

# Indigenous game designer



Phoebe Watson

## When I grew up, I knew I wanted to be ...

I had many different career interests growing up. Spending a lot of time in nature and around animals with my mum, who was a park ranger, inspired me to consider becoming a zoologist to help care for animals and ensure species populations continued to thrive.

Later on, I became fascinated by the idea of being a crime scene investigator, intrigued by the evidence, information and psychology involved. This eventually led to an interest in psychology and criminal psychology. During my final years of high school, I really got into art and design. I've always been a creative person, constantly drawing, designing or making things.

## Professional

### Top-level responsibilities

As a game designer, my primary role is to define the game's objective. This might be something like saving a character in *Super Mario* or *The Legend of Zelda*, finding an item or reaching a destination in a game such as *Journey*, or creating or simulating something like in *The Sims*. A key part of this process is determining the game's mechanics, which involves deciding what actions the player must take to achieve the game's goal. These mechanics can include platforming, solving puzzles, matching items, shooting, collecting, or designing and building elements within the game.

### Day-to-day skills

In my day-to-day work, I focus on designing and generating ideas for the game. Creative problem-solving is crucial when I encounter blockers or issues with the design. Strong communication skills are also essential, as they ensure that everyone on the team is aligned and working together effectively to create the game.

## Personal

### Current location or community

I moved to Melbourne to study at RMIT University, but I grew up in the regional town of Warrnambool by the coast. I am a proud First Nations woman from Gunditjmarra, which is the community around Warrnambool.

### I am passionate about ...

I'm passionate about lots of things! Freedom to be creative and to explore ideas through different mediums and technology, and freedom to explore self-expression through fashion, makeup and dance. I'm also really passionate about creating space and pathways for Indigenous people in the games industry.

### What I would say to 16-year-old me ...

“Keep learning and growing as much as you can! Don't wait! You can self-teach yourself so many things. With access to the internet, there is an abundance of learning and resources from other people. And start making things! You can't improve if you don't practise and keep learning and trying new skills.”