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for Increased Youth Inclusion and Academic Achievement

D8.5

Game Developer Support Network

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Abstract	Report on task 8.3 game developer support network, assisting SMEs in the creative and collaborative development of prosocial games using ProsocialLearn methodology and game components in the 3rd year of the project. Describing platforms, online channels, tools and open access website beyond the end of the project.
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Executive summary

This document reports on task 8.3 game developer support network, to assist SMEs in the creative and collaborative development of prosocial games using ProsocialLearn methodology and game components during the third year of the project. We cover the platforms, tools and online channels aimed at supporting developers using the ProsocialLearn platform during the third year. We further propose a dedicated prosocial games developer support network website as an open resource beyond the end of the project to be presented as part of the PSL platform as a more 'consumer' oriented presentation of the material developed for the creative development of prosocial games.

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1   Introduction

1.1   Purpose of the document

This deliverable provides a report on the channels, platforms and tools created to support SME game developers in the creative and technical tasks of developing and deploying prosocial games using the ProsocialLearn methodologies and software systems carried out in Task 8.3 Game Developer Support Network in year 3 of the project.

1.2   Scope and Audience of the document

According to the purpose of the document the dissemination level is public. The audience of this document includes the consortium members including the three new gaming developers. It is also of interest to other gaming providers and developers who are interested in the results of the project.

1.3   Structure of the document

This document is split into 3 high level sections. The first (section 2) covers the channels used for technical support particularly during the third year of the project. Section 3 covers the tools created for creativity support for defining and designing prosocial games. And finally in section 4 it describes the Games Developer Network Open Website designed to provide a show case space for developers beyond the end of the project.

2   Technical Support Platforms

In order to technically support the use of the ProsocialLearn platform it was necessary to setup a number of platforms and channels. In doing so, it was important to use technologies familiar to most game developers and following best practice guides for technical collaboration.

Whilst the consortium makes use of a document repository based on ownCloud and hosted by ATOS, it was necessary to setup collaborative environments for development of components and source code. To this end ATOS setup an instance of GitLab and Slack, described below.

2.1   Gitlab

GitLab is a web application that is a front end for the management of 'git' source repositories. It not only allows users to create manage and inspect git repositories, but it also allows to manage the users, create working groups that hold source code repositories, and their permissions. Additionally, the platform also provides an Issue Tracker that lets users create issues, sort them by criticality, assign them to developers, and mark them as solved when approved.
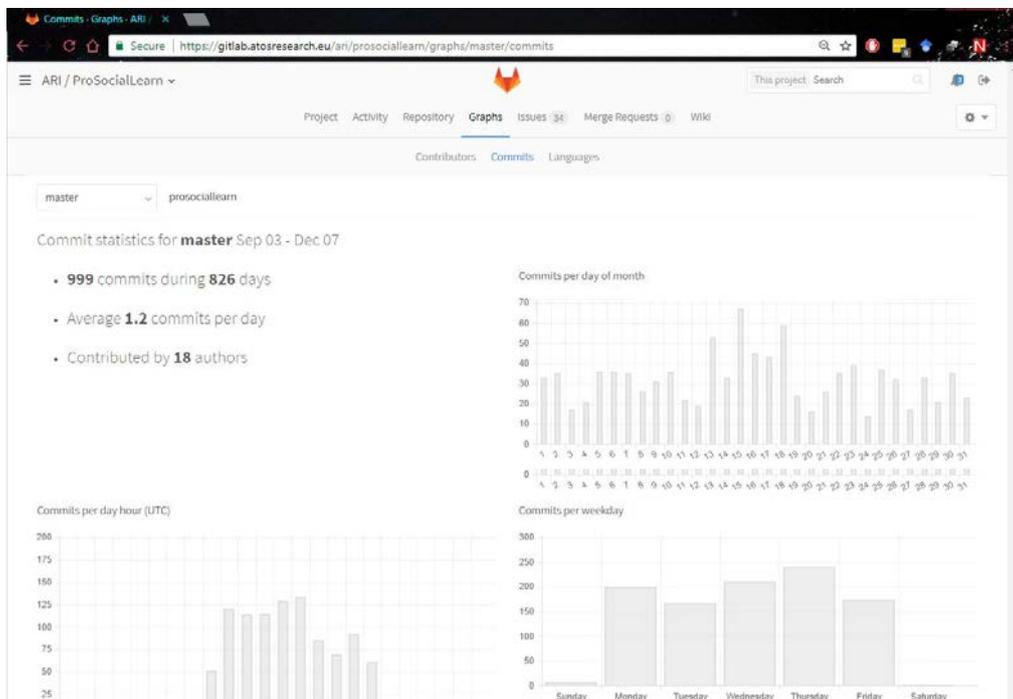
The ProsocialLearn Gitlab URL : https://gitlab.atosresearch.eu/ari/prosociallearn/

Figure 1 ProsocialLearn Gitlab

The Gitlab incorporates all the source code required for SMEs to integrate with the PSL platform and its components. It has been extensively used to track issues with code and integration.

2.2   Slack

Whilst the consortium makes use of periodic teleconferences using Skype for managing the project in general, these are too infrequent as a method of supporting technical collaboration. Accordingly a private Slack project was setup by ATOS at http://prosociallearn.slack.com

Slack is a cloud-based team collaboration tool, which allows developers to share snippets of code and communicate effectively. During integration and deployment to the ProsocialLearn platform Slack was extensively used to relay technical information.
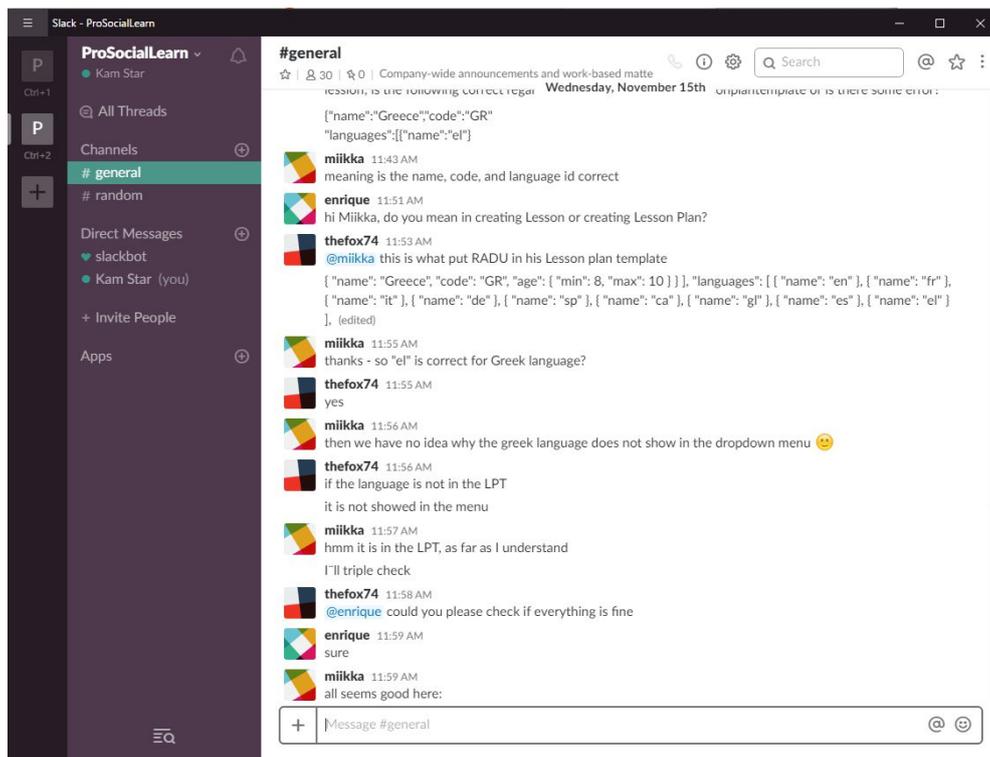

Figure 2 ProsocialLearn Slack Channel

3 Creativity Support Tools

Whilst technical support relies upon collaborative platforms, supporting creativity requires tools that designers can use to generate new ideas and assist their thinking. As such it was important from the outset to create a set of easy to use tools that game designers can use to ideate and find practical advice and direction for designing games for prosociality, and support the desired learning outcomes.

A range of guides and design tools where developed accordingly. These are described in more detail below.

3.1 Prosocial Game Design Methodology Guides

In collaboration with WP2, WP4 and WP6, a straight-forward guide book was developed aimed at anyone interested in designing games with a positive social skills impact , these were presented in D2.2 Prosocial Game Scenarios, D2.6 Prosocial Game design methodology, D4.3 1st Prosocial game mechanics and D4.4 2nd Prosocial game mechanics. This enabled all SME game developers using the ProsocialLearn platform to familiarise themselves with the concepts and methods behind prosociality in games.

The guides cover tangible and accessible psychological and social sciences overview of prosociality in the context, as they relate to game design and provide details on the use of Skillstreaming methodology for teaching new prosocial skills.

3.2   Prosocial Game Design Canvas

The success of the Business Canvas Model as a visual one page tool that lays out what a business does and how it goes about it was the inspiration behind the Prosocial Game Design Canvas.

It supports a holistic approach to the ideation of games for teaching social and emotional skills. Covering all the elements needed when considering a learning game, this includes the audience, inspirations, resources and outcomes. It includes the elements needed for preparation, assessment, debriefing and generalisation. It also includes the core of the game goals, actions, feedback and fun elements.

At its' core the canvas is a very versatile design tool, and can be used by SMEs as well as teachers and students in groups to think about and design educational games for teaching skills.
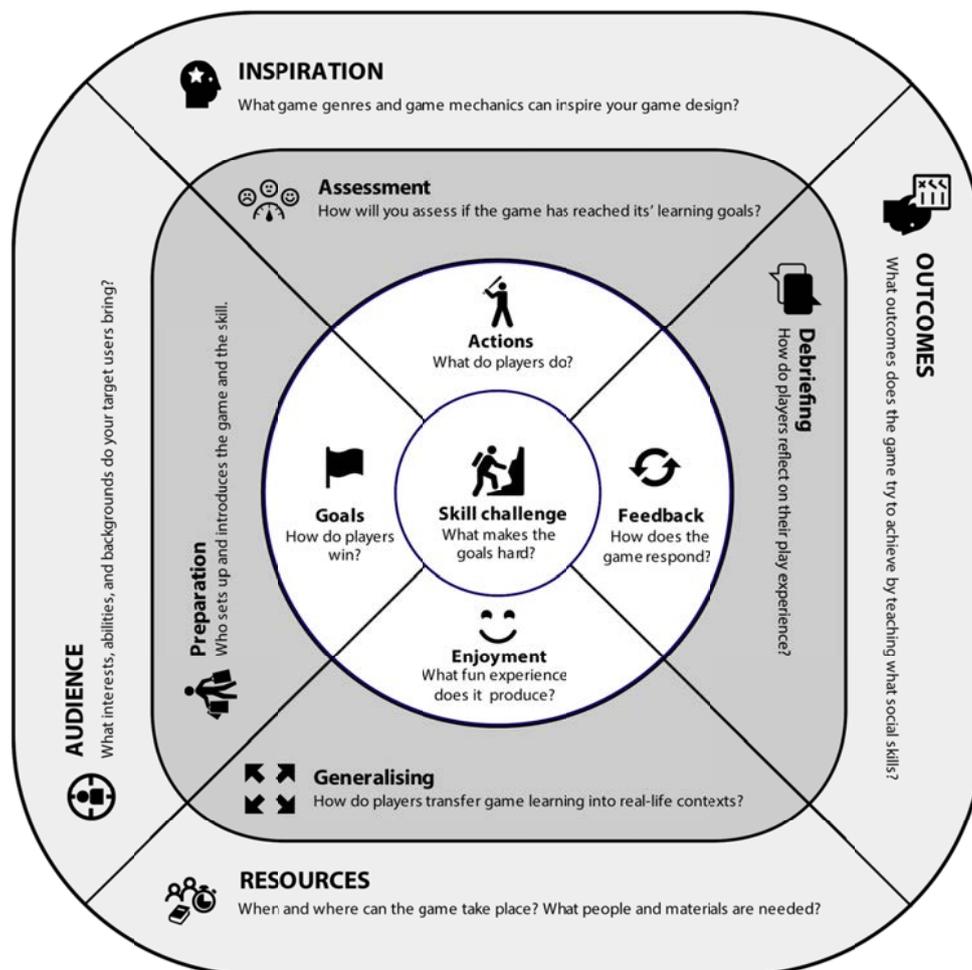

Figure 3 Prosocial Game Design Canvas

To facilitate quick use, a print-and-play version of the Canvas was developed as part of this deliverable which can be found ready for downloading at: http://bit.ly/prosocialtools

3.3   Prosocial Game Design Cards

In order to effectively support the exploration of prosocial game design as it relates to skills it was important to reduce the vast amount of information available into discrete chunks which could be readily accessed and used.

Design cards are a concrete, tangible, cost-effective and approachable way to introduce information and provide resources for inspiration and guidance as part of the design process. Cards are instantly recognisable to game designers as well as teachers and students, meaning that they can serve as shared objects between diverse groups of participants.

The tangible and manifest nature of design cards enable them to function as props that encourage and support design moves in a manner visible to all participants, they are open to ongoing reconfiguration and manipulation in a very straightforward manner (Lucero et al 2016). Design cards can support different phases of design process, from initial ideation through ongoing concept development and evaluation of design concepts.

The Prosocial Game Design Cards provide detailed description and example for 42 prosocial skills. They also incorporate 15 game dynamics, for construction of rules and interaction design for games which are best suited to creating prosocial games. And in order to support teaching, they incorporate 10 teaching and pedagogical techniques.

Hundreds of physical packs (around 900 copies) have been produced and distributed by project partners, in order to facilitate open use, a print-and-play version of the Game Design cards were developed as part of this deliverable which can be found at: http://bit.ly/prosocialtools.

Figure 4 Prosocial Game Design Cards

3.4   Prosocial Game Mechanics Cards

The prosocial cooperative games mechanics design toolkit draws on a wealth of research (as detailed in D4.4 2nd Prosocial game mechanics), in order to derive a practical toolkit which can be used to quickly design cooperative games, simplify the decision making process and provide quick access to the key dynamics that define the nature of the game.

They are designed to support game designers decide a range of factors when designing cooperative games, cards with a 'prosocial' icon denote mechanics which may be better suited to prosocial games, although their specific use depends on the context.

Figure 5 Prosocial Game Mechanics Cards

 To facilitate quick use, a print-and-play version of the Prosocial Game Mechanics has been developed as part of this deliverable which can be found at: http://bit.ly/prosocialtools The ProsocialLearn website includes an article about the use of this resource at: http://prosociallearn.eu/update-prosocial-game-design-cards-toolkit/

4   Open access platform for future

In order to foster ongoing engagement and to establish and online platform to provide support after the end of the project an open access platform is proposed.

The platform is hosted at http://gdn.prosociallearn.eu

It is an open directory where anyone can add new listings for **games**, **game developers** or **tools** including software and tangible guides for games that teach social and emotional skills.
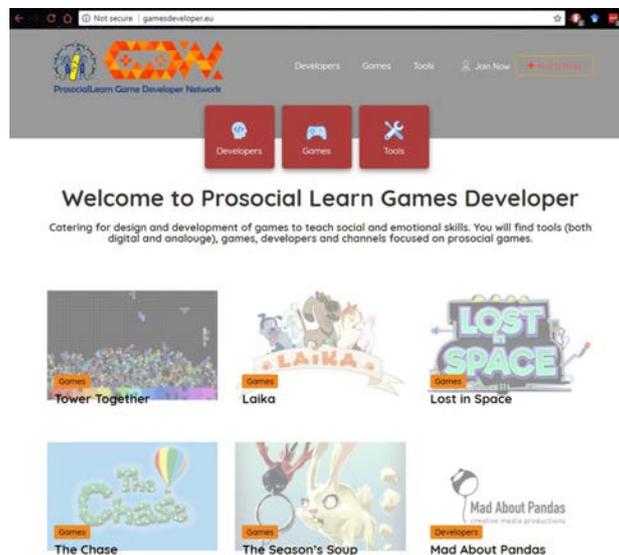

Figure 6 ProsocialLearn Games Developer webpage

4.1   Platform Features

4.1.1   Add listing/resource

This feature allows anyone (with a valid email address) to add a new listing in the categories of games, game developers or tools quickly and easily.

Each category has a set of sub features which can be selected and which can later be used to search the directory. The current taxonomy used is as follows:

- **Tools:** Digital and physical tools for designing and delivering games to teach social and emotional sklls.
    - o **Tools/Software Components:** Features software component and assets.
    - o **Tools/Platform :** Features the PSL platform
    - o **Tools/Books :** Features published books and articles
    - o **Tools/Guides :** Features How-to Guides for designing and delivering prosocial games
    - o **Tools/Print&Play :** Features print and play tools for ideating and designing prosocial games.

- **Games:** Featuring predominantly digital games & apps, but can also accommodate physical games, for teaching prosocial skills.
  - o **Games/Online :** For games that can be played online
  - o **Games/Mobile&Tablet :** For games that can be played via an app store
  - o **Games/Desktop:** For games that can be downloaded and played on PC or Mac.
  - o **Games/Physical:** Featuring card games and board games for teaching prosocial skills.
- **Games Developers:** Featuring game developers who create products to teach social and emotional skills.
  - o **Developer/Consultancy:** Featuring developers that provide consultancy / work for hire.
  - o **Developer/Own Products:** Featuring developer who develops their own products.
  - o **Developer/Applied Games:** Featuring applied games developers.
  - o **Developer/Entertainment Games:** Featuring entertainment game developers who also develop games for teaching prosocial skills and values.

4.1.2   Claim listing/resource

Sometimes a listing has been made for a game developer or another resource (e.g. Book) by someone other than the true owner of the entity. In this case the business owner or the author can literally "claim" their listing, identifying themselves as the owner and get verified.

The process requires a claim to be made, this requires the phone number, email address and a brief message of why the listing is being claimed to be sent to the administrator, where upon it is reviewed and depending on its merit it's granted or not.

If claim is granted the person making the claim takes ownership of the listing and can add/remove or alter the information or remove the listing as desired.

4.1.3   Share listing/resource

Sharing of resources is enabled providing instant sharing via: Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Linkedin, Pinterest, Reddit, Stumbleupon and Delicious.

4.1.4   Review and rate listing/resource

Users of the site can submit reviews and ratings (star rating from 1 to 5) for any listing or resource. Additionally other logged in users can flag the review as interesting, funny or report it for removal, in case it is spam.

4.2   Future support

The site for the games developer support network will continue to be maintained for at least 3 years after the end of the project. Prosocial partner PlayGen undertakes the management and hosting of the site until at least 2020.

5   Dissemination of Design Tools

The digital versions of the game design tools are hosted on the project's main website, and form a part of the ProsocialLearn platform, and are intended to be a part of the offer to game developers wanting to join and develop games for the platform.

Other disseminated is carried out through the project's main communication tools including the social media channels. This includes game development channels to promote the availability and access to the tools. Including:

- Game Developers Group – 100,000 Members
    - https://www.linkedin.com/groups/59205
- Applied Games and Gamification Linked Group – 5300 Members
    - https://www.linkedin.com/groups/3889283
- Serious Games Linkedin Group – 6000 Member
    - https://www.linkedin.com/groups/137156
- Social and Emotional Learning Skills Forum – 480 Members
    - https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8287989

Over 900 physical copies of the Prosocial Game Design cards are distributed at:

- 200 Packs at Develop 2017 in Brighton targeting game developers.
- 150 Packs at Pocket Gamer 2018 in London targeting game developers and publishers.
- 300 Packs at BETT 2018 in London targeting teachers and educators.
- 50 Packs to teachers and schools in Barcelona.
- 50 Packs at Romanian Game Developer Association, to game developers, studio owners.
- 50 Packs at Ludicious Game Festival 2018 in Zurich.
- 30 Packs to Blackfield Primary School, to students and teachers.
- 25 Packs at Sweden Game City and Media
- 25 Packs at Nordic Game Conference
- 15 Packs to Avrohom Zeidman Gift Foundation.
- 8 Packs to PGCE Trainees at University of Southampton as part of Workshop
- 50 Packs to Polo Europeo della Conoscenza for teachers and schools in Italy

6   Conclusions

We have reported on the wide range of platforms, channels and tools used to carry out task 8.3 game developer support network. The aim has been to assist SMEs in the creative and collaborative development of prosocial games using ProsocialLearn methodology and game components. We have also described the establishment and operation of a dedicated prosocial games developer support network site as an open resource which can be used by game developers or those looking for games, developer and tools for creating prosocial games beyond the end of the project.

7   Bibliography

Lucero, A., Dalsgaard, P., Halskov, K., & Buur, J. (2016). Designing with Cards. In Collaboration in Creative Design (pp. 75-95). Springer International Publishing.