Call for Participants: DiGRA 2025 Workshop

The CultureCraft Model (CCM): A Game Designer's Guide to Authentic Cultural Adaptation

Workshop Overview

Creating a video game based on a culture can present both opportunity and challenge, while representation can impact knowledge acquisition in players, missteps can lead to appropriation and stereotyping. This workshop introduces the Culture Craft model (CCM), which is a flexible framework designed to help video game creators integrate cultural elements into their game designs in a practical, authentic, and creative way.

Participants will explore how to research, conceptualise, and refine culturally inspired game concepts using CCM's **step-by-step framework**.

Why This Matters

The game industry is going through a cultural shift, and the video game medium is no longer only about technical advancement, but also about the cultural and ideological narratives that games convey. Video games are becoming powerful cultural products that can shape our understanding of a culture and impact our social behaviour towards them. Often serving as primary exposure to certain cultures for many players, especially in younger age groups, knowledge acquisition occurs through video games. Meanwhile, culturally incorporated games also thrive commercially, making them an industry interest.

While AAA studios can afford cultural consultations and proper resources to approach this complex matter with more consideration, independent video game creators struggle to access such resources due to a lack of budget, resources and time.

The Culture Craft model (ccm) aims to bridge this gap by providing an open-source framework ensuring a much more informed and ethical game design and make it accessible to all. By doing so, contributing to fairer distribution of power and resources in the video game industry and community.

This workshop is a key step in this mission by introducing the CCM model in a practical way to the participants and going through the initial phases of the model. This framework is a crossroad between three perspectives on cultural adaptation in video game design: the player, the creator and the industry. Creating an ethical, imaginative and efficient approach to this matter.

Who Should Attend?

• **Game Designers & Developers** – Looking to enhance cultural authenticity in their projects.
• **Narrative Designers & Writers** – Working with culturally rich storytelling.

- **Researchers & Academics** – Focused on game studies and adaptation.
- **Cultural Consultants & Artists** – Contributing to worldbuilding and representation in games.
- **Students & Game Project Leaders** – Enthusiastic about cultural adaptation and representation in games.
- **Anyone Enthusiastic on the Matter** – Interested in exploring cultural authenticity in game design.

Workshop Structure

This **three-hour interactive session** includes:

- **Introduction & Case Studies** – Examining cultural adaptation challenges and successes.
- **Concept Foundation** – Defining game ideas, cultural themes, biases, and blind spots.
- **Research & Analysis** – Exploring cultural elements, ethical considerations, and sourcing reference materials and archiving methods.
- **Conceptualisation & Design** – Translating research into game mechanics, aesthetics, and narratives.
- **Iteration & Feedback** –Refining concepts through group discussions.
- **Industry & Market Positioning** – Addressing audience expectations.

Additional Information

- **Participation:** Both **on-site** and **remote** involvement are possible. However, priority will be given to on-site participants.
- **Location:** DiGRA 2025 Conference- University of Malta
- **Date & Time:** 30 June 2025
- **Workshop Capacity:** 10–20 participants

Submission Guidelines

Submit a short **statement of interest** (max. 300 words)

Send submissions to: yekta.kalantarhormozi.2023@mumail.ie
Point of contact: Yekta Kalantar Hormozi- Maynooth University

Join us **let's craft culture into the game** (efficiently, creatively and ethically!)