

## For budding female game designers, a new source of support

February 17 2016, by Derrik J. Lang

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In this March 5, 2013 file photo, Rhianna Pratchett, writer of "Tomb Raider" and "Rise of the Tomb Raider," arrives for the 2013 British Academy Games Awards at the Hilton hotel in central London. At the 2016 D.I.C.E. Summit which runs Feb. 16-18, 2016, the Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences is

kicking off its annual summit by unveiling an initiative to include more women in the video game industry. While about 44 percent of the gaming population is made up of women, only about 18 percent of game creators identify as female. (Photo by Joel Ryan/Invision/AP, File)

The Academy of Interactive Arts and Sciences wants to empower women to create video games.

The organization unveiled a new initiative Wednesday called WomenIn that seeks to boost gender diversity in the male-dominated [gaming industry](#).

"When I grew up playing games—and I can say this because it's true—games were made by guys for guys," interactive academy president Martin Rae told a crowd gathered for a breakfast meeting kicking off the 15th annual DICE Summit. "We have an entirely different industry today. Everybody plays games."

The Electronic Software Association trade group says about 44 percent of gamers are woman but only about 18 percent of game developers surveyed at last year's Game Developers Conference identified as female.

Rae said the initiative will include sponsoring scholarships and internships, building a mentor database and hosting events at studios for women interested in the gaming industry.

"We're inventing this as we go," Rae said. "We're going to double on stuff that works, and if it doesn't work, we're going to change it."

Don Daglow, president of 4thRing Inc. and the Academy of Interactive

Arts and Sciences Foundation, said the key to increasing diversity in the industry is establishing bonds between mentors and mentees.

"What I care about is building connections between human beings who love to build games and who feel, like I do, that they were destined to practice this art form professionally with their lives," Daglow said.

The DICE Summit—which stands for design, innovate, communicate and entertain—is an annual gathering of elite members of the [video game industry](#).

Organizers expect about 700 summit-goers this year to attend talks by such gaming industry veterans as "Metal Gear Solid" creator Hideo Kojima, "Fallout" creative director Todd Howard and "Rise of the Tomb Raider" writer Rhianna Pratchett at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center.

**More information:** [www.dicesummit.org](http://www.dicesummit.org)

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