

# 8. How to Level Up a City

*competing while leaving no one behind*

ERIC ADAMS

*Eric Adams, the Mayor of New York City, makes the case of leveling up New York City to become a major center for gaming within the nation.*

We have an unbelievable opportunity to use gaming to help others. Today, it is so much more than Pac Man. We can use games to help people who are dealing with dementia to remember things. We can use games for people who want to learn financial literacy, or how to buy a house, or how to pay for college. We can use games to teach us how to enjoy our diversity and reduce the hate crimes we see in the city, responding to the anti-Asian violence, antisemitism, and attacks on the LGBTQ community.

This is also a great moment in esports. For those who have never played a sport physically, you can almost master it in esports. This is going to become a multibillion dollar industry that anyone can be a part of. Gaming is the great equalizer. Any and everyone can play.

Me and my entire team ask ourselves: How can our youth become not only consumers, but developers? Everyone wants to sell a product to you. Now you're in a position of saying, We want you to buy my product. Now you're able to create a game that is really reflective of what you think about and what you see in the world around you.

Working with the City College of New York, and our amazing Deputy Mayor of Economic and Workforce Development, and the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, I know we have the right team to make New York City a center of innovation. We already have a proud history in innovation, from skyscrapers, to the subway system, to Bitcoin and blockchain. All these things start here and continue to grow – and if they don't start here they grow here because we get it right, all the time. And it's based on the diversity of the people that live in the city, because they bring all of their energies and spirit to the innovation that's needed.

It's now time for us to lead in the digital gaming space. New York City is a leader in so many areas: tech, film, finance... but not in gaming. Not yet. When it comes to gaming development, we are outside of the top five. We want to change that in the next few years. We want to be number one. So the goal is to support the City College of New York to start a new talent pipeline for building our gaming industry.

We know that we have the highest concentration of augmented and virtual reality gaming jobs in the nation. And we have so much talent in this city. Who among these readers will become the creators of the next Rockstar Games, or the developers of the next Rocket League or NB2K?

New York City is ready to level up. We are investing in our future, in the future of New York City gaming development, by funding the new City College of New York's bachelor's degree program in game design. These \$2 million, we believe, are going to help reach over 1000 students over the next few years, and is aimed at increasing diversity and equity in the digital gaming field.

Far too often, you're not seeing the diversity in this field. We want to increase that diversity so those who play the game will look like the people who are also designing the games. Wherever I go – if it's at Google, if it's at Netflix – we talk about paid internship programs, and building a pipeline for young people. That is the goal here. If you don't get exposed to these companies, then you don't see the possibilities out there. And we're focused on telling all of these large companies that you patronize that it is time to hire from the communities that are actually purchasing your product. And we're on a mission to accomplish that.

We recently put in place New York City's first ever digital games industry council, bringing together the top digital game companies, nonprofits and industry leaders, educators, and young people to sit down and advise the city on how to grow this important industry right here in New York, to create pathways from the classroom to careers in game design. Using public and private partnerships, we can attain the level of gaming that we want and clearly set the standard on how this industry must grow.

Now is the time to push forward. We begin this quest together. This is how

we're going to get stuff done in the city and create a more fair and equitable city, without leaving anyone behind.

New York is a great city. But it's not great because of the tall buildings. It is not great simply because of the museums and theaters. It is great because of the people. But too many people don't fulfill their full potential nor reach their greatness.

We say no to that.

Not only are you going to be successful gamers, but you're going to use these tools to help those who have been left behind.

Population	7,911.5M
Online Population	5,115.9M
Esports Awareness	2,469.5M
Games Live Streaming Audience	921.2M
Esports Enthusiasts	261.2M
Esports Revenues	\$ 1,384.0M

*Esports' reach is global (data from 2022). Additional game-related research and reports can be found at Newzoo, who provided the above information.*