



DOLLARWISE
MAYORS FOR FINANCIAL LITERACY

UNLOCKING SKILLS PROGRAM

Foundational Skills Training for Adult Learners

As part of the ongoing effort to find innovative and engaging solutions for Mayors and their constituents, the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Council on Metro Economies and the New American City ("Council") and one of its members, Learning Games Studios, are developing a pilot program to test the viability of using game-based learning as a way to educate those who lack financial literacy. This pilot program will be conducted as part of the DollarWise Campaign, an initiative within the Council.

Learning Games Studios ("LGS") has developed an evidence-based yet easy-to-use solution—called *Xenos*—that currently provides English language and literacy training for adult education and career pathways to help underserved learners unlock skills & level up. *Xenos* builds these core skills, essential for future financial literacy, by incorporating the CASAS "Essential Life and Work Skills for Youth and Adults" rubric, including: basic communication, math, consumer economics, independent living, community resources, employment, learning and thinking skills, and government and law.

Delivery of the game on learners' own mobile devices provides on-demand access, 24/7, dramatically increasing the scale of many programs. Moreover, no digital literacy is required as *Xenos* uses a familiar app interface of touch screens and drag and drop functionality. Recognizing that learners have varying access to devices and the Internet, *Xenos* is platform and operating system agnostic, making it useable on almost any phone, tablet and computer. *Xenos* is also playable without an Internet connection (single player mode) where progress is tracked and added upon the next connection.

Through a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, a third-party efficacy evaluation showed that retention, completion and learning gains are significantly higher with *Xenos* than with traditional classroom-only methods. With further support from the Gates Foundation, *Xenos* was successfully used in a national field trial by community-based organizations who provide training and services to DACA-eligible immigrants.

Through this partnership between the Council and LGS, *Xenos* will be provided to select cities that are seeking effective, cutting edge and cost-effective solutions to skilling up their citizens and ascertain the viability of using this type of solution for future financial literacy efforts.

Minimal costs and responsibilities

In short, the cost to your city will be limited to the manpower costs necessary to oversee the program. We anticipate these will be minimal, as we expect local service providers and not your office, to implement the program.

There is no hardware to purchase or maintain – learners use their own – unless you choose to. The software and support services are provided free of charge during the pilot program.

How would this work with your City?

1. Your city will receive **free access** to the *Xenos* learning games for up to 1,000 users for six (6) months.



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2. Your office must **designate a point of contact** to work with Learning Games Studios to implement the program.
3. Your team **chooses the local service delivery partners** it will grant the training package to and determines the delivery expectations (number of learners, length of program, etc) it expects from them.
4. The service providers **implement the program** together with Learning Games Studios.
 - Learning Games Studios provides an orientation, facilitator training, and access to the data reporting dashboard to the service delivery organizations.
 - The service delivery partners recruit, enroll and choose whether to provide a blended learning model (access to *Xenos* and periodic live instruction) or a self-directed program (only access to *Xenos*, with onboarding assistance) to their targeted audiences.
 - Each delivery site provides feedback on the program and asks individual participants to provide feedback in an online survey.
5. Your office **receives comprehensive reports**, detailing participation and the learning outcomes of the participants, in both aggregated and disaggregated formats, to fully understand the program's reach and results.

What is Included in the Unlocking Skills Program?

- *Xenos* English language and literacy learning games for up to 1,000 individual users
- If the blended learning model is chosen:
 - Facilitator / Teacher orientation and training session
 - Facilitator's Guide on how to introduce and use *Xenos* with learners.
 - Facilitator / Teacher materials with lesson plans and group activities to accompany the game.
- Real-time access to the *Xenos* "data dashboard," providing management and reporting tools to the service providers as well as city personnel.
- A final report of the pilot program detailing the participation, usage and progression of the users in the program. This report can be provided in both aggregate numbers and disaggregated units.

About Learning Games Studios: Learning Games Studios comes out of an innovation network led by MIT's Education Arcade and University of Wisconsin's Games+Learning+Society Center to offer researched and award-winning games that deliver measureable learning outcomes. Our flagship product, *Xenos*, is an evidence-based mobile learning game that rapidly increases adult learners' English language, literacy and 21st Century skills for career pathways and civic engagement. Learning Games Studios is currently semifinalists in the \$7 million global Adult Literacy XPRIZE and Fellows in the Unreasonable/Pearson global Project Literacy Lab. Learn more at: www.LearningGamesStudios.com.

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