

PRESS RELEASE

## **gamescom congress Presents Its 2025 Program: Internationally Renowned Speakers and Socially Relevant Talks**

**Program highlights announced +++ Key topics for 2025: Immersion, responsibility, and well-being +++ Program also in the gamescom biz app**

On August 21st, the gamescom congress will once again bring together internationally recognized experts from business, science, politics, and society to discuss the significance and potential of games. This year, the congress will place a special focus on the relevant topics of **“The Next Level of Immersion,” “Gaming and Responsibility,”** and **“Gaming and Well-Being”**. The gamescom congress has now published the complete program, which addresses these topics with specific questions and exciting contributions.

“Games are perfect entertainment, and that's all they need to be – but they can be more. At the gamescom congress, numerous renowned experts from around the world will demonstrate the enormous significance of computer and video games for all areas of life,” says Felix Falk, Managing Director of game – the German Games Industry Association, co-organizer of the gamescom congress. “This year's key topics particularly highlight this potential. Games and their technologies make complex content in culture, politics, medicine, and administration easily accessible to millions of people in a playful way. They are effective in educating and imparting knowledge on topics such as democracy and improve well-being.”

### **Selected program highlights for 2025:**

#### **Trendsetting discussions on “The Next Level of Immersion”**

With the core topic “The Next Level of Immersion,” the congress will highlight how modern technologies ranging from extended reality (XR) and spatial computing to augmented reality (AR) and artificial intelligence (AI) are being integrated into playful approaches to learning and working.

Kicking off the event, a high-profile **fireside chat** sets the stage for the discussion. Game developer Brendan “PlayerUnknown” Greene and UX designer Robin-Yann Storm explore **immersion in digital worlds, with a focus on PLAYERUNKNOWN Productions' “Prologue: Go Wayback!”** and their work on **“Project Artemis,”** two visionary projects that utilize AI approaches.

Another promising highlight is the discussion **“Press Play – Why Every Company Needs a Gaming Strategy”** by Bastian Bergmann (Solsten) and Erika Wykes-Sneyd (Adidas) on the transformative and immersive power of gaming. In his book “Press Play,” Bastian Bergmann, founding member and COO of Solsten, shows how

visionary companies are benefiting from the unstoppable rise of gaming. Based on exclusive interviews and exchanges with innovative companies, this presentation, combined with Erika Wykes-Sneyd's marketing expertise, provides a roadmap for business leaders.

### **Discussions on “Gaming and Responsibility”**

What potential do games have as instruments for participating in society, democratic education, and diversity? The congress will address the role of games in sustainability communication and in the fight against disinformation, the responsible use of AI, and respectful coexistence in digital communities in the program content now being presented.

The panel discussion: **“Who is Bilal? Games against radicalization and disinformation”** will examine how games can help identify and prevent radicalization. The panel will provide an exclusive preview of the upcoming game “Who is Bilal?,” which will be released in 2026. Developed by Paintbucket Games on behalf of the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia, it sheds light on the radicalization of a young person. The panelists are Nathanael Liminski (Minister for Federal and European Affairs, International Affairs and Media of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia and Head of the State Chancellery), Jörg Friedrich (Paintbucket Games), Dr. Lisa König (University of Education Freiburg), Cigdem Uzonoglu (Grimme Institute), and the discussion will be moderated by Marcus Richter.

How can we harness the power of video games to drive meaningful social and narrative change? In this moving talk, Fiction, Fact, and Social Impact: Authentic Storytelling and Narrative Change through Take Us North, Karla Reyes, Creative Director at Anima Interactive, provides insights into the creation of “Take Us North”, a narrative-driven game that immerses players in the stories of migrants and asylum seekers crossing the US-Mexican border.

### **Talks on “Gaming and Well-Being”**

In times of social uncertainty, games are coming into focus as a means of promoting social bonds, resilience, and mental and physical health. The key question in this topic segment is: How can games support physical well-being, for example in rehabilitation and inclusion, in dealing with stress in adults, or in strengthening emotional skills in children?

A panel discussion featuring Stefan Göbel (TU Darmstadt), Prof. Dr. Schulte-Körne (LMU Munich), Dr. Ulrich Schulze Althoff (Meister Cody / Klett), Sabrina Vogt (TU Darmstadt), and Judith Neuthard (Pädagogische Akademie Elisabethenstift gGmbH) exemplifies this focus. They all will join a panel about **Serious games for mental health. A report on experiences with Meister Cody and current approaches in SG4ChildD**, discussing the role of games in health promotion and therapy.

Meister Cody, an online game for children, serves as a best practice example for health promotion and learning. The interdisciplinary context of the SG4ChildD funding project also highlights current trends such as gamification and serious games.

**The lecture AI-supported games and digitization in hospital management: Gamification for efficiency and patient well-being** by Prof. Lutz Anderie (Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences) deals with how AI-supported, gamified approaches increase process efficiency and patient well-being in hospitals. The focus is on practical examples such as discharge management and personalized learning paths for hospital staff.

**The entire program—curated by Curatomic—can be found [here](#).**

**More top-notch content – also in the app**

Beyond the focus topics, other experts from around the world will shed light on aspects of gaming in the fields of education, business, and culture. Of particular note is the panel **Games, Play, and Robots: Integrating Games and Robots for Language Learning**. Brisia Fabiola Aguirre Ponce de León (Ajal Game Studio) and Dr. Mina Raeisi (Chemnitz University of Technology) present an innovative approach to learning foreign languages by combining the immersive interactivity of games, the social presence of humanoid robots, and the adaptability of AI. In his presentation **“The New Town Square: How Fortnite and Roblox are becoming the next Gen social networks,”** Xander Van Buggenhout discusses how games are evolving into social ecosystems where young people express themselves and build communities. Van Buggenhout examines how these platforms are changing digital interaction, why brands are taking notice, and what this means for the future of social networks.

Following last year's huge success, the gamescom congress will once again be integrated into **the official gamescom biz app** in 2025. In addition to the program overview, it offers additional information on the various sessions as well as quick and easy networking opportunities with the speakers and between participants. The app is available for trade visitors on iOS and Android free of charge.

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**Information on participation:**

Tickets for gamescom congress 2025 are already on sale. A ticket costs €109, discounted\* tickets are available for €39. Selected program highlights and independent online sessions can also be followed digitally via livestream. Due to the high demand, early booking is recommended in order to be able to attend on site. Accreditation for gamescom includes admission to the gamescom congress. All information and tickets at: <https://www.gamescom.global/en/tickets/buy-tickets>

\* For pupils, students, apprentices, pensioners, senior citizens aged 65 and over, severely disabled persons, voluntary social service providers (FSJ/FÖJ) on presentation of the relevant proof.

#### **About gamescom congress**

gamescom congress is the world's leading conference on the potential of computer games in a digitalized world and offers interfaces far beyond the digital and media industry. International speakers present their topics in lectures, seminars and panel discussions. The gamescom congress takes place annually as part of gamescom in Cologne and is organized by Koelnmesse GmbH and game, the association of the German games industry. The gamescom congress is sponsored by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. <https://congress.gamescom.global/en/>

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