

gamescom award 2017– Regulations

1 Object of the gamescom award

- 1.1 Gamescom awards shall be given annually to honor outstanding games, products, previews / visions as well as booth design concepts presented to the public at gamescom.
- 1.2 Submissions for gamescom award will be evaluated by an independent and internationally staffed jury. Gamescom “Most Wanted” consumer award is an audience award and will be conferred on the basis of a consumer survey.
- 1.3 These regulations are binding for organizers, judges, members of the award office, the award committee as well as participating companies. In cases of doubt, the German version of these regulations is legally binding.
- 1.4 The award’s time schedule will be decided on annually by the award committee and communicated in an appropriate and timely manner. Annexed to these regulations, it includes all relevant deadlines and submission periods.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 The term „award submissions“ includes all games, add-ons / DLCs, previews / visions and booth design concepts (compliant with the terms of clause 5.3 concerning nominations by the award office) as well as products.
- 2.2 Within these regulations, „games“ stands for interactive videogames as well as playable demo versions that are hands-on-playable for all visitors in real-time. The term includes all add-ons, DLCs and previews / visions whereby they are subject to additional requirements and restrictions specified within clause 2.
- 2.3 “Add-ons / DLCs” describes additional content for existing games that enhances possible courses of action and features to a more than insignificant extent (e.g. significant amount of new weapons, levels, character models or vehicles). These features can be sold separately or as part of a re-release of the original game.
- 2.4 „Previews / Visions“ are presentations of a game’s content that are predominantly made up of video content and that do not need to be interactive.
- 2.5 „Booth design concept“ means to concepts for exhibition booths within gamescom’s entertainment area, especially in regards to their innovative and artistic aspects of presenting their game or product.
- 2.6 „Products“ describes hardware (e.g. consoles, peripherals or virtual reality devices).

3 Award office and award committee

3.1 The award office is responsible for organizing and conducting the gamescom award and is established by the Digital Gaming Culture Foundation (Stiftung Digitale Spielekultur). Among its tasks are:

- a) Composing the jury and the categories' sub-juries as well as potentially excluding jury members in compliance with these regulations;
- b) Changing categories or category groups if needed as well as removing or merging categories in line with these regulations;
- c) Processing award submissions, including the dismissal of submissions that do not abide by the specified conditions or whose company violates any rules within these regulations. In cases of uncertainty, the award office will consult the award committee;
- d) Answering inquiries concerning the conduction of the award, especially regarding eligibility, nominations, winning a category or in a category group, or decisions of the jury;
- e) Determining nominees and category winners by evaluating the voting documents that have been handed out to the jury and
- f) Organizing and conducting the gamescom award show.

3.2 The award committee will be implemented as a supervisory body, consisting of one representative of Stiftung Digitale Spielekultur as well as two experts that are selected for one year. Spokesperson and head of the award board is the representative of Stiftung Digitale Spielekultur. The award committee supervises the office's actions and can, in case of doubt, make final decisions about the interpretation of these regulations and their application to special cases. Additionally, it can change or annul decisions by the award office at its own discretion, following its own initiative or the request of an affected person or company.

3.3 Enquiries are decided upon with a simple majority. Within the submission period, decisions need to be made within 72 hours. After the submission period has ended, the award board needs to reach a decision within 24 hours after the enquiry has been made. If this is not possible, the head of the award board decides about the respective enquiry on his or her own.

3.4 The head of the award board needs to justify decisions in writing. These decisions are final and cannot be subject to appeals.

4 Categories of the gamescom award

4.1 Except when otherwise changed in compliance with the terms of these regulations (esp. merging or annulation of categories) gamescom award will be conferred in the following categories and category groups:

4.1.1 Category group: Best of gamescom

- Best of gamescom award (only games and products; add-ons / DLCs, previews / visions or booth design concepts are not eligible)

4.1.2 Category group: gamescom global awards

- gamescom award for best add-on / DLC (only add-ons / DLCs)
- gamescom award for best preview / vision (only previews / visions)
- gamescom award for best booth (only booth design concepts)

4.1.3 Category group: Platform (only games; no add-ons / DLCs or previews / visions)

- Best Console Game Sony PlayStation 4
- Best Console Game Microsoft Xbox One
- Best Console Game Nintendo Switch
- Best PC Game
- Best Mobile Game (incl. handheld devices, iOS, Android, Windows)

4.1.4 Category group: Genre (only games (exception: Best Hardware); no add-ons / DLCs or previews / visions)

- Best Role Playing Game
- Best Racing Game
- Best Action Game
- Best Simulation Game
- Best Sports Game
- Best Family Game
- Best Strategy Game
- Best Puzzle / Skill Game
- Best Social / Online Game
- Best Casual Game
- Best Multiplayer Game

- Best Virtual Reality Game
- Best Hardware incl. peripherals (only products)

4.1.5 Category group: Consumer award

- gamescom “Most Wanted” Consumer award (only games or products)

4.1.6 Category group: Indie award

- gamescom Indie award (only games; no add-ons / DLCs or previews / visions)

4.2 At all times during and after the submission period, objective reasons may lead the award committee to change category definitions, merge categories and/or discard categories.

This includes the office’s right to discard a category when there are fewer than three submissions. Within the category group „platform“ (clause 4.1.3.), the office can furthermore merge the three separate console categories to the combined category „Best Console Game“. In individual cases, objective reasoning may lead the award office to deviate from these regulations.

4.3 If changes have been made to one or more categories after the submission period has ended, the award office decides how submissions affected by the changes will be assigned to other categories after its own discretion. Even if subsequent changes are made, all submissions in accordance with the rules need to be accepted by the committee.

4.4 The applicable categories of gamescom award will be announced by July 3 of the respective calendar year. The ultimate categories and category groups will be announced by the award office in sufficient time.

4.5 Only those games or products can win „Best of gamescom award“ which have also won in another category (excluding gamescom “Most Wanted” consumer award and/or gamescom indie award); add-ons / DLCs, previews / visions and booth design concepts are not eligible for participation in “Best of gamescom award”.

4.6 Only nominees (compliant with clause 10) are eligible for „gamescom Most Wanted consumer award“. Every game or product is only listed in the survey once, irrespective of the number of nominations or platforms.

5 General conditions for submission

5.1 Every award submission must meet the following conditions and criteria. By submitting a game or product, a company binds itself to these regulations, especially to the duties regarding the game’s or product’s presentation specified under clause 7.4.ff.

- 5.2 Only full-value games or products can be submitted. An exception is made for add-ons / DLCs and previews / visions. In cases of doubt, the award office will decide, whether a submission is treated as game, add-on / DLC or preview / vision based on the terms specified in clause 2. Submissions for the category group "Indie award" need to fulfil special conditions (compliant with clause 6).
- 5.3 Companies can also submit their concepts for „best booth“ implemented in the entertainment area. Furthermore, the award office can recommend non-submitted booth designs to the judges. No direct submissions can be made to the categories „Best of gamescom award“ and „gamescom Most Wanted consumer award“.
- 5.4 To be eligible, games or products need to be completely documented in English as well as meet all specified deadlines. Final language options of submitted games are allowed to vary from the versions presented in the entertainment area.
- 5.5 Participating companies need to have an exhibitor booth (main exhibitor) in the entertainment area (audience area), or represent their company with their own personnel at the entertainment area booth of a main exhibitor (co-exhibitor). Other exhibitors are exempt from participating in gamescom award. All award submissions need to be shown in the entertainment area. Award submissions that are only shown in the business area, at press conferences or during external events as part of gamescom will be excluded from the competition.
- 5.6 Award submissions must not be published and sold to consumers before the date of the respective gamescom (excluding exceptions specified in clause 5.8). Closed or open alpha or beta versions of games (including Early Access) do not count as published within the scope of these regulations.
- 5.7 The announced release date of a game or product needs to lie within the subsequent year of the respective gamescom (between the last day of gamescom and the start of the subsequent gamescom) either in the company's domestic market or in Germany. This rule does not apply to previews / visions.
- 5.8 As a basic principle, an award submission that has been submitted to any previous gamescom awards cannot participate in the competition a second time, even if it has been submitted in another category. Exceptions are made
- a) If a game has been previously submitted as a preview / vision without having been nominated, it can be submitted as a preview / vision again (possibly also in subsequent years if it is never nominated),
 - b) If a game has been previously submitted as a preview / vision, it can be submitted as a regular game once in any subsequent year (no matter if it has been nominated or not), and
 - c) If a game is re-released with additional content, it can be submitted as an add-on / DLC in compliance with clause 2.3.

Add-ons / DLCs can also be submitted even if the original game has been previously submitted. The award committee may allow further exceptions, especially if a game is based on a previous submission or constitutes a development of that game significant enough to qualify as a new award submission. To clarify: submitting one game or product in several categories within one year (i.e. for different consoles or genres) is generally legitimate (with the exception that a game cannot be submitted as a game and a preview or add-on / DLC at the same time). A standalone sequel of a game qualifies as a new game.

- 5.9 A protective charge of EUR 300,- (excluding VAT) needs to be paid to the award committee for an award submission in one category. For submissions to two to five different categories, the protective charge amounts to EUR 500,- (excluding VAT). For every additional category on top of the fifth, a surcharge of EUR 200,- (excluding VAT) needs to be paid. There are no further discounts. The protective charge will neither be refunded entirely nor partially if the award committee needs to merge two or more categories into one. The protective charge is due no later than submission date.
- 5.10 After the submission period has ended, no further award submissions will be accepted. Furthermore, missing information cannot be handed in and a late payment of the protective charge will not be accepted. The award office can however make an exception to the need for upfront payment, (i) if a company has previously submitted games or products to gamescom award and / or (ii) to consider accounting or payment processes of participating companies (e.g. formal vendor investments). Incomplete application documents (including missing payments of the protective charge that was not granted as an exception by the award office) do not qualify for participating at gamescom award.
- 5.11 If the award office reaches the conclusion that an award submission does not fulfil all necessary conditions for participation in compliance with these regulations, it can exclude the submission from the competition. Moreover, games or booth design concepts that are potentially in violation of German laws can be excluded by the award committee.
- 5.12 If an award submission violates any terms of these regulations, the organizer of gamescom award (represented by the award office) will take the respective award submission out of ongoing procedures and / or any won gamescom award will be retrospectively revoked. If an award needs to be revoked after its bestowal due to violations of the regulations, the organizer of gamescom award charges an administrative fee of EUR 3.500,- plus VAT for past and future services.

6 Special conditions for submissions to the category group gamescom Indie award

- 6.1 Deviating from general submission rules, following special terms apply to the category group „gamescom Indie award“:
- 6.1.1 Deviating from clause 5.4, indie games do not require a full documentation. However, the award submission should be documented appropriately along the usual standards of indie games.

- 6.1.2 Deviating from clause 5.5. additional exhibitors apart from main and co-exhibitors (e.g. from collaborative booths or first party booths) are allowed to submit their game.
- 6.1.3 Deviating from clauses 5.9 and 5.10, award submissions to the category group "gamescom Indie award" need not pay the protective charge.

A game submitted to the category group „gamescom Indie award“ cannot be submitted to any other category or category group. If a company subsequently submits the game to another category or category group, the respective award submission to the “gamescom Indie award” will be annulled.

7 Duties resulting from a submission

- 7.1 Award submissions need to be handed in until the date given in the regulations' appendix „Time schedule for gamescom award“ to Stiftung Digitale Spielkultur via e-mail (award@gamescom.de) or by post.
- 7.2 Submissions need to be handed in in English. Should a company wish a return of the sent documents, it has to contact the award office. Videos can be attached to a submission via link or as downloadable file.
- 7.3 By submitting a game or product, the company agrees that the content of the submission form can be used for promotional and press activities within the context of gamescom award, especially on the gamescom's website.
- 7.4 All submitted games or products need to be accessible and hands-on-playable for judges and the general audience alike at the company's booth in the entertainment area for the entire duration of gamescom within the limits of the German Youth Protection Act. The same is valid for previews / visions and booth design concepts, except that they do not need to be playable. Elements of booth design concepts that are not accessible for the general audience (of legal age) cannot be considered in the judgement process.
- 7.5 Judges can additionally examine submitted games or products a day before gamescom starts, during gamescom in the business area, or at an event in Cologne that has a direct connection to gamescom (e.g. gamescom industry party).
- 7.6 In compliance with these regulations „playable“ means:
 - d) That at least significant parts of games can be accessed freely and played by judges without problems (*hands-on playable format*). Judges must be able to play these parts in real-time on the respective platform for which the game has been submitted. To clarify: the game does not have to be available in its entirety. A significant and representative level or gaming sequence is sufficient.
 - e) That products can be used by judges in real-time with any desired appropriate (demo) software. Technology has priority over gameplay.

Previews only need to be shown and therefore do not need to be playable.

- 7.7 Jury members can visit an exhibitor's booth with or without prior announcement. To avoid misunderstandings in scheduling, all participating companies need to name a contact person that is available to judges for (fixing) appointments before and during gamescom. Every company enables jury members to access the submitted game or product as fast as possible. It is of utmost importance to inform the booth personnel about appearance and meaning of jury badges (clause 8.7.)
- 7.8 All nominated games, products and previews / visions must be marked with the official sticker (gamescom award [year] candidate [category]) provided by the award committee for the whole duration of gamescom. The sticker needs to be visibly attached to the displays of the gaming platforms or to the product itself.
- 7.9 The organizer of gamescom award will announce the winners. Until then, all participating parties agree not to disclose any information about this.
- 7.10 If a submitting company offends any of its duties specified in clause 7, its award submission can be excluded from gamescom award by the jury or the award office.

8 Composition of the jury and sub-juries

- 8.1 Until July 3 2017, the award office staffs gamescom award's jury in compliance with these regulations with suitable representatives from German and international media as well as social media companies, members of the industry and gaming communities. The award office determines the size of the jury and sub-juries (clause 8.3) as well the amount of representatives of the named groups within these juries at its own discretion. The jury's composition will be announced in due time.
- 8.2 Only those persons can be appointed to the jury who
- f) Are at least 18 years of age and legally competent according to the laws of their country of origin;
 - g) Work in the games industry or have a direct connection to the games industry; and
 - h) Acknowledge the mandatory character of these regulations in writing (via e-mail or fax) towards the award committee.
- 8.3 With the exceptions of „Best of gamescom award“ (which is conferred by the jury in its entirety) and gamescom „Most Wanted“ award (which is not awarded by the jury), the award office composes sub-juries for every category (group) as well as a special jury for booth design concepts. The award committee appoints jury members to their respective category groups while especially acknowledging:
- A judge's professional qualification for the respective sub-jury;
 - an appropriate amount of judges in every sub-jury;

- an adequate relation of national and international judges in sub-juries as well as the jury in its entirety.

If applicable, award submission for a category group will only be judged by the respective sub-jury. If these regulations refer to the “jury”, it may constitute the respective sub-jury when required by context.

- 8.4 The composition of the jury and sub-juries will be publicly announced by the organizer. A list of the judges' contact information will be provided to participating companies to allow scheduling for meetings with jury members during or prior to gamescom. Within the context of gamescom award and gamescom, every judge agrees to be mentioned by name, a short résumé, job description and company in media, press and gamescom's marketing material, in printed and online format in vision, sound and word.
- 8.5 A calling to the jury is only valid until the end of the respective year's gamescom and does not automatically extend to the subsequent event.
- 8.6 Working as a jury member is voluntary and without payment. Expenses in relation to jury work (especially travel expenses to gamescom) will not be reimbursed.
- 8.7 To facilitate the work of jury members, every judge will be provided with
- i) Access to Koelnmesse's guest club for the whole duration of gamescom (incl. Trade visitor ticket),
 - j) An invitation to gamescom's industry party,
 - k) A list with contact information from the participating companies (clause 7.7) and
 - l) A special badge to identify oneself as a jury member towards booth personnel.
- 8.8 Judges are required to inform the award committee about any changes in their own or their employer's professional duties. If a jury member does not fulfil the requirements of these regulations after a professional change, the award office can exclude the judge from the jury.
- 8.9 Jury members are bound to secrecy about any internal (i.e. not publicly known) information (including processes and contents) they acquired through their work as judges. It is of utmost importance that judges refrain from disclosing nominees and winners prior to their official announcement by the organizer.

9 General proceedings and tasks of the jury

- 9.1 The jury rates all award submissions in the category groups Best of gamescom, gamescom global awards, platform, genre and indie award, selects nominees for the categories if applicable and decides on a winner; in each case in accordance with these regulations. The award office provides a rating sheet.

- 9.2 Judges make free and independent decisions. Their choices are especially not influenced by the organizer, BIU (Bundesverband Interaktive Unterhaltungssoftware e. V.), companies within the games industry and/or the affiliation with a specific employer.
- 9.3 Judges are obliged to inform themselves appropriately about all award submissions in due time (i.e. before deciding on nominees in compliance with clause 10).
- 9.4 Prior to and during gamescom, judges evaluate all nominated award submissions more closely. Usually, this requires playing the game, testing the product and/or visiting the companies' booth in the entertainment area. If appropriate, this evaluation can take place without previously contacting the respective company.
- 9.5 To properly evaluate all award submissions, jury members should particularly draw on the following material and resources
- m) Information that has been provided by participating companies prior to or during gamescom;
 - n) Information provided by the organizer
 - o) Information, experiences and knowledge that jury members gathered due to their professional experience in the gaming industry.
- 9.6 If a jury member does not respect the schedule and/or these regulations, the award office can terminate their jury membership with immediate effect. In this case, all valuations of this jury member will not be considered in upcoming decisions (e.g. nominations, deciding on a winner). All decisions made before the judge's exclusion will remain unaffected, regardless of the judge's contribution to them.
- 9.7 If the jury reaches a level score during the nomination process (clause 10) and/or the selection of category winners (clause 11), the award submission that
- p) Received most votes for the 1st place;
 - q) In case of equal votes for 1st place, received most votes for 2nd place;
 - r) In case of equal votes for 1st and 2nd place, received most votes for 3rd place; and
 - s) In case of equal votes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place, gets selected by lot, with one person mixing the tickets and another person blindly drawing the lot
- wins.

10 Nomination

- 10.1 If a category has more than three award submissions, the jury selects nominees according to this clause. The number of nominees per category depends on the total amount of award submissions to the respective category. From four to nine submissions, the jury chooses three nominees. If a category has ten or more submissions, the jury chooses five nominees.
- 10.2 If nominees are chosen in a category, a judge selects three or five favorites from the total of award submissions and awards points according to their preferences; 12 points for first place, 8 points for second place and 6 points for third place (and, if applicable, 4 points for fourth place and 2 points for fifth place).
- 10.3 The three respectively five award submissions that received the most points from the responsible judges are nominated. By way of exception, all award submissions in a category with three or less total submissions are automatically nominated. In case of a level score, clause 9.7 is valid.
- 10.4 The award committee consolidates the list of nominees and announces it in compliance with clause 13.1. The list contains no ranking of nominees.
- 10.5 There are separate nominee lists for the categories add-on / DLC and previews / visions (clauses 2.3 and 2.4). The terms of clause 10 apply.
- 10.6 There are no nominations for booth design concepts. All submitted or subsequently recommended concepts are automatically nominated.

11 Selection of category winners and Best of gamescom award winner

- 11.1 If there are nominees in a category, the winner can only be selected from this pool of award submissions.
- 11.2 To choose a winner in every category, every judge assigns 12 points to the first, 8 points to the second and 6 points to the third place. The nominee that received most points is the winner of the respective category. In case of a level score, clause 9.7 is valid.
- 11.3 Clause 11 also applies when selecting a winner in the category gamescom global awards. To clarify, the winner of "best booth" is selected exclusively by the respective sub-jury whereas the result in the categories "best add-on / DLC" and "best preview / vision" is determined by the jury in its entirety.
- 11.4 Clause 11 also applies to the category „Best of gamescom“, in which the winner is selected by the jury from the entirety of legitimate category winners.

12 Selection of the winner of „gamescom Most Wanted consumer award“

- 12.1 After the nominated games and products have been announced, the winner of „gamescom Most Wanted consumer award“ will be selected through a consumer survey via the official gamescom app respectively via platforms of additional media partners.

- 12.2 All nominated games or products are eligible for selection in the category „gamescom Most Wanted consumer award“.
- 12.3 Consumers vote for their most anticipated nominated game or product presented at gamescom. Every consumer has one vote. Multiple votes for different games or products are not possible.
- 12.4 The game or product that combines most points from consumers wins „gamescom Most Wanted consumer award“. If two or more games and/or products receive the same score, they share first place. Therefore, more than one game and/or product can win „gamescom Most Wanted“.

13 Announcement of nominees and winners

- 13.1 Nominees are announced publicly by a press release prior to gamescom.
- 13.2 Winners are announced during an award ceremony at gamescom. The prospective date for the respective year (subject to short-term changes decided on by the award office) is specified in the appendix „Time Schedule of gamescom award“.

14 Usage of gamescom award's logos; trophy

- 14.1 Winners of gamescom awards are entitled to use the title “[category] gamescom award winner [year]” as well as the corresponding logo and word and figurative mark for global advertising purposes upon consultation with the organizer. Eventual additional trademark guidelines decided upon and communicated by the organizer at its own discretion have to be respected. It is not permitted to modify, change and/or isolate certain parts of the logo or the word and figurative mark. All rights relating to the logo or gamescom award in general not explicitly conceded within these regulations (especially trademark, copyright or exploitation rights) remain with the organizer of gamescom awards.
- 14.2 Winners receive a trophy. The trophy's ownership is transferred to the winner (i.e. the respective company) on handover or delivery.

15 Miscellaneous

- 15.1 These regulations are liable to German law.
- 15.2 The regulations are not subject to legal recourse.
- 15.3 In cases of doubt, the German version of these regulations is legally binding.

Effective: July 3, 2017

Appendix: Time schedule of gamescom award 2017

- Composition and announcement of the jury until July 3, 2017
- Shipping of relevant submission documents to registered exhibitors from July 3, 2017.
- Update of gamescom award's online presence on the website of gamescom until July 3, 2017 (estimated).
- Deadline for award submissions is August 4, 2017, 6:00 pm UCT+2. Submissions have to be directed at Stiftung Digitale Spielkultur via e-mail (award@gamescom.de, rostalski@stiftung-digitale-spielkultur.de) or by post.
- Jury members receive additional information to submitted games and products until August 14, 2017, 6:00 pm UTC+2.
- Jury members send their three respectively five favorites in their categories as suggested nominees to Stiftung Digitale Spielkultur until August 18, 2017, 6:00 pm UTC+2.
- The award committee informs participating companies and the jury about the nominees until August 20, 2017, 6:00 pm UTC+2.
- Publication of a press release containing the nominees and the names of nominated companies by Stiftung Digitale Spielkultur and Koelnmesse on August 21, 2017.
- Voting for the gamescom Most Wanted consumer award after publication of the nominees and until August 24, 2017, 3:00 pm UTC+2.
- Companies with nominated award submissions can grant jury members access to their game / product from August 21, 2017 (online registration for existing online versions is also possible). Jury members will receive direct access to a game / product. To ensure this, companies can contact jury members directly.
- Companies present their nominated game / product at their booth in the entertainment area from Tuesday, August 22, 2017 and mark them with a provided nominee sticker until Thursday, August 24, 2017 (in compliance with clause 7.8). Stiftung Digitale Spielkultur provides according marketing material from August 21, 2017.
- Jury members evaluate award submissions and choose their favorites in each category (incl. Preview/Vision and Add-on/DLC) until Wednesday, August 23, 2017, 4:00 pm UTC+2.
- The award office evaluates the jury's rating sheets until Wednesday, August 23, 2017, 11:00 pm UTC+2.

- Jury members will be informed about the category winners from Wednesday, August 23, 2017, 11:00 pm UTC+2.
- Winners for each category will be informed via e-mail from Wednesday, August 23, 2017, 11 p.m. UTC +2.
- Election of the winners in „Best of gamescom“ as well as the category winners in the category group „gamescom global awards“ until Thursday, August 24, 2017, 2:00 pm UTC+2.
- Winners are announced during the award ceremony on Thursday, August 24, 2017, from 5:00 pm UTC+2 and via press release. The schedule may change according to the exact date and time of the award ceremony.
- Certificates are handed over to the winners during the award ceremony.
- Trophies will presumably be sent to winners within two weeks after gamescom.