

Seattle Indies 2025 Impact Report: A Year of Transformation

Executive Summary

2025 was a landmark year for Seattle Indies, marked by unparalleled growth, geographic expansion, and the successful launch of foundational programs dedicated to advancing the professional and creative careers of indie developers across the Pacific Northwest. We not only cemented our flagship events but expanded our footprint to serve communities across the entire Puget Sound region, making a quantifiable impact on the careers and connections of thousands of creators, culminating in our Meetup group hitting a major milestone of **10,000 members** by the year's end.

1. Launching New Professional Platforms: The Inauguration of SLICE

The most significant initiative of 2025 was the creation and execution of the first annual **SLICE (Seattle Loves Indie Creators Expo)**. Conceived as the premier regional event for industry-level connection, the debut conference attracted **850 attendees** and provided a vital platform for deep-dive workshops, networking, and advanced business discussions.

- **Industry Engagement:** SLICE successfully brought in major platform holders and industry partners, including **Epic Games, Unity, Xbox, and Discord**, providing attendees with direct access to decision-makers and vital resources.
- **Impact:** SLICE successfully bridged the gap between passion projects and sustainable business models, offering a dedicated professional track previously unavailable to our community.
- **New Programs:** Alongside SLICE, we launched two critical program tracks:
 - **Founders Club:** A structured support group and resource hub for developers actively incorporating and running a games business.
 - **Games Business Meetups:** Regular events focused purely on the operational challenges of indie development, including marketing, legal, and funding.

2. Exponential Growth of Our Flagship Showcase: SIX 2025

The Seattle Indies Expo (SIX) continued its trajectory as the largest community-run game showcase in the region, experiencing exponential growth that redefined its scale.

Metric	2024(Approx)	2025 Impact	Growth
Physical Footprint	One Floor	Two Floors	100%
Games Exhibited	32	50	43%
Total Attendees	4,000	5,000	25%
Online viewership	4,600	28,000	509%

By expanding SIX to two full floors and showcasing 50 incredible games, we provided maximum exposure for local talent while delivering an essential and beloved event experience to 5,000 members of the public and industry peers.

In 2025 we combined our SIX Online live stream with the live event, interviewing over 40 developers on an all-day live stream that was broadcast from the show floor of SIX with the help of our friends at [SOBA](#) (Seattle Online Broadcasters Association). This allowed us to capture the live experience and energy of the developers on the show floor to both promote their games and the event itself. The stream was a huge success with viewership at its highest levels since we returned to host SIX in person in 2022 (after being online only during 2020/21 due to COVID restrictions).

[SIX Direct](#) or mini online showcase of each game selected for SIX has received over 28,000 views to date on our YouTube channel, an increase from 4,600 views in 2024.

External Showcase Expansion

Beyond SIX, Seattle Indies significantly expanded its presence at external events across the region, providing vital new showcase opportunities for our members. This included expanded representation at established local events like **WA State Gaming Expo, Play and Display @ Auburn Outlet Mall, Kent Nerd Party and Geek Fest West**, as well as making our debut at the **Portland Retro Gaming Expo (PRGE)**.

- **Total Reach:** Across these external events, we collectively provided opportunities to

showcase **over 50 games**, connecting our developers directly with diverse audiences and expanding our visibility throughout the Pacific Northwest.

3. Deepening Community Investment: Mentorship, Diversity, and Accessibility

Our commitment to one-on-one professional development and inclusive representation reached new heights, formalizing and scaling our initiatives to provide direct career guidance and broaden industry access.

- **Mentorship Matches:** We successfully facilitated **over 130 mentorship matches**, connecting aspiring and early-career developers with experienced industry veterans specializing in disciplines ranging from programming and design to production and business strategy. This program ensures personalized, sustained support for community members navigating complex career paths.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** In partnership with our Diversity Collective group, Seattle Indies sponsored **three scholarship recipients** to attend the Game Developers Conference (GDC) in 2025, providing invaluable opportunities for professional growth and industry exposure to underrepresented voices.
- **Accessibility Focus:** We dedicated the entire month of May to promoting game accessibility through specialized events and community streams, emphasizing best practices and the importance of inclusive design in game development. This initiative reflects our increased commitment to making development and gaming accessible to everyone. We capped off the month with a visit to Microsoft's Inclusive Tech Lab that included a lengthy and lively discussion and Q&A session with the accessibility experts who work there.

Narrative and Writer Development

In a significant move to support the specialized craft of game narrative, we expanded our monthly **Writer's Room event**. This expansion created a dedicated space for game writers and narrative designers to meet, exchange feedback, and draw inspiration from their peers. This deeper commitment was reinforced by a new partnership with **Hugo House**, a renowned literary center, which allowed us to host **two industry panels** featuring veteran game writers and narrative designers who shared their knowledge and insights on storytelling in interactive media.

4: Grant Impact & Strategic Partnerships

Our growth in 2025 was catalyzed by significant investment from major arts and cultural organizations. These grants provided the foundational capital necessary to scale our most

ambitious projects and expand our professional services.

2025 Major Grant Awards:

- **\$27,000 from 4Culture (Free Public Access):** Ensured that our flagship showcases remained accessible to the public, fostering a diverse audience for local creators.
- **\$20,000 from 4Culture (Doors Open):** Provided the critical operational funding needed to expand the physical footprint of SIX and launch SLICE.
- **\$25,000 from ArtsFund/Allen Family Foundation (Community Accelerator Grant):** Fueled the expansion of SIX and the rapid expansion of the **Founders Club** and regional meetups, allowing us to pivot from a city-centric model to a regional support system.

The Lesson of 2025: These funds proved that with increased investment, Seattle Indies can exponentially scale its service delivery. This funding didn't just support existing programs, it paved the way for entirely new levels of professional advocacy and community support.

Strategic Ecosystem Partnerships:

Beyond direct funding, our impact was multiplied through collaborative initiatives with key ecosystem partners:

- **BRIC Foundation:** Partnered on critical **workforce development** initiatives, creating clearer pathways for underrepresented talent to enter the professional games industry.
- **Seattle Creates & Future Arts:** Engaged in ongoing explorations for **shared co-working and creative spaces**, aiming to provide our members with permanent physical touchpoints for collaboration.
- **Revere XR:** Co-hosted a high-impact **Immersive Storytelling Hackathon for Black History Month**, blending emerging XR technologies with powerful narrative heritage to empower BIPOC creators.

The Lesson of 2025: These funds and partnerships proved that with increased investment and a unified creative ecosystem, Seattle Indies can exponentially scale its service delivery. This foundation paved the way for entirely new levels of professional advocacy, workforce development, and community support.

5. Measuring Success in Shipped Games

One good measure of our community's health is the quality and volume of games successfully launched by our members. This year demonstrated the exceptional creative and commercial power of the Pacific Northwest indie scene.

Featured Studio Success: Aggro Crab's PEAK

A highlight of the year was the continued success of Aggro Crab's groundbreaking title, *PEAK*. The studio's journey, which involved deep participation in local community events and mentorship, resulted in a multi-million-unit selling hit that proved the global reach of Seattle-born indie games.

New Titles Launched by the Seattle Indies Community

Many successful titles, studios and developers received a crucial boost and community validation by participating in **SIX (Seattle Indie Expo)** showcases and receiving feedback through the Seattle Indies community.

These 2025 launches represent the current vitality of our ecosystem:

- Hyperbeat, Eclipse Breaker, Puzzle Depot, Videohole Episode 2, Heartspell: Horizon Academy, Rogue Labyrinth, Astrohaulers, DEAD LETTER DEPT, Desert Angels, Azoove, Just Crow Things, Slime Heroes

These titles demonstrate the variety of genres and the global ambition of developers nurtured right here in the Seattle Indies community.

6. Regional Expansion: Serving the Puget Sound

In 2025, Seattle Indies transitioned from a city-centric organization to a true regional resource by launching and supporting new decentralized meetup locations. This expansion ensures that indie developers outside the immediate Seattle metropolitan area have access to local community, networking, and resources.

- **New Regional Meetups Launched:** Bremerton, Tacoma, Olympia, and Auburn, WA.
- **Result:** By establishing these new events, we have fostered self-sustaining local hubs that reduce geographical barriers and bring the spirit of Seattle Indies to a wider and more diverse developer population across the state. This regional growth contributed directly to our overall Meetup group reaching a record **10,000 members** by the close of 2025.

7. Policy and Advocacy Engagement

In 2025, Seattle Indies broadened its scope beyond community events and professional development to include direct policy engagement. We actively participated in Advocacy Days in Olympia, collaborating with key organizations like **NAWA** and **Inspire Washington**. We also became a **founding partner of the Creative Economy Workforce Coalition (CEW-C)**, led by the **BRIC Foundation**, cementing our role in statewide efforts to build a robust, diverse, and skilled workforce for the creative economy. This engagement ensured that the voices and needs of the indie game development community were represented in legislative discussions, securing a

supportive environment for creative economic growth within the state.

Conclusion

The successes of 2025—from launching SLICE to increasing the scale of SIX and our external presence, expanding our regional footprint, and committing to greater inclusion and accessibility—are a testament to the passion and dedication of our volunteers, members, and partners. These accomplishments have laid a robust foundation for future growth, enabling us to better serve our mission of fostering a thriving, inclusive, and professionally vibrant indie game development community in the Pacific Northwest. We are excited to see what lies ahead in 2026 as we enter our 10th year as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization!

