

Students get *Neon Runner* game published on Google Play

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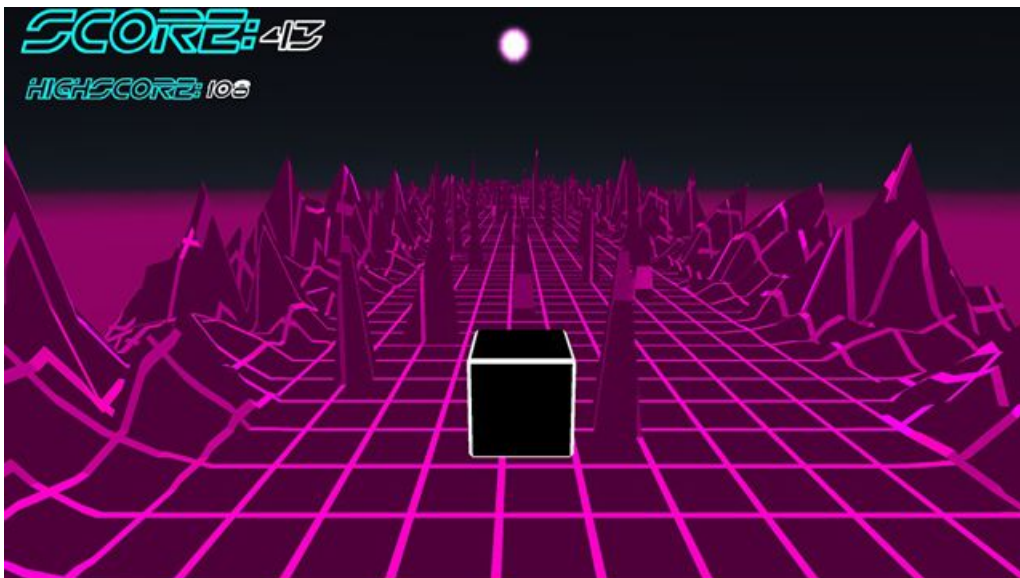
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Four second-year students from [Vega](#) (a brand of the Independent Institute of Education - [The IIE](#)) are well on their way to pursuing lucrative careers in the gaming world, after having their game, *Neon Runner*, successfully published on the Google Play store.



Neon Runner is an endless runner game that becomes more challenging as it progresses. Players simply need to avoid the obstacles in their paths in order to keep moving forward, and to score points as well as 'currency' in the game based on how far they progress, allowing them to purchase items like character skins and more.

"Publishing an app on the Google Play store is fairly simple," says Peter van der Merwe, an aspiring programme developer on the team, adding that the only other requirements are a few technical aspects, such having the correct Android and Java development kits installed, and a once-off fee that needs to be paid to Google before the app can be submitted. "The last step is to submit the game to Google Play and wait while it gets reviewed. *Neon Runner* only took two hours to be reviewed before it was made available for download," continues Van der Merwe.



The game was created by The IIE Vega students Peter van der Merwe, Dylan Ramsden, Dylan Mitchell and Damian Dowie, and was born from an assignment they were given to create an endless runner game. The four later formed a team called Project Pixel and combined their talents to create a game of their own, which was successfully published on Google Play on 25 April 2019.



More on team 'Project Pixel'

All four members are currently studying an [IIE BCIS degree in Game Design and Development](#) at Vega. Van der Merwe and Ramsden are the programme developers on the team, while Mitchell and Dowie created the assets and overall aesthetic of the game.

For Ramsden, the decision to pursue a career in game design came about when his dad handed him a brochure on the IIE BCIS degree available to study at Vega. "After visiting the Vega Open Day, I instantly knew that this was where I belonged," he says.

Van der Merwe was unsure of what he wanted to do after high school. He had started studying BCom accounting until a friend at Vega told him about the new IIE BCIS degree available. "I decided to change instead of finishing my third year of BCom, and I haven't looked back since," he says.

Dowie on the other hand had already been introduced to programming in high school and knew that he wanted to pursue a career in coding. He decided to pursue a qualification in gaming after visiting a Vega exhibition at a career day he attended.

Despite having ventured into the world of game design without any background or knowledge of what it would entail, Mitchell says that he had a passion for creation in all aspects of his life and work. "I found myself developing a drive for creation of art and environments models. I then found a group who shared my passion and we came together to develop our own work, with my side of it being the visuals and art."

Neon Runner is available to download for free from the Android app store. The app is currently only available on Android, but the team is investigating ways to get it onto the Apple app store too in the coming months.

"The four of us are definitely planning on starting up our own independent game development studio, which will be called Project Pixel. We will continue to update *Neon Runner* if there are any issues or bugs with the game, and we're also planning on developing other games for the future," says Van der Merwe.

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