A collaboration between

Games at TABLE Guidelines

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Games at TABLE is our hub for serious games about food systems, where we collect, publish and allow access to a selection of games created by researchers, activists, organisations and professional game designers to print and play, as well as information about the games and their creations and facilitation guidance (how to run a games session).

'Serious games' can describe any kind of games with a purpose beyond play: teaching, social learning, dialogue facilitation, informing strategy and exploring possible futures. They have a long history, and include diverse forms ranging from educational games for schools to tabletop wargames carried out by NATO to explore risks and tactics, from roleplaying games created to share the lived experience of abusive relationships to video games designed to advocate for ecosocialism. Increasingly, researchers, activists and stakeholders are exploring the exciting potential of using games to help unpack the wicked problems facing our food systems.

The Games at TABLE library offers space for serious games which:

- Align with TABLE's theory of change and approach
- Allow free, open access for public use
- Ground discussion and game play in credible evidence and experience
- Explore tensions, debates, challenges, goals and practical realities inherent within food systems across scales
- Encourage critical thinking, debate and discourse while engaging with multiple, different perspectives

These guidelines exist to help game creators understand the purpose of the Games at TABLE library, what we look for in serious games and the process for getting it published as part of our library.

(Disclaimer) Games at TABLE a is a free, open access library games that support an open and exploratory look at food systems topics, debates and complexities. The games we share are *not* TABLE's work (unless explicitly stated), and TABLE is not responsible for their content.

What does TABLE look for in a serious game?

Required	Not for Games at TABLE
✓ Free, open access for public ✓ Food systems relevance ✓ Draws from credible, clearly sourced evidence and/ or personal experience ✓ Critically engages with tensions, challenges and/ or multiple perspectives **We allow:** ➔ Virtual or physical format (downloadable PDF) ➔ Different types of of games	⛔Subscription or purchasing fees ⛔Not food relevant ⛔Promotional or commercial ⛔Unclear or uncredible evidence sources ⛔Allows for only 'one' correct answer ⛔Highly niche or specific, so as not to be useful for wide audience engagement

Food systems relevance

For TABLE, food sits at the heart of interconnected crises, spanning climate change, biodiversity loss, malnutrition, poverty and injustice. We define food systems broadly, encompassing these broad but correlated areas, including: human and animal health, climate, equity, economics, politics, social justice and welfare, agriculture, nutrition, welfare and many more. To be 'food systems relevant', the game should:

- Have a clear justification for engaging with food or food systems
- Be directly related to a food systems challenge, topic or goal *and/ or* have clear reasoning for how it indirectly engages with a debate or topic which influences food systems decisions and activities

Credible evidence and personal experience

Fundamentally, TABLE is a food systems platform that explores the **evidence, assumptions and values** that people bring to debates about resilient and sustainable food futures. We look at the data, the biases and the beliefs behind those debates in order to support better dialogue, decision making and action. To that end, games included in our Games at TABLE library must draw from clear source material which is based on direct research, lived experience and/ or expert reports and guidance. Source references and citations and preferably links are expected to be included as part of any game proposal, and TABLE staff may review these for credibility.

What is the process?

While these are relatively short pieces of writing, TABLE is extremely attentive to the quality of its outputs and the editorial process for essays reflects that. We are eager to support you to write the best possible piece.

1. Fill out and submit the Games Pitch form, including all necessary source material and access to the game (or game contents in PDF form)
2. TABLE staff will review and respond with any questions
3. Once both parties are happy with content and expectations, a release form will need to be signed by the game creator, allowing for publication on TABLE's website and other platforms
4. Final approval and feedback by TABLE staff
5. Publication of the game on Games at TABLE library
6. TABLE will promote the game across channels, with the creator tagged (where possible). This usually includes posts with social cards across all our social channels, and a feature in our newsletter. If you have ideas about how or to whom the piece could be promoted, we welcome these. The pieces that get the best traction are often those where the author has informed promotion

Essential information for each game:

- Game title
- Authors, including contact information
- Permission to publish and share for public use
- Banner question — intriguing problem that the game tackles
- # of players
- Format: virtual or in-person
- Full list of materials
- Downloadable PDF versions of all games components, to scale
- Instruction manual (*separate from final research report!)
- Themes
- How long it takes to play
- *Brief* summary
    - If relevant — detailed explanation
- Related resources, links, info