THE GAMES FORUM ROMA

FINAL PROGRAMME

12 & 13 November 2026

Villa Mondragone · Sala degli Svizzeri

Frascati, Rome, Italy

An international forum on games, culture, education, society and industry, organised by Structura and Women in Games.

CULTURE **COMMUNITY** **COMMERCE**

Two opening keynotes · Nine thematic panels

Workshop · Wellness · Cultural Tour · Networking

The Rome Roundtable 2026

Women, Equality & Europe's Digital Future

Two closed working sessions and **a pathway for follow-up action**

ORGANISED BY

STRUCTURA
knowledge:games:futures

women in games

thegamesforumroma.eu

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME · DAY ONE

Thursday 12 November

MORNING

08:30-09:30

Bodies Before Badges

Wellness Session - Valentina Marchetti, Astera

09:40-10:00 Registration and badge collection

10:00-10:10

Academic Greetings

Prof. Antonella Canini

Prof. Barbara Martini

10:10-10:30

Opening Keynote: Games, Culture and the Work of Change

Dr Marie-Claire Isaaman, TGFR Co-Director, CEO Women in Games

10:40-11:30 PANEL 1 / COMMERCE

Building Games Ecosystems: From Talent & Opportunity to Rights & Protection

Michele K. Robichaux
Entertainment Attorney, Odin Law and Media

Serena Tripepi
Director, Technical Director and Supervisor of Gaming Productions, Maga Animation Studio

Carmen Martino
People Operations Manager, Playstack

Moderated by **Dr. Chris Lowthorpe**

11:30-12:00 Coffee and networking

12:00-12:50 PANEL 2 / CULTURE

Art, Memory and Play: Creating and Preserving Games Heritage

Prof. Dalma Frascarelli
Director, Academy of Fine Arts of Rome

Beatrice Gentili
Lead Clean Up Artist and Supervisor, Little Sewing Machine

Carlo Tuzza
Game Composer and Sound Designer

Moderated by **Prof. Marco Accordi Rickards**

13:00-14:30 Lunch and networking

AFTERNOON & EVENING

14:30-16:00

Workshop: Embracing Ambiguity: Designing for Diversity

Dr Menno Deen

Chair of Games [4Diversity] and organiser of Courage. Impact Game Designer, HAN University of Applied Sciences.

A hands-on workshop using playful exercises to explore assumptions, exchange perspectives and discover how ambiguity can encourage dialogue, collaboration and more inclusive game design.

16:00-16:30 Coffee and networking

16:30-17:20 PANEL 3 / COMMUNITY

From Education to Industry: Skills, Access and Shared Opportunities

Prof. Antonella Canini
Vice-Rector, University of Rome Tor Vergata; Head of “Città della Conoscenza” project

Prof. Barbara Martini
Rector’s Delegate for Equal Opportunities and Inclusion; President of the CUG, University of Rome Tor Vergata

María Uzquiano
Asuntos Públicos, AEVI

Moderated by **Hannah Wright**

17:35-18:25 PANEL 4 / CULTURE

Three Continents, Three Perspectives: Games, Gamification and AI for Learning

Aditya Soni
Founder and Creative Technologist, Owster Labs

Valentina Marchetti
Creative Strategist, ASTERA Welldoing Wellbeing

Christian Mokuba
CEO, Bonobo Studio, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Moderated by Francesco Giovanetti

18:25-18:30 Close of day one

20:00 Speakers’ Dinner

IN PARALLEL · 11:30-13:30 *The Rome Roundtable · Working Session 1. By invitation*

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME · DAY TWO

Friday 13 November

MORNING

08:30-09:30

Bodies Before Badges

Wellness Session - Valentina Marchetti, Astera

09:40-10:10 Badge collection and welcome

10:10-10:30

Opening Keynote: The Foundations of Play: Public Vision and Private Enterprise for a Thriving Games Ecosystem

Prof. Marco Accordi Rickards, TGFR Co-Director, President Structura

Video from Dr Fabian Mehring, Bavarian State Minister for Digital Affairs

Video from Peri Fractic, President & CEO, Commodore International Corporation

10:30-11:30 PANEL 5 / COMMERCE

Taking European Games Global: Communities, Commerce and Sustainable Growth

Inês Ramalho
Country Manager for Southern Europe, Xsolla

Jenny McBean
Insights Director, Head of Gaming, Bryter

Thierry Baujard
Co-Founder, SpielFabrique

Michael Raith
Project Manager, Games/Bavaria

Moderated by **Dr Chris Lowthorpe**

11:30-12:00 Coffee and networking

12:00-12:50 PANEL 6 / COMMUNITY

Speaking to Players: Localisation, AI and Cultural Access

Gaia Celeste
Culturalization Specialist, freelancer & Marketing Manager, Women in Localization, Southern Italy

Cristina Anselmi
Independent Video Game Localisation and AI Consultant; Events Manager North, Women in Localization Italy

Marta Lucrezia Molina
Adopt an Indie - GameLoc Academy / NyanLoc

Moderated by **Hannah Wright**

13:00-14:30 Lunch and networking

AFTERNOON

14:30-15:20 PANEL 7 / CULTURE

What Do We Play? Games, Society and Culture

Francesca Noto
Game Writer, games matter

Pino Ieno
Assistant Animation Director, Little Sewing Machine

Alex Gate
Senior Community & Social Media Manager, Dovetail Games

Moderated by **Francesco Giovanetti**

15:30-16:20 PANEL 8 / COMMERCE

Games for Positive Change: Industry, Sustainability and Impact

Anastasia Gayvoronskaya
Business Support Assistant, Partnerships and Innovation, Technical - United Nations World Food Programme

Volha Marozava
President, Donne for Peace

Fabio Pegorin
Innovation Manager, EIT Culture & Creativity

Video from **Jennifer Estaris**
Estaris Works

Moderated by **Valentina Marchetti**

16:30-17:10 PANEL 9 / COMMUNITY

The Power of Community

A contextual introduction followed by three specially commissioned TGFR video contributions exploring community, connection and belonging in games.

Gemma Johnson Brown
Co-Director and Ambassador Director, Women in Games

Athena-Maria Enderstein
Group Head of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, Keywords Studios

Amir Satvat
General Partner, 1Up Ventures; Founder, ASGC

Don Daglow
President & CEO, Sausalito Games

Presented by **Prof. Marco Accordi Rickards**

IN PARALLEL · 11:30-13:30 *The Rome Roundtable · Working Session 2. By invitation*

THE ROME ROUNDTABLE 2026

Women, Equality & Europe's Digital Future

The Rome Roundtable is conceived as a '**spark session'**: the starting point for a distinctive European community of organisations and voices working together to turn gender-equality ambition into tangible change.

The starting question is not simply *what should we do next?*, but *what has worked, what has not, and why are systems proving so difficult to change?* Between 2021 and 2025, €190 billion of EU expenditure was classified as contributing to gender equality. Yet in 2025, women represented just 19.5% of EU ICT specialists – only three percentage points more than a decade earlier.

Within the games industry, this means looking across the entire ecosystem: education and entry routes; recruitment, retention and progression within studios; creative and technical leadership; entrepreneurship and access to investment; workplace culture; and the online environments in which women work, play and build communities. Because games sit at the intersection of technology, culture and digital society, the sector offers a particularly valuable test case for structural change, with lessons that can extend beyond the industry.

Across two closed working sessions, participants will examine the evidence, identify where progress is stalling and explore the structural barriers that continue to reproduce inequality. The aim is to establish shared priorities and practical strategies aligned with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2026–2030, providing a basis for continued collaboration beyond Rome.

Chaired by Dr Marie-Claire Isaaman

Co-organised by Women in Games and Structura · By invitation

WORKING SESSION 1

Thursday 12 November

11:30-13:30

Women in Innovation & STEM

Strengthening women's participation and leadership across research, technology, startups and creative industries.

Economic Participation & Leadership

Supporting women's entrepreneurship, access to finance, career progression and decision-making.

WORKING SESSION 2

Friday 13 November

11:30-13:30

AI, Online Safety & Gender-Based Harm

Addressing the impact of AI, online abuse and emerging digital harms on women and girls.

Gender Equality & EU Funding

Ensuring gender equality is embedded in European investment, research and innovation programmes.

Continuing this work beyond the Forum

CIRCULUS · Knowledge in Motion *Rome is the starting point. Through CIRCULUS, follow-up circles will connect participants and supporting organisations, carry forward the priorities identified through the Roundtable and develop opportunities for shared action.*

Participants by Session

Confirmed participants for the two closed working sessions, updated 8 November 2026. Chaired by Dr Marie-Claire Isaaman; Friday's session is co-chaired by Jenny Ching-Wei Lee, Video Games Europe.

Thursday 12 November · 11:30-13:30

Elisa Di Lorenzo, Untold Games / IIDEA; Gaia Celeste, Women in Localization; Cristina Anselmi, Women in Localization; Silvia Patrizi, Women in Localization; Jenny McBean, Bryter; Barbara Martini, University of Rome Tor Vergata / CUG; Federica Pierini, University of Rome Tor Vergata; Carmen Martino, Playstack; Menno Deen, HAN University of Applied Sciences / Games [4Diversity]; Thierry Baujard, SpielFabrique; Manuela Pincitore, Flimflam / Women in Film, Television and Media Italia; María Uzquiano, AEVI; Volha Marozava, Donne for Peace; Laura Liguori, Women&Tech ETS / Portolano Cavallo.

Friday 13 November · 11:30-13:30

Jenny Ching-Wei Lee, Video Games Europe; Silvia Patrizi, Women in Localization; Jenny McBean, Bryter; Micaela Romanini, Women in Games Italia; Inês Ramalho, Xsolla; Carmen Martino, Playstack; Domenica Fioredistella Iezzi, University of Rome Tor Vergata; María Uzquiano, AEVI; Volha Marozava, Donne for Peace; Laura Liguori, Women&Tech ETS / Portolano Cavallo.

Barbara Martini will join after her university meeting ends at 11:30 on Thursday.