

**BUSINESS  
FINLAND**

# **Business Finland funding services for game companies - Startup and SME segment**

**-**  
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Kari Korhonen, updates 3.2.2023,  
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# BUSINESS FINLAND

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- Helps customer companies grow and succeed globally, develop future solutions, and boldly renew business operations. By accelerating companies' sustainable growth, Business Finland generates prosperity and well-being for the Finnish society.
- By accelerating sustainable growth, creates prosperity and well-being for Finland:
  - New high-skill jobs
  - Tax revenue from global markets
  - High-impact investments in Finland
- Funding focuses on **innovation**, aiming to strengthen skills, competence and long-term competitive advantage in global markets – not just the next product release
- BF has funded Finnish game industry with approximately €200 million over the past 20 years.

# Points to note for 2026

- **Business Finland will publish a new strategy in November 2025**
  - The foundation remains more or less unchanged, but there will be **increased emphasis on ambition level, competitive advantage and scalability of innovations** to global market
- **Research & Development funding from Business Finland will increase in 2026**
  - Projects can include tasks previously covered under Tempo funding.
- **Second round of funding for Creative industries R&D (totaling €9 million) will open early 2026.**
  - **Game companies** are also eligible to apply.
  - Detailed guidelines will be published in **early December 2025**.

## Unfortunately..

- **Due to government budget cuts the following are on hold**
  - Tempo funding
  - NIY programme
- **We will share more information as soon as we get further details about the next steps!**

# Tempo

**Tempo funding call is closed until further notice !**

*"Clash of Squirrels is promising, but we need to pimp it up s*

- Tempo de minimis funding is intended **for under 5 years old startup** companies with a new product or service idea into making a product for markets and gathering market information.
- Grant **€ 60,000**. BF covers 75 per cent of project **costs that can be at most EUR 80,000**.
- BF pays 70 per cent of the funding after the funding decision, and rest 30 % in conjunction with the project's final report.
- More difficult to obtain compared to innovation voucher
  - **Minimum of 2 full time employees**
  - **The total amount of funding EUR 38,000, of which at least EUR 30,000 must be equity financing**
  - Somekind of a knowhow of the market and the product that is being tested, rarely given to just a power point idea.
- Granted typically only once unless company does a total pivot (or uses this to fund joining an accelerator)

# Tempo continues

- BF will help you on the application, I do not recommend spending this money into a consultant
- Our target is to support your company into a good growth and give you a kickstart to the market.
- Besides the hard rules, the decision is always made case by case.
- Tempo **cannot be just product development** but it must include (at least 40%)
  - **Market research**
  - **Customer information collecting**
  - **Piloting**
  - **Testmarketing (but not *marketing*)**
- The funding is based into development of work packages and the success is measured by 2-5 goals that are set during the application processing.
- 3-12 month project, money can be spent on wages, purchases, personnel sidecosts and small amount into other expenses like plane tickets and expos (but not into basic company needs like office rents and the cleaning person)

**R&D funding** – Fast growth companies seeking international markets can update their products, services, production methods or business models, or develop completely new ones

*“Clash of Squirrels of War of Heroes needs a ton of content and a really hard core backend system to run 200 000 simultaneous players”*

### **Loan for research & development**

- Ment for companies to get a great boost to their profitability and competitive advantage through innovation.
- No max or min amount for the loan.
- As a rule, it can cover a maximum of 50% of the total cost of your project. Justified reason, the loan can cover 70% of the total project costs
- There can multiple R&D loans at the same time, you can have multiple after each other – just not funding the same thing or same people at the same time.
- Well funded companies who have already proved themselves skipping Tempo & voucher and going straight to R&D might make sense.
- If the project fails and doesn't generate economic growth and is cancelled, there is possibility to negotiate the loan into a grant as full or part.
- Our objective is to support you – not to drive you into bankruptcy!

## **R&D funding** – Fast growth companies seeking international markets can update their products, services, production methods or business models, or develop completely new ones

- Grants for critical research that aims to acquire new information for the industry and that creates capabilities for later development work
- For SMEs grant can cover 50 % of research project. If project content is entirely industrial research (When project results are not yet deployed in the operational activities but new capabilities, services, and processes are built on the acquired research results) grant can be 60% (of the total eligible costs)
- For midcap companies, the grant is 40%. When the project content is entirely industrial research, grant can be 50% of the total eligible costs

# Young Innovative Companies (NIY/YIC)

*"League of Squirrels is now a top selling MOBA. Is there some of our revenues better?"*

**The Young Innovative Companies (NIY) funding call is closed until further notice !**

- Extremely large grant (**500 000e**) and loans (max. **750k**) which are given in phases.
- High requirements for companies to be accepted to the funding. Must show revenue, experience, investor interest...
  - Varjo
  - Wolt
  - Supercell
  - Applifier
- Requirement: Company must be below 5 years old and be a small company
- " Typical company selected for NIY is 3.7 years old on average. Company have an average of 14 employees, €550,000 in turnover and €920,000 in equity investments. The management of the companies has strong international expertise and the vast majority of the companies already have international business operations."

# Creative industries research and development call 2026

- R&D funding to boost business in the creative industries
- Game industry is also eligible for funding
- Exceptionally, only grant instrument available, covering 35 or 50% of the total project costs
- The minimum budget estimate is €100,000
- Detailed instructions and criteria will be published in December 2025
- The application period opens in January 2026 and ends in May (update: 7.1.-29.4.2025)
- Webinar will be held in January 2025 (TBD)
- Follow updates on the Business Finland and Neogames websites!

# Before contacting Business Finland prepare to answer following

- **Growth vision** – What kind of growth and scale of business are you aiming for in (selected) international markets, and what is the basis for this vision?
- **Project plan draft** – A brief description of what will be done in the project and what its concrete outcomes and objectives are
- **Competitive advantage and innovativeness** – What is innovative and novel in the project's outcome compared to existing solutions on the market? How does its revenue model and scalability work?
- **Financing plan** – How will the project's self-financing be formed and what funding will be used immediately after the project?

# And furthermore...

- The focus of game business funding is on achieving systematic growth in export markets by strengthening expertise that will be utilized over the long term. Not primarily in the first or next release, even it's often very important. **Business Finland is funding demanding Research & Development projects, not productions**
- Game development is normal and challenging operative work of game studios, but as such, it is considered standard development. Therefore, it is important to **identify the novelty value of R&D project that distinguishes it from other solutions in the same segment. That's why it is eligible for funding**
- Business Finland shares the risk of challenging product development by funding part of the project's costs. However, a positive funding decision does not solve the long-term funding needs after the project. So, **creating a long-term financing and investment plan, as well as a market entry plan in advance is extremely important**
- **Finally: Do your homework—prepare your business plan and pitch! Keep your eye on the ball and don't focus on things that cannot be done (with Business Finland's funding), but rather on what can be done and when is the right time for it!**

# How can I get personal contact to Business Finland?

1. Contact your BF account lead or business coach
2. If you do not have a named account lead or do not remember if you have one, use "Become A customer"- service
  - Sign up to service and complete basic mapping
  - Our (game) business coaches or advisors take contact you

# More Information

- [BUSINESS FINLAND](#)
- [BF FUNDING FOR GAME BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT](#)
- [Financing creative industries research and development](#)

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**Thank You!**