

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

High Concept

Enter the grim depths of the chasm, lead a group of characters down through the alien layers of Bathyal, take tactical decisions to keep them alive and sane, and discover new paths into the abyss to uncover its lost secrets.

Unique Selling Point

Our game offers a unique experience to explore a mysterious and visually stunning landscape underlined by an immersive narrative experience to deepen the impact. We accomplish this through our team of experienced artists, which can craft detailed and visually appealing environments, so players may immediately recognize our game's art and design from other competitors. *Darkest Dungeon* offers its own unique art style and is highly recognized for it, resulting in high attention in its early kickstarter stage.

Many successful indie games succeed in either creating narrative impact or offering a challenging gameplay experience, very few succeed in doing both. *Sunless Sea*, a game highly praised for its narration only offers a shallow gameplay experience, criticized by many players. Board-games like *The 7th Continent* and *Kingdom Death: Monsters* are highly praised for their gameplay, both kickstarters exceeding most digital game kickstarter campaigns, further board-games becoming digital has become more frequent (like *Gloom Haven* and the upcoming *Tainted Grail: The Fall of Avalons*) despite those games offering little more compared to their paper counterpart. Understanding the restrictions and limitations found in board games while taking advantage of our game being digital, we are capable of delivering a full fledged digital game with the desired mechanical experience found in successful board games.

Game Genre

Rogue-like, Turn-based, Exploration

Play Value

Exploration is the key experience we sell our players, the uneasy feeling to dive into the unknown. As the players overcome challenges in order to progress, we pull them into an immersive narrative experience assisted by the suspenseful and gloomy atmosphere. To achieve such a goal our game offers a visually intriguing world, handcrafted biomes with their own events and creatures, inviting the players to explore or - if they feel ready - to delve deeper into the chasm, reaching a new layer filled with its own foreign flora and fauna. On their journey a player will encounter different events with multiple outcomes, rewarding them accordingly and increasing their curiosity: what if they had chosen differently? Resource management is important, especially on higher difficulty, turning the game into a merciless roguelike experience for those seeking a challenge, therefore most outcomes are predictable, yet not always in favour of the players and possibly resulting in their party's perishing. We expect the player to go through many deaths in order to progress deeper. At first everything will be surprising, strange and challenging, but with each run the player adapts to surviving each layer and adjusts their approach. They feel clever for choosing a good strategy, carefully managing their resources or making good decisions based on what they've experienced. Each run players will be rewarded with new items or unlocked feats and characters, allowing players to customize their party to have a better chance going deeper into the chasm the next time.

Business Model

Nowadays, with the possibility of distributing games via online platforms (like EpicStore, GoG or Steam) we don't face technical issues when selling our game, though due to multiple titles being released each month we have to spend additional effort on marketing our game as soon as possible while keeping a low budget. The earliest step is to build a discord community to give players the opportunity to get involved early (hypeing community with gameplay snippets, running a creature design contest). Our goal is to reach 20.000 members (preferable 40.000) before our kickstarter launches in August 2021. Primarily, our reason for the kickstarter campaign is to create hype and visibility for the game. In case we reach our kickstarter goal (not necessary) we would use the money for six additional months of polishing before releasing. Otherwise we evaluate whether the prototype is good enough for an early release or we pitch our prototype to suitable publishers (like *Raw Fury* or *Paradox Interactive*) to gain money for one additional year of polishing.

Target Audience

Our audience enjoys turn-based tactics and making decisions like found in board games and pen-and-paper, emphasising our gameplay on tactical thinking, resource allocation and short-term planning. Gameplay is purposefully constructed to be comparable to other games (like *Curious Expedition*). We decide to focus our attention on improving those mechanics, to reach and thrill this specific community. Furthermore, our visual style is crafted to convey an exciting feeling of tension and increasing horror as players descend deeper into the chasm, letting them experience unique creature- and fauna-designs, disturbingly resembling known things, yet being grotesquely different. As examples, the cthulhu mythos and its bizarreness of lurking horrors, despite being overused in game media it still finds its audience, or the incredibly successful *Kingdom Death: Monster* board-game that has thanks to its outstanding world and creature design a loyal fan community.

Market/Competition Analysis

Comparing the targeted quality of our game to released games in 2016 - 2019, we expect a revenue of 100.000 € after 7 months of release, with plenty of headroom upwards. Most comparable games earn over 200.000 € after 1 year of release, the game *Curious Expedition*, released in 2016 with similar gameplay, earned an estimated revenue of \$512.658 on Steam, despite its simple pixel look. Comparing successful games with those having failed, the players tend to buy games with challenging gameplay over visually pleasing ones, though games exhibiting in both aspects are doing overwhelmingly well in sales.

Competition amongst games is common: the Xcom series, Microsoft's newly released *Gears Tactics* (2020), and plenty upcoming titles like *Othercide*, *Star Renegades*, *Curious Expedition 2*, *Darkest Dungeon 2*, *Tainted Grail: The Fall of Avalon* and other indie titles. The number of releases in the roguelike and turn-based genre isn't perceivable higher compared to previous years, the only remarkable thing is the line-up mostly consisting of successors of previous games (release in 2016-2018). Other game genres, like MMOs and especially "Games as a Service" tend to introduce mechanics to bind their player base beyond a play session, being very time consuming and keeping them from playing any game from the competition. In terms of roguelikes it's common for players to switch games after sessions or taking bigger breaks to continue weeks later, meaning multiple roguelikes can exist next to each other, given they don't share the same release week (which has to be avoided). Our game is different enough from its competitors, like being not a clone of an existing game, further we deliver higher visual production quality, to catch our audience's attention.

Estimated Steam revenues of turn-based, rogue-like, indie games

