

Game co-ownership

TL;dr: *This social contract is a plain-language way of saying that early collaborators have an avenue into becoming stakeholders in the project.*

Right now we the core team (who that is depends on the game project that referred you to this contract) owns 100% of this game. But we plan to reduce our ownership to 5% per core team member over the course of the first few¹ years of development. We want the game to be co-owned by as many people as possible.

Ownership of the game quite simply means what share of the revenues you're entitled to. If the game makes \$100,000 and you own 5% of the total shares, you earn \$5000. But in the early development stages the active developers share 100% of the profits. More on that a bit later.

The first regular contributors can get up to 5% each. A month of regular work (e.g. equivalent to a \$250 micro-gig) earns a contributor 0.1% "game stock" ownership. This formula might change a bit over time, but the basic intent is that it should be possible for an early contributor to attain about 1% ownership per year. But if we have run out of ownership to give away after 4 years, then it won't be possible to attain more than 4% ownership. This would be a good thing, as it means we've actually got an incredibly large group of people actively developing the game.

It doesn't matter if work was done for pay or voluntarily: Whoever shows up to work with some regularity over the course of a month will have earned their 0.1% share.

Awarding ownership is done at the core team's discretion. We can reward less than 0.1% as well, for monthly activity that doesn't quite qualify as 'regular' but should still be counted. We will try our best to communicate very clearly to any contributor that should be expecting less than 0.1% on any given month. These shares are also worthless until the game makes any substantial revenue; the focus for early developers should be on current game revenues, not future shares.

As long as the game has made less than \$2000 in lifetime-revenue, all revenue will go towards the active developers. So if there are two active devs when the game earns \$500 one month, each dev gets \$250 that month.

Past \$2000 will be quite similar since all we're interested in doing is reinvesting profits into the game. The next \$250 the game earns would probably be on a third person (if that hasn't happened already) because we can afford to pay them for a \$100-\$250 gig. From here on we discuss as a team how to best spend our revenues. The ideal mix would be regular payments for the core developer(s) (1-3 people), plus some irregular but steady stream of micro-gigs done with community contributors (essentially interns).

¹ As of yet undefined. Probably 2-5 years.

Past \$20,000 in lifetime revenue, we need to evaluate as a team how our future revenues should best be distributed. Do we wanna hire more people, or keep the team small?

80% of the game will be owned by the core team. The remaining 20% is set aside for potential investors/publishers. But we are definitely not selling any more than 20%, and no individual investor will own more than 10% (5%?).