation and understanding of the refresh rate). They will then work their way backwards selecting components and peripherals that fulfil these requirements without overshooting or undershooting their goal.

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## Peripherals

Peripherals describe any device that provides input and output for the PC. The peripherals of a computer are particularly important in the world of Esports and are integral to high performance gaming. A good comparison is a Formula 1 driver and their car, where the car is the 'computer' and the steering wheel is the peripheral. This is how they interface with the vehicle and is one way the user provides input.

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### Mouse

Arguably the most important peripheral to gaming. A mouse that the user isn't comfortable with or doesn't perform particularly well can hinder performance.

#### What to look for:

For years wired mice have been standard due to reliability and reduced input lag over wireless.

Although this trend may be slowly coming to an end as wireless options become more appealing to gamers. Reliability, latency and battery performance are increasing. Currently the Esports world consists of a mix of players who use wired and wireless. Arguably for a community based Esports set up, wired mice may be preferable as keeping track of the mice which require charging would become difficult.

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## Keyboard

Keyboards are important but aren't nearly as impactful on performance as the mouse or monitor. The world of keyboards are divided by 'membrane' keyboards and 'mechanical' keyboards. Membrane keyboards are what you would find in your standard office and are often described as 'spongy' and looked down upon. Mechanical are favoured by enthusiasts, gamers and typists. Mechanical keyboards utilise physical switches and provide superior haptic feedback.

#### What to look for:

Wired mechanical keyboards which utilise Cherry MX switches will be a crowd pleaser for the majority of gamers. You can't go too wrong here.

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## Monitor

Monitors are extremely important as a professional or aspiring pro gamer. An important concept is understanding 'refresh rate'. Screens or monitors flicker on and off rapidly displaying different images to create moving pictures - just like movies.

This is referred to as the refresh rate and is measured in hertz (Hz). Most run-of-the-mill screens have a refresh rate of 60Hz. This means it flickers on and off 60 times per second.

This simply doesn't cut it for professional gaming. A professional or enthusiast monitor ranges from 144hz up to 240hz.

Another important concept is the response time of a monitor. This is measured in milliseconds and is the time it takes for the monitor to respond to any input. Less is always better. The aim of the game is to give yourself a slight edge over your opponent. Milliseconds matter.

#### What to look for:

A monitor with a refresh rate of 144hz (or higher), a response time of <1ms and standard aspect ratio (16:9) and somewhere in the 27" inch range.

Something along these lines is recommended: <https://www.pccasegear.com/products/49125/benq-zowie-xl2731-fhd-144hz-freesync-esports-27in-monitor>

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#### Headset

Sound matters. Hearing footsteps before your opponent can be the difference between winning and losing. Audio is heavily relied upon in many competitive games and neglecting it will put you at a severe disadvantage.

**What to look for:** Just as the world is divided between those that prefer wired over wireless mice, the same applies to headsets. For this use case scenario, I would recommend sticking to wired. They will be cheaper, more reliable and less maintenance. Ensure you buy a headset with a built-in microphone to allow comms between players.

Something like this is recommended: <https://www.pccasegear.com/products/47063/logitech-pro-x-gaming-headset-with-blue-vo-cemic-technology>

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#### Mouse Pad

A mouse pad is a must which allows the mouse sensor to perform reliably. Different mouse pad materials offer different resistances. Some are rougher while others are smoother allowing for different 'speeds'.

**What to look for:** Big mouse pads go a long way. Nothing is more frustrating than running out of mouse pad when attempting a 'flick shot'.

What gear do professionals use?

It's worth noting that different Esports utilise slightly different gear to cater to their game. You can view breakdowns of different games and what gear the pro players are using here:

- 1 Fortnite Pro Settings and Gear List: <https://prosettings.net/best-fortnite-settings-list/>
- 2 CS:GO Pro Settings and Gear List: <https://prosettings.net/cs-go-pro-settings-gear-list/>
- 3 Overwatch Pro Settings and Gear List: <https://prosettings.net/overwatch-pro-settings-gear-list/>
- 4 Rainbow Six Siege Pro Settings and Gear List: <https://prosettings.net/rainbow-6-pro-settings-gear-list/>
- 5 Apex Legends Pro Settings and Gear List: <https://prosettings.net/apex-legends-pro-settings-gear-list/>
- 6 PUBG Pro Settings and Gear List: <https://prosettings.net/pubg-pro-settings-gear-list/>
- 7 Rocket League Pro Camera Settings and Controller List: <https://prosettings.net/rocket-league-pro-camera-settings-controller-list/>

Note: Some games (e.g. Rocket League) utilise a controller in place of a mouse and keyboard at professional levels.

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#### Common Stores in Australia for PC Components

- PC Case Gear (PCCG): <https://www.pccasegear.com/>
- MSY: <https://www.msy.com.au/>
- PLE Computers: <https://www.ple.com.au/>
- Scorptec: <https://www.scorptec.com.au/>

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## Prebuilt PCs

My recommendation is to buy prebuilt PCs. PC Case Gear (and several other retailers) put together their own PCs. Prebuilts take the doubt out of component compatibility and are usually well optimised to reduce too many bottlenecks. Plenty of things can go wrong putting together your own PC, especially on a larger scale. Keep things simpler and picking a well balanced prebuilt.

PCCG Ready to Ship Gaming PCs: [https://www.pccasegear.com/category/1411\\_1917/pccg-gaming-pcs/ready-to-ship-systems](https://www.pccasegear.com/category/1411_1917/pccg-gaming-pcs/ready-to-ship-systems)

This is a pre-built which would meet the required standards to run the majority of games (particularly Esport titles at 144hz on a 1920 x 1080 monitor): <https://www.pccasegear.com/products/49072/pccg-storm-2060-super-gaming-system>

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## Internet

To be competitive in online games, your internet connection matters. You want high speeds and to be connecting to servers (where games are hosted) in your region. For example, you would be at a substantial disadvantage playing Americans on an American server as an Australian.

Your latency would be much higher than the other players and as a result your performance would suffer. The other players will be able to react to situations before you've even seen them yet. This is commonly referred to as 'lag'.

The majority of Australia has been connected to the NBN at this stage, although it's worth noting that the way you've been connected to the NBN will vary between different areas. Some connections are objectively better than others while others are less desirable or even unfeasible to be used in a competitive gaming environment. The different types of connections are outlined opposite:

### 1 Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)

Considered the best connection you can get but is the least common. It was originally what NBN planned to roll out over Australia but was reconsidered due to expenses of this connection type.

### 2 Fibre to the Node, Basement, or Building (FTTN)

A line of fibre runs to a node and then traditional copper runs the remaining length to the premise. Copper lines can slow down the speeds, especially if they're of low quality.

### 3 Fibre to the Curb (FTTC)

Typically more desirable than Fibre to the Node as the fibre cable can usually get closer to the premise and involves a shorter length of copper wiring to complete the connection.

### 4 Hybrid Fibre-Coaxial

This is the wiring used in the past to deliver TV subscriptions such as Foxtel. HFC has the ability to provide speed on par as FTTP in some cases.

### 5 Fixed Wireless

This is one of the connection types run in regional areas and as the name suggests it is wireless. A wireless connection simply won't cut it for professional gaming. Avoid at all costs.

### 6 Satellite

Utilised for extremely regional and remote areas. This type of connection shouldn't be considered.

When looking for NBN plans, you will need to consider the NBN connection type available at the premise and aim for FTTP, FTTC, Hybrid-Coaxial or FTTN. Achieving 100mbps is ideal but isn't always possible.

The faster your internet is, generally the lower your latency becomes. For multiple PCs all trying to achieve high speeds, use the Business NBN search tool to check the premises to see what connection is available: <https://www.nbnco.com.au/business>

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## Streaming Sites

### 1 Twitch

The undisputed champion, the streaming name is ubiquitous with streaming games sitting at 1.5 million streamers. This is recommended to use as it will be familiar with the majority of users and at this point in time would be considered an industry standard.

### 2 YouTube Gaming

This is Google's competitor to Amazon's Twitch platform. Although smaller it is up and coming, and shares very similar functionality as Twitch.

### 3 Mixer

This is Microsoft's streaming platform. Mixer's community sits at about 69,000 streamers, although this number is growing rapidly.

### 4 Facebook Gaming

Facebook's advantage lies in its integration to an already massive platform. Having gaming a couple of clicks away from Facebook is helping this platform stay competitive.

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## Potential Hidden Costs

### 1 Windows 10

A common oversight when building a computer is the costs involved to buy the operating system - Windows 10. Ensure not to forget this if building a PC.

### 2 Games

Consider that some games are free to play while others require upfront payment. Keep this in mind when quoting or figuring out costing.

### 3 Desk

Take into consideration a good desk. An adjustable desk is ideal to cater to all different heights. Just ensure it has a manual crank and isn't electric. Trying to keep that many electric desks in order will prove painful. If possible look for something with cable management as this will help clean up the set up.

### 4 Chair

Sometimes hours are spent at a time playing games so something comfortable with plenty of adjustments is important. There are lots of chairs which are marketed as 'gamer chairs' but I wouldn't buy into this. Nice ergonomic office chairs look better and are often more comfortable. A wide variety of chairs are utilised by professionals and don't all buy into the 'gamer chair' trap.

### 5 Cable Management

This is something that is easily overlooked but I would argue it is important to keep all gear neat and tidy. This keeps the setup looking professional and helps prevent any gear from being toppled over from loose cables underneath the tables.

### 6 Electricity

Consider what the electricity costs are of running this many high performance PCs would be. A plug-in power meter could be purchased to test what the peak draw of power from the wall socket would be to help estimate costing.



### Who are we?

The South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People is an independent statutory position, established under the Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016 ('the Act').

The Commissioner promotes and advocates for the rights, development and well-being of all children and young people in South Australia. The Commissioner is committed to advocating for children and young people's involvement in decision-making that affects them, giving particular consideration to the needs of vulnerable and at-risk children and young people.

A key objective of The Commissioner for Children and Young People is to position children and young people's interests, development and wellbeing front and centre in public policy and community life and to advocate to decision makers to change laws, policy, systems and practice in favour of children and young people.

In the Commissioner's work she listens to the views of children and young people, collaborates with them and represents their diverse voices in the public arena with a special focus on those who struggle to have their voices heard. Much of her advocacy is directed by the experiences and issues that children and young people talk about and have asked her to focus on.

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) says Children and young people have a right to have a say on all issues that affect them and for their views to be taken seriously. By improving our children and young people's participation in decisions that impact on them, we can strengthen our democratic institutions and structures and build a strong state for the future of all children and young people.

### Endnotes

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