



ENERGIZE – PLAY FOR REALITY: CONVEYING SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES THROUGH GAME MECHANICS

Department:

English Language and Literature

Program:

MA

Project type:

Industry Partnership

Project funded by:

Mitacs and the Waterloo Global Science Initiative (WGSi)

Project co-researchers:

The Games Institute Team:

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AC ATIENZA

Many Ontario municipalities have agreed to reduce 80% of their carbon emissions by 2050 (80 by 50). However, most do not actually have a plan for how they will achieve this goal. In response, graduate student AC Atienza designed the print-and-play board game *Energize* as an educational tool. The game was created specifically for students in grades 7 and 8 to learn about energy consumption and pollution in the Waterloo Region. Atienza worked with experts from WGSi to ensure accurate representation of the science and policy challenges pertaining to carbon emissions reduction.

Energize draws attention to the challenges and solutions of how a city can reduce carbon emissions by placing players in the roles of a project facilitator, a financial manager, and others. Each player-character is equipped with different talents (charisma, efficiency, and resourcefulness) and must fulfill their personal goals. However, as the players complete a campaign rally, conduct research, or engage with their own community stakeholders, they must also work collaboratively with others towards the goal of overall 80 by 50 carbon emission reduction in the Region.

Interesting fact: By Atienza's count, *Energize* is the result of over 160 play tests and 50 game design iterations.



To access the game, scan this code to contact the UW Sustainability Office!

