

2024 Ukie Board Nominations

Anna, Kozlova

Room 8 Group, CEO



As CEO of Room 8 Group, I've led one of the fastest-growing companies in external game development. Since joining as COO in 2019 and becoming CEO in 2021, I've navigated the industry's challenges while expanding our services and capabilities. We've built partnerships with companies like Activision Blizzard, EA, Hasbro, SEGA, Sony, Ubisoft, and dozens more. My experience in change leadership and crisis management has been key in driving this growth, especially during uncertain times and including in the United Kingdom.

I'm now seeking to join the Ukie board because I believe in the power of collaboration to shape the future of our industry. Ukie plays a crucial role in uniting industry voices, and I believe I can contribute to this in meaningful ways. Firstly, I have greatly expanded Room 8 Group's operations in the UK. We are a foreign company—historically Ukrainian—that has come to the UK and established operations and hired UK talent. As such, I am well positioned to advocate for the UK games industry and to encourage foreign businesses to invest here.

Part of this would include attracting global talent to the UK. Given the worldwide nature of the games industry today, it is important that the UK has a global reach, able to attract the world's best talent. I manage a 1,300-strong global workforce. I know what it takes to recruit for and manage cross-cultural teams and would be a valuable asset to the Ukie board for this reason, able to advise other companies logistically, financially, and otherwise in their recruitment efforts, thus contributing to the advancement of the UK games industry as a whole.

Furthermore, I am an ambassador for the UK-based organization Women in Games, and would bring valuable advocacy for underrepresented groups. Women represent only 23% of game developers, and their presence in senior roles is even smaller: just 5% of senior developers with over 20 years' experience are women. This lack of diversity limits the industry's potential. I am passionate about unlocking the potential of underrepresented groups for the overall betterment of the industry, and already work with British stakeholders to do this.

If I were a Ukie's board member, I would collaborate with other leaders to drive real change. Together, we can create a more inclusive industry that reflects the rich diversity of the global gaming community. Thank you for considering my nomination!

Caolan, McKendry

Ambertail Games, Operations Director



At Ambertail Games, I have the privilege of leading a passionate, tight-knit team dedicated to crafting premium experiences that our players love. As Operations Director and Producer, I oversee our production efforts and shape our long-term business strategy, ensuring that Ambertail continues to thrive.

My dedication to the indigenous games sector in Northern Ireland is unwavering. Beyond my work at Ambertail, I am driven by a desire to uplift and support this sector. Through my NI Game Dev Network leadership, I foster the Northern Irish game dev community, managing our Discord community, hosting our 'PlayMyDemo' networking meetups, and organising events like the annual Global Game Jam Belfast site. I also collaborate on local festivals and events, including managing the Indie Games Area at the Q-Con convention, curating industry sessions at the Belfast Media Festival, and advising on the development of the RENDR Festival - all with the aim of providing a platform for local talent to thrive, and to foster collaboration and growth among developers in our region.

Northern Ireland has a vibrant and burgeoning games ecosystem, full of potential but often disconnected from the national industry. As an advocate for this community, I believe regional representation on the UKIE board is crucial. Like all regions, Northern Ireland's interactive ecosystem faces unique challenges & provides unique opportunities. In joining the UKIE board, I'll bring a fresh perspective rooted in both hands-on game development and community-building, with a focus on supporting indie developers and regional talent, ensuring that the growing game dev scene in NI - and other regions like it - are fully integrated into the broader UK games industry strategy, contributing to UKIE's mission of making the UK the best place to make, sell, and play games.

Maria, Sayans

ustwo games, CEO



After four intense and inspiring years on the UKIE board, I would like to serve for a final term (6 is the maximum number of years one can be on the board) and so I am running for re-election.

When I first put my name forward in 2020 I was motivated by a sense of responsibility, as a leader in the games industry, to help shape it for the future. To drive greater positive impact on our players and our teams, for sure, but also on the planet and on society more broadly.

These continue to be important themes for me to drive at a board level - but I am also acutely aware of the challenging time our industry is going through. Profound structural changes resulting from technology, business models and consolidation. I want to support Nick and his team so UKIE can play a more forward-looking role in shaping the industry we want: where diverse people, content and companies can thrive; where people can have careers, not just jobs; where companies can innovate and take creative risks.

UKIE is a world-leading industry body, and it has been thrilling to collaborate with the UKIE team and fellow board members on topics and projects such as the latest Gaming Industry Manifesto, DEI initiatives, legislative changes, and raising the industry's profile to name a few.

In terms of my experience - I have been in the industry since 2001. I spent 14 years at EA doing online, marketing and publishing work. In 2015 I joined CCP as their Chief Customer Officer and in 2019 I became CEO at ustwo games.

Mark, Backler

Sketchbook Games, CEO



Serving on the Ukie board for the past two years has provided me with valuable insights into how the organisation does its incredible work. I am keen to continue supporting Nick Poole as he leads Ukie into its next exciting chapter, preparing it for the games industry of tomorrow.

As people spend more time playing games than ever before, I believe that if we want to elevate our medium's cultural recognition, the industry must take its social responsibilities more seriously and actively contribute to a better future for our teams and our players.

I co-founded the community interest company Game Anglia to teach game development skills to the next generation of developers in the East of England. I believe the games industry offers significant opportunities for those outside the current main development hubs, and I'm committed to fostering regional talent and creating pathways for aspiring developers across the UK.

Being an ex-AAA developer and now running my own independent game development studio, Sketchbook Games, gives me a deep understanding of the challenges facing studios big and small in the UK. I've played an active role in establishing the funding working group to help studios navigate the financial landscape and access essential resources, as I know first-hand how difficult it can be to keep a studio running in this incredibly tough economic climate.

I believe that striving for a more diverse games workforce will enable us to reach a wider audience and improve the industry for both games makers and players. This is reflected in our values, hiring practices, and culture at Sketchbook Games.

I would value the opportunity to continue serving on the Ukie board, supporting its growth and evolution alongside the rapidly changing industry, while helping to elevate the cultural recognition of video games and ensuring the long-term health and creativity of the amazing UK games sector.

Melissa, Phillips

ReadGraves, Manager



I am applying for the Ukie Board because I believe in the potential of the Games Industry to foster positive change, not just in Entertainment, but in Culture, Education, and Mental Health. I want to see more balance within our industry, where healthier working practices are not just encouraged but ingrained in Studio Culture through a strong foundation of business knowledge and understanding.

My career has been shaped by a commitment to building studios that thrive, not just creatively, but also through strong Operational health. I've held (and still hold) senior positions such as Head of Studio, Operations Director and Head of Operations across several Studios. As BAFTA Games Programme Manager, I curated and facilitated programmes that celebrated innovation and diversity across Learning & New Talent. These roles, alongside my Coaching and Psychology qualifications, have equipped me with a unique holistic perspective on the challenges and opportunities that we face going forward.

Founding the Games Leadership Academy and Games Leadership Network CiC allowed me to address some of these gaps in the Industry. Over the past 18 months, I have coached over 200 industry leaders, helping them develop not only their Leadership skills, but also their ability to build healthier, more sustainable Studios. I believe a Studio's success comes from balanced Leadership; where innovation is matched by strong, ethical business practices.

On the Ukie Board, my goal would be to advocate for these balanced, holistic approaches. I want to champion the importance of mental well-being, whilst also driving initiatives that help Studios become more resilient and sustainable. By combining Creative and Operational perspectives, I believe we can help the Industry reach its full potential and create lasting, positive impact.

I also like pomeranians and mint-choc ice cream (probably not together though - probably...)

Michael, Heywood

Included Games, CEO



I've been lucky enough to be part of the UK games industry for almost 20 years in a range of roles including producer, exec producer, studio head and company founder. My goal on the UKIE board would be to help make the UK the best place in the world to start, scale and run a games company, and to make sure the full diversity of talent we have in the industry has access to those opportunities.

Peter, King

Green Man Gaming, EVP Business Development



My colleagues describe me as a thoughtful leader and veteran having been a part of this wonderful industry for over 30 years. I take that name as a badge of honour not just a reflection of my maturity!

Throughout my career, I have worked within computer games from AAA companies to one-man studios. Had the pleasure of launching titles like Myst and the original Call of Duty. I also had my own company for a few years which specialised in publishing services working with hundreds of studios that were looking for a team to help them launch their titles on the digital space - we helped a lot of people during those years.

Since 2019 I have been EVP of Business Development at Green Man Gaming who are a London-based independent retailer, distributor and publisher. As part of the marketing leadership team, I work closely with publishing to create new partnership opportunities and help to introduce potential new games to get funding and support to market.

Although I have a canny commercial mindset and a large part of my role is to negotiate deals, I try hard to bring a sense of fun and empathy to any business meeting that I'm involved in. It costs nothing to be friendly, listen and mentor others; one of the core skills that I've honed over the years and a way of giving back to the industry that I love.

Outside of gaming, I'm a devoted rugby coach for the Mini / Junior section at Tring Rugby - up early every weekend training 2-10-year-olds the importance of team sport for mental health, wellbeing and cooperation with others. I'm also a dog dad to two cockapoos (Amy & Bowser - see even their names are video game characters!), one of which is a Pets at Therapy dog. The importance of kindness to others is core to my values.

Also a member of BAFTA and a Patron of Safe in our world. It's now time for me to give back and to help the great team at UKIE. These are interesting times and with a bit of hard work the future once again could be very bright. I'm extremely passionate and keen to get stuck in!

Ranj, Vekaria

Curve Games, Creative Director



Being asked to put myself forward for a position on the UKIE Board is surreal and humbling.

Whilst everyone around me followed more traditional career paths, Graphic Design was where I wanted to build my future, I just had no idea how to get there. A 2-week freelance role at Midway Games turned into a year as a Creative Assistant, I was instantly hooked. This led to 13 incredible years at SEGA Europe, where I grew from Artworker to Creative Lead. But I was hungry for more.

Within a month of joining Curve Games, I was charged to deliver a full company rebrand, while launching multiple new titles and steam campaigns. Months later, I was received the Creative Impact award from MCV WIG and built an in-house creative team. My time at Curve has shown me the incredible talent waiting for the right platform.

As a self-taught designer, my journey has been fuelled by an unrelenting passion for excellence. I am committed to nurturing talent. My ambition isn't just about personal success, it's about lifting others. I'm eager to share what I've learned with those hungry to grow, while navigating this challenging industry. I have a natural ability to spot potential in others, helping them find their voice, and connecting them with opportunities that can change their lives. I've battled my own demons and have come out stronger. Now, I use those experiences to offer genuine support and encouragement to others facing similar struggles.

I know what it's like to start at the bottom, to step into a new industry and fight just to stay afloat. I've faced the grind, pushing through obstacles. I know what it means to be a woman in a world that often underestimates us, a person of colour navigating spaces that weren't always built with us in mind. I've learned to trust my gut, even when I've been told I was wrong. Every challenge and doubt thrown my way has only fuelled my determination to show what I'm capable of.

My focus on the UKIE board will be to drive meaningful improvements in recruitment, skill development, and education, while also reshaping how our industry is viewed. I want to create opportunities for more people to join us and benefit from the same rewarding experiences we enjoy every day. By pushing for these changes, we can open doors for others and ensure the industry thrives.

Reedah, El-Saie

Brainspark Games Ltd, Founder & CEO



Reedah El-Saie, is the founder/CEO of multi-award winning EdTech Gaming startup, Brainspark Games. The studio is building free, culturally-inclusive, AI-powered, Augmented-Reality, educational mobile games, aligned with the national-curriculum. Pioneering neurogames technology, Brainspark Games is designing games for primary and secondary pupils including GCSEs.

Diverse Female Founder Reedah will add unique insight and expertise to the Ukie Board as a multi-award winning solo female founder of diverse heritage. As a non-gaming, non technical founder, and mother of 3xgamers, with a strong ethical approach to developing games, Reedah will provide an 'alternative' viewpoint to AAA/indie games perspectives.

Inclusivity is at the heart of Reedah's personal/business work. Brainspark Games' mission to revolutionise the way children 'learn through play' and ensuring all cultures/faiths/sexes are included/represented has led to it becoming one of the most innovative companies in the UK. She also pioneered 2 Innovate UK funded projects to develop Neurogames Technology.

Brainspark Games was featured in the Prime Minister's Council-for-Science&Technology report into the Creative Industries as one of the most innovative companies in the UK having an impact on neurodiverse pupils and offering an alternative approach to education.

Reedah is one of very few games company founders who have secured in excess of £1.3m in 7 x Innovate UK grants. Her unique understanding of the challenges startup indie studios face will reflect and represent the wider indie games community.

Media work:

- Extensive experience working with multi media channels; press, radio, podcasts, industry journals, blog, through leadership and TV
- Previously featured; BBC, CNN, Channel 4, MBC, Evening Standard, The Independent, The Guardian, The Telegraph magazine, Vogue, Woman & Home, Coutts Website, Barclays website, Games Industry Biz

Previous Advisory work

- 10 Downing Street: Advisor to National Women's Advisory Group
- British fencing: Board Director
- Leap Confronting Conflict: Advisory Board
- Chelsea & Westminster Hospital Arts Charity: Advisor

Multi Stakeholder Management

- Worked with children & youth services
- Delivered edtech gaming programmes in areas of deprivation across various London Boroughs
- Delivering project to prisons and Alternative Provision
- Intergenerational audiences
- HNWI & art patrons
- Corporates, charities & SMEs

Legal Background

- As a management consultant, portfolio manager and qualified Barrister, Reedah brings unique skills and experience.

Samantha, Ebelthite

Singer Studios, Board Advisor



I am deeply passionate about making the UK games industry the world's leading destination to create, sell, and enjoy games. I have a strong belief in the positive contribution videogames make to our culture, and our economic prosperity and I am deeply invested in their ability to create educational and employment opportunities for a new generation at a time when we are seemingly divided can be a universal connector that transcends economic, social and geographical divides.

In nearly a decade in the industry, I have held executive commercial roles in both large AAA publishers, like EA mid-size businesses such as OutRight Games well into their growth journey, nurtured start-ups and held multiple board positions including at Singer Games, who I would look to represent on the UKIE board. I am currently Global Commercial Director at a creative marketing business representing and working with multiple video game clients. Outside my work, I am a full-time mother to two young but avid gamers who are as invested in my career in the industry as I am.

From 2020-23, I served as Vice Chair of the UKIE board. During my tenure I was highly active in my role and leveraged my experience and my network, creating meaningful change. Most notably I helped launch 'Raise the Game' creating vital data and benchmarking for our industry and campaigning for DEI—a cause very close to my heart.

Beyond my board roles, I actively contribute to the industry through panel talks, engaging with the government, and have been a visible voice for the sector in both national mainstream and global B2B news cycles. I'm committed to championing the best in gaming and ensuring our industry continues to thrive.

If you vote for me, I will work tirelessly to leverage the breadth of my understanding of the industry, and my passion for DEI and drive positive change with both political and public audiences helping make the UK the best place in the world to create, sell, and play games. I firmly believe as a highly active and engaged member of the industry I can play a vital role in building a brighter future for our industry together!

Simon, Barratt

Cooperative Innovations Ltd, CEO / Co-founder



Having proudly served on the Ukie board for 8 years, I'm thrilled to have had the chance to contribute to the future of our industry. Over this time, I've been involved in shaping governance, recently in terms of caution around GenAI and its training data as well as the Online Safety Bill, and previously bringing in amendments to limit board terms, ensuring fresh perspectives and diversity on the board.

My journey started early, learning to code in BASIC at age six thanks to my mum, and teaching myself from there. At 16, I moved to Bradford for my first programming job, and by my early 20s, I had founded my first studio. Now, at 42, I look back with pride at the teams, careers, technologies, and games I've helped build, leading internal teams of 15-30 people. My experience spans independent development, AR/VR, UGC platform creation and building sustainable practices within tech.

Since I was re-elected 2 years ago I've have had the opportunity to action on my passion for sustainability, co-founding Green-Bit Software (with my excellent co-founder Emily Bailey) alongside my existing work at Cooperative Innovations. Green-Bit's focus is on reducing the carbon impact of software and games through monitoring and optimisation tools, helping the industry evolve in a more sustainable direction.

I'm deeply committed to representing independent developers, non-London based companies, sustainability initiatives and AR/VR creators. Additionally, as we navigate the evolving landscape, it's critical that we ensure our industry is safe, inclusive, and environmentally responsible.

Diversity in the industry remains a core value for me, as evidenced by my previous work with Get Into Gaming, and my support for apprenticeships and non-university pathways into the industry. I strongly believe in creating opportunities for juniors and building a more accessible industry for all.

I've also been previously engaged in shaping academic talent, working with the University of Leeds to help develop their High-Performance Graphics and Games Engineering Masters, serving on their steering board to help foster new technical talent in our sector.

With Nick now leading Ukie, I'm excited to bring my long-term experience of the organisation to support him and the fantastic team as they work to achieve our goals. Along with the rest of the board I look forward to continuing to drive positive change in our ever evolving industry.

Thank you for your consideration.

Simon, Byron

Yogscast Games, Managing Director



Having worked in the media, communications and publishing sectors for over 30 years, I have a unique perspective on the opportunities and challenges the industry faces. I've long admired our trade body and would love the chance to contribute to its future.

Simon, Sparks

Electric Sheep Studios, Co- Founder, Executive Producer



I have been actively involved in the UK games industry for the past 10 years, wearing multiple hats—from founder and CEO of indie studios like Splendy and now Electric Sheep Studio, to leading People and Talent in a games tech start-up, Polysteam, to serving as an advisor and leadership coach to many members of UKIE. These roles have given me firsthand experience with the challenges that studios face around funding, team building, and sustaining creative momentum.

My journey has allowed me to collaborate with some of the brightest minds on how to construct teams and systems that foster creativity and innovation. Over the last four years, I've been part of a global leadership think tank based in NYC, Next Jump, where we've been experimenting with tools and practices to create future-ready workplaces and teams. This journey led to a long-term

project focused on transforming the culture of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) through behavioral workshops. The insights gained from these practices—alongside the rhythms and tools used to measure change—have given me a unique perspective that is both humancentric and strategically sound.

My creative background, coupled with practical experience in organizational design, learning and development, decision-making, innovation, and creativity, equips me with a distinctive blend of strategic and tactical skills. I am intimately familiar with the unique challenges that indie studios face, from securing funding to building cohesive teams, and I am passionate about using these insights to support and advocate for studios across the industry.

I believe my deep understanding of the current R&D landscape, coupled with my experience in both leadership and creative roles, will help challenge and refine UKIE's strategies to drive more meaningful change across both policy and daily practices, fostering a more inclusive and innovative UK games industry.

Tim, Scott

Roblox, Director of Public Policy, UK and Middle East



I am standing for election to the Ukie board because I believe Ukie are essential to the continued success of the UK games Industry and I can make a real impact if elected. My history with Ukie goes back about 20 years, from when I was a civil servant working on games policy. I was directly involved in some of the landmark campaigns delivered on behalf of the UK games Industry and led by Ukie and its board members, including the NextGen report, the UK Games Fund and the Video Games Tax Relief and I saw first hand what a difference . I left the Civil Service to head Policy and Public Affairs at Ukie for 5 years before joining Roblox in 2022.

Over the course of my career I have developed a unique insight into the broad spectrum of the UK games industry, its strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities that can be leveraged. Above all, I've championed the importance of the role that Ukie plays for the UK Games Industry, not just domestically, but as a leader on the global stage.

If elected I would work to bring my experience to the board, including insights from government on policy, regulation and legislation, from representative bodies on effective lobbying, representation and delivering crucial programmes in support of the industry, and from business both through working with and for companies across the whole ecosystem and at the very cutting edge of interactive entertainment and technology.

I have built a strong network globally which I am always looking to expand and I have extensive board experience, currently sitting on a number of industry councils, advisory boards and forums and from my personal life where I am chair of my football club's Supporters' Trust and a member of the Football Supporters' Association National Council.

With a new Government facing significant economic and policy challenges concerning online safety, AI, education and skills, and with an industry continually striving to make itself heard, there has never been a more important time for effective representation. Our sector is a unique combination of social, economic and cultural influence and impact. If elected to the Ukie Board, it would be an honor to bring my experience, passion and enthusiasm to help continue the great work and drive us ever forward as a vital part, not just of the creative industries but of the future economy in general.

Vadim, Andreev

ROKKY, CEO



Rokky vision is to deliver outstanding solution to monetize game sales worldwide. We believe that game developers can focus on creating perfect game mechanics and create sticky gaming experience for game lovers, and Rokky can handle the sales and help to achieve biggest revenue and launch sales not only in Europe, that is pretty easy, but also worldwide including China, India, Gulf countries, where it is much harder for game developers to achieve high results.

Rokky is a UKIE participant and experience huge impact from the whole UKIE team on company performance and the whole UK gaming industry. And as a CEO I would much appreciate an opportunity to increase UK impact and UKIE members on the whole gaming industry.