

Ascension X - Development Run

The Basics

The development run of *Ascension X* will be a series of blog posts, online sessions, and documents, ending in a 6-hour online larp on February 20th, 2021. This document provides basic information, a description of the experience, and frequently asked questions.

What Is It?

In 2021, Sinking Ship Creations will launch *Ascension X*, an ongoing cyberpunk larp. Sessions will be quarterly, with the intent to start live events in the fall. Leading up to that launch, we'll be developing the larp in phases... the first phase being the development run to create a playable online experience.

How does this work?

After a six-week period of development - including blogs, documents, and talkbacks - we'll produce an online larp we're calling "Session 0." There will likely be some playtests and additional roleplay sessions during that time, as well as the opportunity to watch rehearsals with the facilitators.

Participants will have early access to documentation and be able to steer the development of the larp. They'll also have online social opportunities and some limited chances to larp before Session 0.

Who's Going To Play

We will accept 25 participants for the development run: 20 paid participants (recommend cost: \$75) and 5 scholarship participants. People interested in being a participant will have to apply with our [application form](#); see [Application Process](#), below.

When will it run?

The development run will consist of information released weekly, as well as weekly online sessions that can be used as a talkback, workshop, or playtest session. Online sessions will generally be Mondays, 9 to 10 pm Eastern; additional sessions will be Thursdays. It will start from Monday, January 11 and culminate in Session 0 on Saturday, February 20th. A series of feedback sessions will follow Session 0 during the week of February 21.

Where Will It Be Held?

All events of *Ascension X* will be held on a Discord server developed for this larp.

Why a development run?

There's three reasons we're doing this:

1. We want to develop *Ascension X* in public view to build hype for the larp.
2. We want feedback early in the process from our participants, as well as the opportunity to explain design decisions.
3. We want to develop a core group of "experts" who understand the larp, and how to play it.

This last part is the most important: we want a group of people who understand the norms and themes of *Ascension X*, so that when we transition to live play, that herd competence can support the larp.

Content & Risk Notices

Content may include anti-establishment themes, implied sexual content, implied violence, and profanity. There are no non-normal risks associated with this larp. This might change during development; participants will be notified of all changes.

Description of the Experience

Overview

The development run is a six-week experience with an online larp at the end. It will be centered around a weekly process of development, discussion, and release. During the six-weeks, there will also be workshops, including a mandatory Risk Management Workshop. A normal week may look like this:

- An online session, from 8 to 9 pm Eastern on Monday. This would be followed by an informal hangout afterwards.
- A development blog post, released via Discord, on Wednesday. This may include a moderated discussion, via text channel.
- A weekly document drop on Friday.
- Additional, impromptu online session might occur. These might include an open rehearsal with facilitators, or a pre-event roleplay session.

The main event will be Session 0, which will be the first official *Ascension X* event. This will be a six-hour, online larp on Saturday, February 20th. While this event will be the end of the development run, you can expect online support following the larp to include at a minimum an open discussion session the week following, and the opportunity to schedule private feedback sessions.

The cost for the development run is \$75. Included in this price:

- A 6-hour online larp
- Six 1-hour online sessions
- Early access to *Ascension X* documents
- Access to the *Ascension X* Discord server
- Six development blogs
- The opportunity to help shape mechanics, policy, and setting for the larp.

Application Process

The development run will only accept 25 participants: 20 paid, 5 scholarship. People interested must fill out our [application form](#) by December 29th; applicants will receive a response no later than January 5th.

Applicants will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Availability (both online and for live events later in the year)
- Potential freelancers (facilitators, designers, etc)
- People with different accessibility needs
- Past history with Sinking Ship Creations
- Gen Z larpers (minimum age: 21)
- BIPOC will be prioritized (see our [FAQ](#) for more information)
- LGBTQIA+ people will be prioritized

After we select participants, we will determine scholarship tickets using a weighted randomizer.

Applicants selected to participate will be informed if we're offering a paid or scholarship ticket. They will have 48 hours to accept; for paid participants, this includes purchasing their ticket. All participants will have to register through the Sinking Ship Creations online store (scholarship participants will receive a 100% discount code). Applicants not selected to participate will either be waitlisted or denied. Waitlisted participants will receive a form email with the waitlist posted publicly; denied participants will receive a personal email informing them of the denial of service.

Frequently Asked Questions

What's the date of the larp?

Session 0 is scheduled for February 20, 2021. It will run from 6 p.m. to midnight, Eastern, and consist of three 90 minute sessions. It will start with a 30 minute rehearsal, and include two 30 minute breaks.

Tentative Schedule - Session 0

February 20th, 2021 (all times Eastern)	
6:00 pm	Rehearsal (workshop)
6:30 pm	Scene 1
8:00 pm	Break
8:30 pm	Scene 2
10:00 pm	Break
10:30 pm	Scene 3
12:00 am	End of session

There will be workshops leading up to the larp, and only sessions after for feedback and discussion.

Where's the Risk Management?

At the start of the development run, we will use our [Standing Risk Assessment](#) for risk management (we use the term "risk management" instead of safety). This includes using our [Code of Conduct](#) and [Anti-Harassment Policy](#).

As part of our development run, we will perform a risk assessment specifically for *Ascension X*, as well as implement tools fulfilling the purpose of the Code of Conduct and Anti-Harassment Policy. The participants will have the chance to offer input as part of the run.

How much participation is required?

We expect participants to attend the Risk Management Workshop (an hour of time prior to Session 0) and then participate in Session 0. All other participation is optional. However, we will be selecting participants who are interested in providing their opinions throughout the development run.

Why are you charging for a playtest?

There are two answers to this question.

The first is that even playtests cost money, and we have the interest level in *Ascension X* to charge money to cover costs. External costs include editing, facilitation, and rehearsal. Roughly a third of the revenue will go to Sinking Ship Creations as part of development.

In addition, we acknowledge that we have to charge a price that would allow other designers the opportunity for development. While the crew of Sinking Ship Creations could afford to do this development run for less, we want to set an expectation that larps such as this (a full evening, with six weeks of prior support) costs about \$100.

Will there be in-role rewards for participants?

We're unlikely to offer formal, in-role rewards for participants as part of the cost of the ticket. We may offer special perks to people who participate, but we do not want to set the standard of offering in-role advantages as out-of-role rewards.

That said: the setting will be developed around the core of characters created for the development run. That is an intrinsic reward for participation: they essentially get to be "in the room where it happens."

How will we pick the participants?

First, no particular answer or set of answers will guarantee an applicant gets selected. We'll look at the whole set of applicants, and then make our decision looking at all the information.

Second, there's one question we *won't* look at when we make our decision: whether or not you're requesting a scholarship ticket. Once we make our selections, we'll allocate the scholarships, so don't worry if your answer to that question will change your chances of getting selected.

That said, here's some of the questions we'll be asking:

- How do we make our larp more diverse? This is probably the first question we're asking, and one of the most important.
- Can they make it? We want to make sure people can make Session 0 in February... and we also want people who intend to play in person when we do live events.
- Are they creators? While participation in the development run is not a prerequisite for working with us, it is an advantage for us to bring in people who might work as designers for us during the ongoing campaign.
- How do we grow larp as an artform? We want to make sure we have a good number of Gen Z larpers, as well as newcomers.
- What sort of unique experiences do people bring? We want people who have different accessibility needs, because their experiences will help us make *Ascension X* more accessible to all.
- What's their past history with Sinking Ship Creations? We have people who have shown us tremendous support in the past. We want to remember that support.

How will we pick the scholarships?

First, we'll identify the participants, at which point we'll look at who requested a scholarship.

As part of our [reparations policy](#), two of the five scholarships are reserved for Black people.

The remaining three scholarships will be given out via a weighted lottery. We consider if the participant is a Person of Color, LGBTQIA+, and/or a person with disabilities. If, at the end of the lottery, we have participants selected who would not attend without a scholarship ticket who did not receive them, we will place them at the top of the waitlist, and add a participant who will pay for the ticket.

If we give someone a ticket off the waitlist, we will give them the type of ticket that was dropped (i.e. if a paid participant drops, we'll offer them a paid ticket). Exception: if a scholarship ticket drops, and the highest person on the waitlist has not request a scholarship, they will be offered a paid ticket.

How will your social justice policy interact with the application process?

Once we have determined the participant list, we will offer any Indigenous participant a ticket at no cost. We do this as part of our [land acknowledgement](#), and will do so prior to awarding scholarship tickets.

After awarding scholarships, we will offer any Black participant who did not receive a scholarship a 50% discount as part of our reparations policy.