



**BLACK
SHAMROCK**
A VIRTUOS STUDIO

Gender Pay Gap Report 2025





Introduction

At Black Shamrock, we are proud to be a leading company in the global games industry, known not only for our creative excellence and innovative spirit but also for our commitment to building a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace. Recognising that our strength lies in the diversity of our people, we are dedicated to fostering an environment where every employee feels valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their best, irrespective of gender, background, or identity.

Our commitment to inclusion is embedded in our company values and operational practices. We strive to create career opportunities and a working culture that reflect the richness and diversity of our society. We actively promote gender equality as a cornerstone of this vision, not only because it is the right thing to do, but because it drives better business outcomes, inspires creativity, and enhances our ability to innovate in a highly competitive industry.

We recognise that while meaningful progress has been made, we must continue to challenge ourselves and take actionable steps to ensure truly equal opportunities and pay equality across all levels of our organisation.

Thoughts from our General Manager - Elaine Reynolds

“ At Black Shamrock **our most important asset is our people**. We value diversity and support initiatives aimed at eliminating gender inequality such as the gender pay gap reporting guidelines. We ensure there is no salary disparity by gender for each role and level. However, when we look at the studio as a whole there is a difference in average pay, primarily due to the fact that we have a smaller number of women at the more senior levels.

I am glad that the pay gap we have is lower than the average in comparable industries and considerably lower than the games industry in general (e.g. the recent GDC salary report) but there is still improvement to be made. **We want to see more women in senior positions in our studio and more women entering the games industry** overall and that's something we are actively working to improve.



As part of this commitment, we continuously review and refine our policies related to recruitment, career development, compensation, and employee wellbeing, ensuring transparency and fairness at every stage. We support this with ongoing training, mentorship programs, and initiatives aimed at encouraging gender balance and preventing unconscious bias within our teams.

This Gender Pay Gap Report for the period 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025 represents one component of our broader diversity, equality, and inclusion strategy. It provides a transparent assessment of the gender pay disparities within Black Shamrock and serves as a foundation on which we will build further progress towards closing these gaps and fostering an even more inclusive workplace for all.



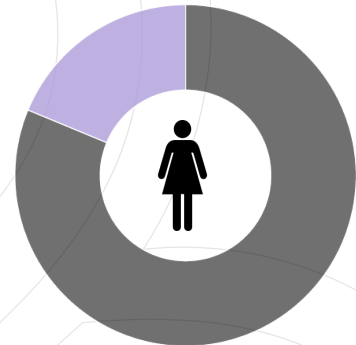
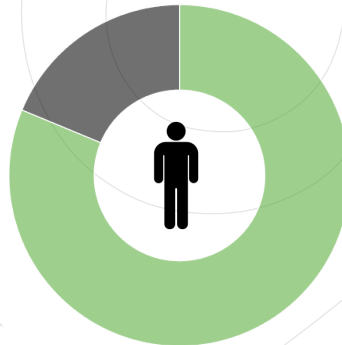
2025 Black Shamrock Gender Pay Gap Results

As per the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021, the following data is based on a 12-month snapshot from 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025.

Below is our Gender Pay Gap results.

Company gender make-up:

- Total employees: 128
- Male employees: 104 (81.25%)
- Female employees: 24 (18.75%)



Understanding The Pay Gap Gender Breakdown

At Black Shamrock, our workforce as of the reporting period (1st July 2024 – 30th June 2025) consists of 81.25% male employees and 18.75% female employees. This distribution reflects the gender makeup common in the video game industry in Ireland and globally, where historically, male employees have been more predominant, especially in technical and development roles. The underrepresentation of women in video game development is a recognised industry challenge influenced by various factors including societal norms, education trends, and career interests.

Despite this, Black Shamrock is committed to cultivating a diverse and inclusive workplace. Our hiring and employment practices strictly adhere to Irish equality legislation, including the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015, which safeguard employees and job applicants from discrimination on the grounds of gender, among other protected characteristics.

All our employees who conduct interviews on behalf of Black Shamrock receive in depth training by the talent acquisition team to ensure a fair and thorough recruitment process. We also host annual events with the aim of attracting more females to the gaming industry and Black Shamrock.

Gross Pay Difference of Male to Female Employees

Measure	All Employees	Part-Time Employees	Temporary Contracts
Mean Gross Pay	8%	N/A	59%
Median Gross Pay	7%	N/A	59%

Note – the data used for the purpose of this report is total salary by gender only and no adjustments are made for level, discipline or experience.

The Mean

The standard average between men and women's hourly wage. This is the average across the entire company.

The Median

This is the calculation of ranking all employees from highest paid to lowest, and taking the one specific wage of the person in the very middle.

Gross Pay Gap Explanation

The data from 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025 shows that Black Shamrock experiences a mean gross pay gap of 8% and a median gross pay gap of 7% for all employees, with males earning slightly more on average than females.

Several factors contribute to this gap, which is consistent with trends seen within the video game development industry and the broader technology sector in Ireland:

1

Workforce Composition

As noted, women represent a smaller proportion of the workforce.

2

Role Distribution

Pay differences among job roles and seniority levels affect the overall hourly pay gap. For example, certain technical or leadership roles with higher pay grades currently have a higher male representation.

3

Experience and Length of Service

Variation in experience and length of service across employees can influence hourly wages.

It is important to note that the data for part-time employees is marked as 'N/A,' as there were no part-time employees at Black Shamrock on the snapshot date of 30th June 2025.

For the purposes of this report, "Temporary Employees" are defined as individuals employed on fixed-term contracts (FTCs). The mean and median gross pay for FTC employees is reported at 59%. It is important to note that this figure is affected by the small sample size of FTC employees, comprising only three individuals: two males in senior roles and one female in an intern position. This disproportion contributes to a significant variance in pay figures. Due to the limited sample, the data is more variable compared to other groups, and with a larger FTC sample size, we would expect the pay gap metrics to be less skewed and more representative.

At Black Shamrock, differences in pay across various job families are a significant factor in our overall Gender Pay Gap. As a game development company in Ireland, we employ a wide range of roles, each with its own pay scale shaped by industry demand, skill requirements, and established market rates. For example, software engineering roles typically fall within higher market pay brackets, and this department currently has 12% female representation. In contrast, some other disciplines within Black Shamrock that are more female dominated, while very important, generally align with lower market pay brackets based on wider industry standards. Because men and women are not evenly represented across these different role types, this naturally influences the overall pay picture for our organisation.

It is important to stress that our pay rates are set in line with industry standards and governed by our fair pay policies, which mandate minimum and maximum salary ranges regardless of gender. In cases where a man and a woman hold the same position with equivalent experience, qualifications, and scope of work, **we are committed to ensuring equal pay** within the boundaries of our established pay-grids. We uphold a strong commitment to providing equal opportunities for progression and fair remuneration across all roles.

Proportion of Employees Receiving Bonus Pay and Benefits

Benefit Type	Male %	Female %
Bonus Pay	91%	88%
Benefits in Kind (BIK)	78%	71%

Bonus Explanation

At Black Shamrock, all employees are eligible to receive an annual bonus, which is based upon individual performance review scores as well as the overall financial performance of the company. Bonuses are calculated using a preset formula that incorporates variables related to performance and project outcomes, ensuring the process is objective and not influenced by gender or other personal characteristics.



This process ensures that bonuses are awarded fairly, rewarding contributions that are based on both individual and company success. The bonuses shown here reflect a mean pay gap of 3% and a median pay gap of 2%. These bonuses are reviewed and approved by a non-biased panel composed of both men and women, ensuring fairness and equality in the process.

It should be noted that interns are not eligible for bonuses. One of the female employees included in the data was an intern who recently moved onto a fixed-term contract. At the time the annual bonuses were paid, this employee was still an intern, so they were not eligible for a bonus. If this employee had not been included in the data, 100% of females would have received bonuses. Additionally, employees who are experiencing performance issues may not be eligible for bonuses or may receive reduced bonuses. This context is important when interpreting the data, as it helps explain some of the differences seen in bonus payments.

Project-specific bonuses are available to employees in production regardless of gender. It should be noted that the production team has a female representation of only 21%. The General Admin division, which includes finance, HR, marketing, talent acquisition, and general administration functions comprises of 57% female representation, does not receive game project-specific bonuses due to the nature of their roles. However, members of the General Admin division remain eligible for the standard annual performance-based bonus.



Difference in Bonus and BIK amounts between Male and Female Employees

Measure	Mean	Median
Bonus Pay	3%	2%
Benefits in Kind (BIK)	0.7%	0%

Benefit in Kind Explanation

All employees at Black Shamrock have access to private healthcare coverage, which is fully paid for by the company. Participation in the private healthcare scheme is offered on an opt-in basis and is fully available to all employees from day one of employment, with no requirements or restrictions based on gender.

This equal and inclusive approach ensures that both male and female employees have the same opportunity to benefit from this valuable perk, contributing to the similar participation rates observed. This benefit underscores our commitment to supporting employee wellness and enhancing staff wellbeing beyond salary.

Quartile Breakdown of Employee Salaries

Measure	Men	Women
Lower Quartile	78%	22%
Middle Quartile	81%	19%
Upper Middle Quartile	75%	25%
Upper Quartile	91%	9%

Quartile Pay Difference Analysis

When examining the gender distribution within the company, it is important to note that females represent 18.75% of the total workforce. This female representation is relatively evenly distributed across the Lower (7 employees), Middle (6 employees), and Upper Middle (8 employees) quartiles. Notably, there is a spike in the Upper Middle quartile for females, highlighting that women are progressing into higher pay bands. However, the Upper quartile shows a notable underrepresentation, with only 3 female employees occupying positions within this highest pay segment.

Such disparities are frequently observed within the games industry. At Black Shamrock, we are committed to growing our employees further and specifically increasing female representation in the Upper quartile. This commitment to equal gender representation in leadership roles is championed by our General Manager Elaine Reynolds and is something we plan to build on as a strength for the studio going forward.

We continue to ensure fair compensation and equal opportunities for career growth across all roles, fostering an inclusive environment as our company continues to grow and evolve.



Reducing the Gender Pay Gap

Black Shamrock is dedicated to ensuring **fair and equitable** pay for all employees, regardless of gender. We regularly review our pay and policies to maintain compliance with the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015, which ensure that all employees receive equal pay for the same or equivalent work.

At Black Shamrock, we recognise the **importance** of gender pay equality as a cornerstone of a fair and inclusive workplace. While our current Gender Pay Gap of 8% is below the average for the Irish Information and Communication sector where the average Gender Pay Gap stands at approximately 15.5% and in the Arts and Entertainment sector where it is 13.25%, we understand that there is still work to be done. **We are committed to continuously reviewing and improving our pay structures and practices to reduce this gap further.**

Below is a list of initiatives Black Shamrock are taking, with the aim of reducing our Gender Pay Gap:

1

Investors in Diversity Bronze

In September 2025 Black Shamrock was awarded the 'Investors in Diversity Bronze' Award from the Irish Centre of Diversity. The Investors in Diversity Accreditation is Ireland's only Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Award which provides a structured framework through which companies can improve and embed their inclusion & diversity practices. Results showed that we achieved the accreditation with the highest scoring category of 'Moving On' and we hope to achieve the Silver Award in September 2026. These insights guide us in refining policies and developing targeted training to further encourage diversity and inclusion across our teams.

2

Regular Pay Audits

Continuously analysing pay data to identify and address any disparities, including reviewing and updating pay grids in 2026 to align with the latest market surveys and trends.

3

Performance Reviews

Incentive programs and bonuses will be consistently aligned with measurable individual and company performance, ensuring transparency and accessibility for all employees. Black Shamrock will maintain and enhance its commitment to regular performance feedback through four formal reviews each year, with ongoing adaptations to support employee growth and organisational goals.

4

Encouraging Women in Games

We at Black Shamrock recognise the barriers of entry that women face breaking into the gaming industry including social norms and educational barriers. To help address this, we have collaborated with organisations such as Women in Animation. Looking ahead, we aim to deepen our partnerships with groups like Women in Games and broaden our sponsorship efforts to champion female-focused initiatives. Building on our previous support for youth female sports such as sponsoring the underage Wexford County Camogie team we plan to continue investing in similar opportunities that empower and elevate the next generation. We also plan to continue hosting impactful events, including our annual International Women's Day "Crack The Code" series. This inspiring initiative invites young students to hear firsthand from remarkable women within our company, highlighting diverse career pathways and opportunities for women across all areas of game development. Through engaging talks spanning every discipline, along with personalised portfolio and CV reviews, we strive to equip aspiring talent with the insights and tools they need to succeed and thrive in the gaming industry.

5

Policies

Beyond legal requirements, Black Shamrock fully covers 100% of employee salaries during the first 26 weeks of maternity leave, demonstrating our commitment to supporting women during this critical phase.

Additionally, we are exploring new policies tailored for women's health and wellbeing, including a Menopause Policy and a Fertility Treatments & Assisted Human Reproduction Policy. We also plan to enhance our company healthcare offering to include support and coverage in these areas.

6

Training

All employees joining Black Shamrock are required to complete the Addressing Unconscious Bias: Basic Awareness in the Workplace training. In 2026, we plan to enhance and expand our learning programs to continuously address bias and build a more inclusive workplace, and to identify further training options that align with our commitment to inclusion at Black Shamrock.



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