



RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR *FREE TO PLAY: A VIDEO GAMES ANTHOLOGY*

1. Theme

The theme of this anthology is “video games”.

2. Content Eligibility

Content must be:

- Original works of any genre, and not currently under review or previously published by a publisher. We accept works that have been self-published on personal blogs, personal social media accounts, personal websites, platforms like Webtoons and Tapas, e-newsletters like Substack, Patreon, or elsewhere. We will also accept excerpts from longer work if they can be understood as a standalone without the need for additional context.
- 1000–5000 words if prose, 5 pages maximum if poetry, or 5–10 pages and in black & white if comics.
- Written in the English language. Where integral to the work, the use of non-English languages in dialogue or as sound effects is welcome. Works translated into English are also welcome.
- Suitable for readers aged 13 and above, containing no explicit content, including but not limited to graphic language, depictions of violence, drugs, and sex.
- Content that appears in the submission must not be output from any generative AI tools that draw from copyrighted material.

Creators/creative teams whose stories are selected will be working with the anthology editors to prepare it for publication. Selected creators/creative teams should expect – and look forward to! – a professional and highly collaborative editorial process intended to support the development of the story to its full potential.

3. Creator Eligibility

Creators must be:

- Aged 18 and above upon submission.
- Creators can submit as an individual or as a team.
- Multiple submissions are accepted, up to a maximum of 3 submissions per creator/creative team.
- Creators/creative teams must own all copyrights to their submitted work.
- Creators/creative teams must be prepared to take on all aspects of the project's creation (e.g. including lettering and colouring for those submitting comic pitches). Difference Engine will not be able to pair or group up creators.
- Difference Engine reserves the right to request for verification of eligibility.



4. Submission Guidelines:

Fiction submissions must include:

- A completed prose story of 1000–5000 words (with preference for pieces that are of 2000–3000 words)
- A short biography of the author/s (50–150 words).
- A completed and signed entry form.
- All of the above needs to be compiled into a single .DOC file no more than 10MB in size.
- Label the .DOC file with the title of the story.
- Email the file to submissions@differenceengine.sg with the subject header “Free To Play Fiction Submission: [title of the work]”.
- **Fiction submissions selected through this open call will be eligible for eventual publication in the anthology. Author/s will go through a process of feedback and revisions with the editors.**

Creative non-fiction submissions must include:

- A one-page pitch, single-spaced, for the proposed work of 1000–5000 words (with preference for works that are of 2000–3000 words). The pitch should include interest in the topic, the author/s’ relevant qualifications (including lived experience), and research done or planned.
- A short biography of the author/s (50–150 words).
- A completed and signed entry form.
- All of the above needs to be compiled into a single .DOC file no more than 10MB.
- Label the .DOC file with the title of the story.
- Email the file to submissions@differenceengine.sg with the subject header “Free To Play Non-fiction Submission: [title of the work]”.
- **Creative non-fiction pitches selected through this open call will be eligible for eventual publication in the anthology. Author/s will go through a process of development, feedback, and revisions with the editors.**

Poetry submissions must include:

- A maximum of 3 completed poems per submission, not exceeding 5 pages in total.
- A short biography of the poet/s (50–150 words).
- A completed and signed entry form.
- All of the above needs to be compiled into a single DOC file no more than 10MB.
- Label the .DOC file with the title of the work(s).
- Email the file to submissions@differenceengine.sg with the subject header “Free To Play Poetry Submission: [title of the work]”.



- **Poetry submissions selected through this open call will be eligible for eventual publication in the anthology. Poet/s will go through a process of feedback and revisions with the editors.**

Fiction comics submissions must include:

- A full comic script with page, panel, and dialogue instructions for a 5–10 page work.
- One to two pages of concept sketches showing characters and setting.
- A portfolio sample of previous illustrations or comics work.
- A short biography of the creator/s (50–150 words).
- A completed and signed entry form.
- All of the above needs to be compiled into a single PDF file no more than 10MB.
- Label the PDF file with the title of the story.
- Email the file to submissions@differenceengine.sg with the subject header “Free To Play Comics Submission: [title of the work]”.
- **Fiction comics submissions selected through this open call will be *shortlisted* for eventual publication in the anthology. Creator/s will go through a process of comic development with the editors, after which there will be a *second round* of selection.**

Submissions that make it through the second round of selection will be eligible for eventual publication in the anthology. These creator/s will go through a process of feedback and revisions with the editors.

Non-fiction comics submissions must include:

- A one-page pitch, single-spaced, for the proposed work of between 5–10 comic pages. The pitch should include interest creator/s’ in the topic, relevant qualifications (including lived experience), and research done or planned.
- One to two pages of concept sketches showing characters and setting.
- A portfolio sample of previous illustrations or comics work.
- A short biography of the creator/s (50–150 words).
- A completed and signed entry form.
- All of the above needs to be compiled into a single PDF file no more than 10MB.
- Label the PDF file with the title of the story.
- Email the file to submissions@differenceengine.sg with the subject header “Free To Play Comics Submission: [title of the work]”.
- **Non-fiction comics submissions selected through this open call will be *shortlisted* for eventual publication in the anthology. Creator/s will go through a process of comic development with the editors, after which there will be a *second round* of selection.**

Submissions that make it through the second round of selection will be eligible



for eventual publication in the anthology. These creator/s will go through a process of feedback and revisions with the editors.

Multimedia submissions must include:

We are open to all proposals involving multimedia elements. For example, you could submit a poem or short story that embeds an interactive web element that can be separately accessed which builds on the print version. We're excited to find out how creative folks will get! Technical requirements such as web hosting and coding should be included in the pitch.

- A one-page pitch, single-spaced, that should include a description of the piece, the reasoning behind it, interest in the topic, relevant qualifications (including lived experience) and research done or planned for the submission.
- A portfolio sample of previous multimedia projects, if available.
- A short biography of the creator/s (50–150 words).
- A completed and signed entry form.
- All of the above needs to be compiled into a single DOC file no more than 10MB.
- Label the DOC file with the title of the story.
- Email the file to submissions@differenceengine.sg with the subject header “Free To Play Multimedia Submission: [title of the work]”.
- **Multimedia submissions selected through this open call will be eligible for eventual publication in the anthology. Creator/s will go through a process of feedback and revisions with the editors.**

5. Timeline:

The Call for Submissions closes on **31 March 2025**, 11.59pm GMT +8.

Final creators/creative teams creators will be informed by **2 May 2025** if their submission has been selected. Difference Engine and the Editors reserve the right to ask for clarification from creators/creative teams before making their decision.

6. Contracts

With the exception of comics submissions for which there are two rounds of selection (shortlist and final list), creators/creative teams selected will be offered a contract in May 2025. Finalists for comics submissions will be offered a contract at a later date.

7. Publication Details

Free to Play will be published in print and digital formats.

Estimated Publication Date: June 2026.

8. Payment



Works selected for publication will receive the following rates in USD (or the SGD equivalent):

- Prose: US\$0.07/word
- Poetry: US\$50.00/piece
- Comics: US\$25.00/page
- Multimedia work: US\$200.00/work

Creative teams may determine the payment division between them.

Each creator will receive two complimentary copies (up to a maximum of six copies per submission).

9. Rights Requested

Exclusive first world anthology rights for one year from the date of publication in both print and digital formats, including exclusion from republishing in any other format.

Continuing non-exclusive rights to print and reprint as this anthology for 10 years from the date of publication in both print and digital formats.

Copyright to the published work will remain with the creator(s).

10. Data Privacy

Difference Engine will take all reasonable efforts to ensure that your personal data is securely handled according to the guidelines set out by the Personal Data Protection Act of Singapore.