Lunarch is hiring!

Toronto-based game developer Lunarch Studios is looking to make several new hires for its next title ("Project Sophia"—a multiplayer first-person puzzle game incorporating elements of MMOs, escape rooms, and battle royale games, built in Unreal Engine for PC and consoles).

Accordingly, we're seeking talented game development professionals:
- across many specializations (engineering, production, puzzle design, art, audio, QA, etc.)
- at a range of experience levels (new grads/interns all the way up to director-level)
- from all countries (Lunarch has been operating virtually since 2016 and all positions will continue to be remote for the foreseeable future. All positions are permanently remote. **Relocation will NOT be necessary**.)

About Lunarch Studios

Lunarch is a small (<10 people, but growing significantly in 2021) Canadian game developer founded in 2013 by a group of math olympiad champions, professional poker players, and MIT PhD students. We develop cutting-edge, intelligent games that leverage technology to create novel and deep experiences for smart players. Our products are ambitious, one-of-a-kind titles that define new genres and innovate in multiple directions at once. Their creation demands exceptional intelligence, creativity, and hard work.

We're the developers behind Prismata—a multiplayer strategy game that blends elements of RTS, deckbuilders, and board games. Our upcoming title ("Project Sophia") is similarly innovative and aims to bring large-scale multiplayer gameplay to the 3D puzzle genre (Portal, The Witness, Zelda, etc.).

Lunarch is more like a tech startup than a traditional game studio. We're in a competitive space that rewards quickness and demands high-quality work that meets all requirements on the first try. Ideal candidates are exceptionally intelligent, knowledgeable about games, and highly productive. We love people who have excelled in competitions (math/programming contests, puzzlehunts, science fairs, infosec CTF, competitive gaming, poker, etc.), people with heroic academic accomplishments (awards, publications, etc.), or people with proven track records or killer portfolios (shipped games or jaw-dropping work in art/animation/audio/UI/design/etc.).

The benefits of Lunarch include an excellent work culture and high-tier compensation (aiming to be competitive with tech startups), but most importantly, you'll contribute to ambitious titles that aim to make meaningful advances to the state of the art. We operate in an ideal mid-budget space: we're sufficiently well-funded to hire the best people, do high-quality work, and promote our titles widely, but we're not constrained by the AAA need to stick with low-risk designs for mass-market audiences. **You will make an impact here.**

Contact: careers@lunarchstudios.com

Puzzle Designer
- **Part-time or contract**
- **Design logic puzzles or interactive puzzle objects/systems**
- **Possibility of full-time work if you're experienced in Unreal Engine development**

We believe that the video game industry (particularly at the AAA level) massively underuses the talents of the world's greatest puzzle designers.

Are you one of them?

Would you like your work to be included in a major multiplayer puzzle game for PC and consoles?

If so, this is your chance. There are two ways you can help:

(1) Logic puzzle contributor
- You'll design grid-based logic puzzles, similar those found in
    - Paper logic puzzles like Nikoli, Grandmaster Puzzles, or Logic Masters
    - Games like The Witness or Picross
- You'll work within a modular system of rules and constraints. You'll be able to mix and match different rules, constraints, and grid symbols to create unique and original works (our logic puzzle system aims to be 10x as expressive as the one in The Witness).
- Puzzles must have a unique solution reachable through a clear logical path, must be original, and must be low to medium difficulty (aim for average solvers taking 30s to 180s per grid).
- You'll submit puzzles using a web-based tool similar to puzz.link or penpa-edit.
- You'll be paid a flat rate per accepted puzzle after our curators have reviewed and test-solved your submissions. Puzzles may be rejected for any reason but we aim to accept most good original submissions (we're not ultra-selective like the NYT crossword).

How to apply:
- Email puzzles@lunarchstudios.com and include a portfolio or links to your original puzzles.
- If you are newer to nikoli-style logic puzzles but specialize in other genres of logic puzzles (e.g. sudoku, chess puzzles, puzzlehunt logic puzzles, math puzzles) then you're still welcome. We're familiar with all of the above and we know talent when we see it.

(2) Unreal Engine puzzle designer
- You'll design interactive puzzles that can be individually placed or procedurally spawned in a giant open world map.
- You'll build them in Unreal Engine (using your choice of Blueprints and/or C++ classes) and place them in a demo map.
- We'll license your puzzle creations, import them, add art/audio if necessary, and adapt them to be included in "Project Sophia".

For more information, including some examples of the types of puzzles we're looking for, see here.

Puzzle requirements:
- Puzzles must be playable in first person.
    - It's recommended that you start with the "First Person" Unreal Engine Template, delete the weapon, and build your puzzle directly in there.

- Your puzzle needs to be able to support both keyboard/mouse and controller input. (We can help with UI implementation if needed, but don't design something that's only pleasant to play with a mouse).
- Puzzles must have an element of replayability, which could be one or more of:
  - They can be manually placed or hidden in the map hundreds of times by a human, and the placement of the puzzle creates a unique challenge every time
  - You (or another puzzle creator) can create 100+ different instances of them
  - They employ random or procedural generation
- Puzzles must be easy to translate to the most common languages
  - They can't depend highly on language, culture, or trivia
  - They shouldn't contain letters, words, or symbols whose semantic meaning is important
  - Numbers are OK to use
  - A small bit of rules text, helper text, or UI text is OK. You can assume it will be translated into left-to-right languages only, but make sure to leave extra room.
- Puzzles *can* depend on colour perception, dexterity, hearing, working memory, musical ability, cognition, or other accessibility barriers that may make them difficult or unenjoyable to some players. But try not to use these elements needlessly.
- Puzzles must not contain anything that our publisher might object to, including:
  - Anything that might be offensive to anyone or any culture
  - Anything that would need a warning for content, fear, photosensitivity, etc.
  - Anything that infringes on existing copyrights, trademarks, or patents (if you use any assets, we must be able to obtain full rights to them)
- Puzzles may (optionally) include co-op multiplayer functionality, if it adds something non-trivial to the experience (beyond just two people working on the same puzzle). It's sufficient that your puzzle works with 2 or more players in the play menu in Unreal Engine; you don't need to optimize for smoothness at high latency or performance with 100 players.

Good puzzles are:
- Easy to understand and self-explaining for a first-time audience member watching a twitch stream
- Highly visual and satisfying to watch
- Enjoyable even after the player fully understands the rules and goals
- Replayable for a long time, with room for player improvement and a high skill ceiling

Your puzzles must be fully functional and bug-free, but they *do not* need to include:
- Final art or audio
- Perfectly optimized high-performance code, blueprints, or materials (we'll fix them up if needed)
- Code to hook your puzzles into the rest of the game (we'll take care of that)

How to apply:
- Send an application to puzzles@lunarchstudios.com, including the following information:
  - A resume/CV or portfolio demonstrating talent in puzzle or game design
  - A 2-sentence description of what you'd like to make for us
  - You do not need to be an expert in Unreal Engine, but you must know enough to complete the project (or be willing to learn on your own time)
- If we're interested in working with you, we'll request a more detailed proposal including a project description, budget, and schedule. Once it's approved, you can get started!
- For small projects, Lunarch will pay for deliverables. For bigger projects from reputable creators, we can provide some payment up front. For even bigger projects, payment can be split across multiple milestones.