

Welcome, Designers!

The Game Design Contest is about feedback, networking, and marketing. It's a great event for all three, with most past contestants having used the contest as a launching pad for a future in the industry.

First and foremost, your game must arrive at the address below by May 20th. This will allow us (the panel of designers and professional play-testers) to play your game enough to give you the best feedback. (We will give you that feedback, at the latest, during KublaCon at the event on Monday at 10 a.m.)

Here is the information you need about the contest, folks!

Anthony J Gallela
KublaCon Game Design Contest Chair

I. WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

a. Benefits

Over the more than 20 years of the KublaCon Game Design Contest, it has been our intention to connect amateurs with feedback from professionals in the game design business, focusing on whether the game will sell and what to improve to help ensure it does.

b. Prizes

The winning prize is a trophy; a wonderful, wonderful trophy. And a winner's pin!

There are also a number of "intangible" prizes. The panel of experts, at a minimum, will give you professional feedback on your game. These play-testers and judges are "close to the action" in the game industry so their comments should be very helpful. If you make it to the finals, then attendees of KublaCon will give you feedback as well because the finalists are played during the convention. This is a great way to expose your game to a wide audience and find out what the "public" thinks of it. If you win, your game will carry the label of "game design contest winner" -- a label that will help you get potential publishers to look at your game (and/or it will look nice on crowdfunding pages and the like). Not all the winning games from past contests have been published, but nearly all the winning designers have found design work or had one of their other games published because of connections/opportunities they've made right here.

c. Feedback

It is the intention of our panel to give every entrant in-depth feedback on their game. How in-depth the feedback is will be determined by the amount of feedback the game elicits from judges. Your game might not elicit much feedback, but what it gets will help. You will be given a report on Monday of the show, at the latest, but usually before the show so you can adjust where needed.

II. CONTEST DETAILS

a. Judging Process

Entries are played and judged by a hand-picked panel of experts: professional designers, top play-testers, publishers, and other industry insiders. The play-testers capture their thoughts about each game using questionnaires, which are then reviewed by judges to

select a small group of finalists. These finalists are played by the on-site judges and convention attendees at KublaCon! Three winners are chosen from the finalists and announced on Monday.

b. Judging Criteria

Entries are evaluated based on ratings in the following categories:

Rulebook: how well can you play the game out of the box?

Mechanics: does the game play well?

Interface: are the components and player interface the right components and player interface?

Target Consumer: is the game appropriate for the consumer group presented in the submission form?

Connecting with your target audience is by far the most important thing in this contest, and will receive the highest priority. The interface of the game is not the graphical presentation of the parts, but rather how the player uses the cards/pawns/board/etc during game-play and whether that use aids and adds to game-play or works against game-play. Solid, working mechanics are key, of course, but they are the least important of the four areas of judging.

So again: does the game work for its audience, do players feel like they are playing the game, and does the game work? And the rulebook must allow us to experience all those things without your help. Pay special attention to your rulebook! The quality of your rulebook will be a big contributor in the quality of the feedback you receive.

c. Ownership of Product

Games submitted are the sole property of the game submitter. Submitting a game in no way adjusts the rights of any party associated with the game.

Judging submitted games will not limit the judges in concept or design of games already created, in the process of being created, or that will be created in the future. By entering your game in the contest, you are knowingly putting it into the public knowledge domain.

Plain talk: the judges don't want to steal your ideas. If your ideas are good, then they'd rather just publish your game.

III. ELIGIBLE ENTRANTS

a. Amateur Designers Only

This contest is open to amateurs only. (If you're a professional, you can sign up for KublaCon's Protospiel.) For the purpose of this contest, a professional game designer is anyone who has a published game now in print, or who has ever had one in print, whose name appears as a designer or developer on the credits page, and that game must have sold at least 500 copies. "Sold at least 500 copies" means that at least 500 copies have been put in the hands of customers/distributors/stores/etc on/before our submission deadline. In other words: to be a professional, you are credited as either a designer or a developer on a published game of which at least 500 copies have been sold in some way. A game entered into this contest may be designed by as many people as you like, but NONE of the designers may be professional.

b. Table Top Games Only

You may submit your game only if it is a Table Top Game (TTG). There is huge variety in this category, so for KublaCon's purposes, a TTG is defined by excluding things rather

than by including them. With that in mind, a TTG is not:

A Role Playing Game

A Miniatures Game (though your TTG might have miniatures -- like Gloomhaven)

A Live Action Role Playing Game

A Collectible Card Game (though Living Card Games are okay)

A Computer Game

An Activity

c. Finished Games Only

All entries submitted must be finished games. A “finished” game is one that has a rulebook and all its necessary components (though the components may be proxies/demos that stand in for the final components meant for the published version). The judges must be able to play the game out of the box: all the components needed for your game must come with the game. (You may note if you intend to make the customer buy their own dice/counters/minis/etc separately, but the judges don't want to have to go scrounging for these things while judging the contest.)

A special note about the rulebook: The judges must be able to read the rulebook and play the game based on what they learn in said rulebook. **THE RULEBOOK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF YOUR GAME!** Judging the games is a VERY time consuming and often frustrating process. A clear and concise rulebook will help our play-testers spend time evaluating your game ... instead of deciphering how to play. Before submitting your game, blind play-test your rulebook. We recommend giving your game with rulebook to someone who has never seen the game before, then have them try to learn how to play the game without asking you any questions. Watching them go through this process (while not saying anything!) will teach you what's missing from your rulebook.

If a game is not finished or does not have all the necessary components, then it may not get any feedback from the judges and won't advance to the finals.

d. KublaCon Attendees Only

There is no entrance fee to submit your game! However, please note two very important rules that apply to all contest entrants:

You must purchase a full weekend pass for this year's KublaCon.

You may submit only ONE game for free. If you want to submit more than one game, the fee to do so is \$100 per game. This fee helps compensate KublaCon for its support of the play-testers for their hard work testing your games. (Note that if you have a co-designer, one of you may enter a game with your full weekend pass while the other enters one with their full weekend pass.)

IV. SUBMITTING YOUR GAME

1) Submission form: You must fill out a submission form and include it in the box with your game. You can get a submission form by downloading it from the link at the bottom of this page.

2) Contact info: Make sure to include your name, phone number, and email address.

3) Rulebooks:

a) You must send an electronic copy of your rulebook (or a link to an online copy) to gamedesign@kublacon.com.

b) Please include enough printed rulebooks for every player (if your game can play up to 6, please include at least 6 rulebooks).

Remember how important your rulebook is! If you don't remember, go re-read the section above called "Finished Games Only" now.

4) Payment: Include your check or money order made out to "KublaCon" for the \$100.00 per each game beyond the first free submittal.

5) ASAP: The earlier you send your game to KublaCon, the more time the panel will have to review it and make notes. The deadline for submissions is the 20th of May-this means your game must ARRIVE by May 20th.

Send in your game as soon as possible to:

KublaCon Game Design Contest

6354 S Prince St. Littleton, CO 80120-3025

Good luck, Designers! May the best game win!