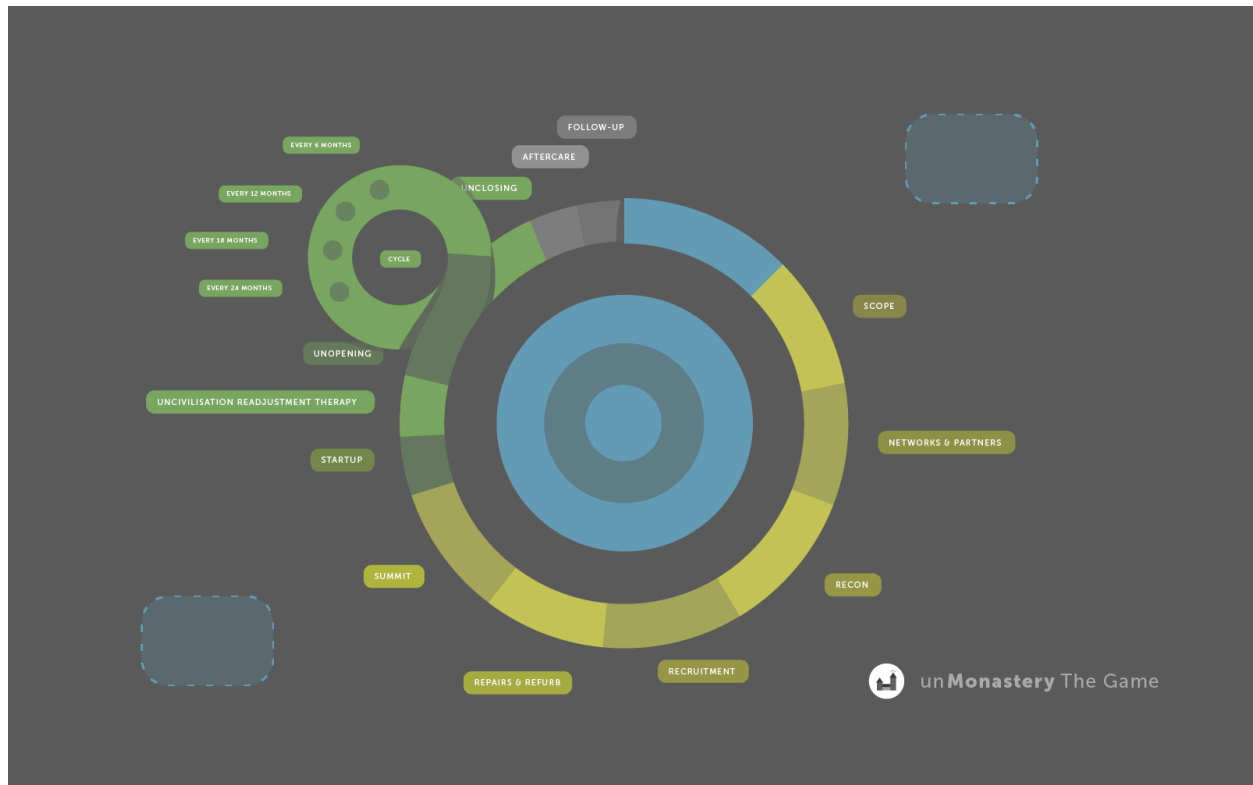


The unMonastery BIOS Game



Since the unMonastery prototype in Southern Italy, we have been developing specific elements of the unMonastery BIOS, a [toolkit](#) including the [MethodKit card set](#) providing an overview of unMonastery design patterns, [The Book of Mistakes](#), the [Process Map](#), and the [Stakeholders Handbook](#), a manual for all those invested in the project. More information can be found on these components and their interplay at unmonastery.org/bios.

During Transmediale 2015 in Berlin, we used our program in the Haus der Kulturen der Welt foyer to begin experimenting with rulesets and mechanics for the unMonastery BIOS Game, which uses the Process Map as a gameboard visualizing the development process of establishing a space and connecting with local partners, with stages such as “Foundation and Alignment” and “Networks and Partnerships”.

Inspired partially from community-oriented games such as *The Quiet Year*, the current instantiation of the BIOS game has one host, or “facilitator,” who introduces the unMonastery model, sets the scene for a potential unMonastery, and guides its narrative. The facilitator introduces mechanics of play through other components of the BIOS: the card deck of design patterns creates challenges, common aims, and characteristics for the players; the Stakeholders’ Handbook serves as an oracle of consultation during the decision-making process; and so on. The host gradually “disappears” as the unMonastery development unfolds, shifting decision-making and scene-setting authority to the game players themselves.

A key component of the unMonastery model is skilled facilitation, an important factor in building community and decision-making processes; thus the game host, as well as the players, will be - rather implicitly - involved in an active learning process to build resilient - and joyful - communication skills.

As a multi-format, nomadic interface, the game offers an introduction to the unMonastery narrative model and allows people to interact and work together as though “in” an unMonastery. Through role-play, strategy and narration, they can quickly envision and prototype scenarios for future unMonasteries, as well as reimagine previous situations in the history of unMonastery. As a tool with several points of access, we hope to identify partners and begin working with potential collaborators through its play.

The main aspects of BIOS Game development we would like to focus on in the near future:

- **Flexibility of rulesets:** The game facilitator often acts through improvisation, with a set of mechanics at hand to be deployed to guide gameplay. We wish to develop these robust mechanics and experiment with the degree of rule-lenieny the game can provide.
- **Digital unDivide:** Developing online and offline versions of the Game, as well as prototyping virtual participation in a real-time game - ensuring gameplay and documentation can transfer easily between both formats.
- **Scribing the Game:** The best means to efficiently capture the knowledge and narrative of individual games during play and how to share this information across several platforms - that is, how to open source the narrative(s) and journeys.
- **The Protocol:** Develop and expand the unMonastery design patterns to create a written protocol for unMonastery - light suggestions for common living and working methodologies - fostering players' understanding of the implicitly applied rules in each game as they relate to the unMonastery's backstory.
- **IRL unDivide:** Develop the game to easily facilitate shifts in scale, using maps, larping, the urban commons.

All unMonastery materials, including the BIOS Game, will be freely available online and distributed through an open source Creative Commons license, as we have the ultimate aim of making the game as participatory and inclusive as possible, to foster new processes for community relations.



The core elements of the BIOS include:

- **unMonastery Roadmap:** an interactive online and printable process map that reveals the pathways to realising an unMonastery, designed to ensure that all stakeholders and participants can retain an overview.

Format: PDF, web page and distributed as an A2 poster.

- **unMonastery Cards:** Designed in collaboration with [MethodKit](#), this cardset acts as a checklist and series of design patterns to help unMonasterians work together, nurture ideas, and get an overview of common questions - depending on [methodology](#) the kit can be deployed in a variety of ways.

Format: PDF and printed card deck.

- **The Protocol:** a ruleset for collective living and coworking that draws on 10th century monastic social codes and hackerspace design patterns.

Format: Online wiki and print on demand publication.-

- **The Book of Greater and Lesser Omissions:** a collaborative [critical history](#) of the project's ongoing development and a poetically correct retelling of its narrative to date. We strive to avoid reinventing the wheel and reliving our mistakes, so we document them. The initial unMonastery prototype in Matera has provided abundant raw material. unMoaners are not at all documentation-shy: chat sessions, post-its, a web presence, project proposals and urgent emails have left behind a maze of commentary. The Book of GLO recycles this maze into distilled clarity. Fragments of argument and trampled shards of vision are reassembled into magnificent vessels of wisdom.

Format: Online wiki and print on demand publication.

- **The Stakeholders Handbook:** the [core information](#) for contemplating an unMonastery, it functions both as an introduction manual to the unMonastery concept, including its embeddedness within places and people. The unMonastery is no clandestine operation, it aspires to involve as many in the process as is organisationally possible, as a result of this aspiration negotiation between individuals and groups can feel like a minefield - the Stakeholder Handbook is designed to help orientate and coach future unMonasterians in managing these relationships.

Format: Online wiki and print on demand publication.

- **The Scriptorium:** an open use repository for documents essential in managing organisational logistics, including budgeting spreadsheets, legal documents, workshop methodologies and source code. Like monasteries of a bygone era and those still standing today, the unMonastery generates a lot of documentation and knowledge products - the scriptorium is an online repository that builds up and improves over time which houses everything; budgeting spreadsheets, legal documents, workshop methodologies, source code and individual project documentation.

Format: Website and github repository.

- **The Atlas:** a growing repository of experience, which includes: infographics and network graphs, captured from development of individual unMonasteries and play-testing of the BIOS.
- **The Talking Piece:** The core technology of the unMonastery sometime takes the form of a stone or small rock, morphing its shape in the bios to a 3D printed artefact. In meetings, circles and gatherings it is decreed that only the holder of the stone is permitted to speak, ensuring the speaker addresses the group with intention and those not possessing the stone listen with attention.

Format: 3D printed artefact, .ma filetype or a stone found on the ground.

<http://unmonastery.org/bios/>