

IFTF 2025 Transparency Report

This report summarizes the activity of the [Interactive Fiction Technology Foundation](#) (IFTF) from January 2025 through December 2025, including a high-level accounting of the organization's financial income and expenditures. As a public-service organization that many people entrust with their time, attention, and money, IFTF presents this report in an effort to show how it has applied its community's investments over the past calendar year.

IFTF president Justin Bortnick wrote and published this report in May 2026, based on IFTF's internal financial records, public blog and forum posts, a template from prior year reports, and consultations with IFTF leadership. All monetary amounts that appear in this report are expressed in U.S. dollars.

Summary

Program Activity

Conference

Reported by JD Calvelli, 2025 Conference junior chair

NarraScope 2025 took place June 20th - 22nd at Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA as a hybrid event with talks presented on site and streamed on Discord. About 240 people (including speakers) attended in person and 216 registered for remote attendance. This year, we had two keynote speakers, (Hidetaka "SWERY" Suehiro speaking on Saturday and Dain Saint on Sunday) and 69 talks with a total of 80 speakers. Use of Drexel University facilities was considerably more expensive than previous years' event spaces and combined with the high cost of two keynote speakers, NarraScope was not ipso facto financially solvent in 2026. To achieve neutrality in expenditure, NarraScope 2025 relied heavily on individual donations, including, and perhaps most importantly, an anonymous last-minute angel donor contribution of \$5,000.

This year, we introduced the NarraScope Showcase as an evolution of the Demo Room. This event took place on Friday, June 20th and consisted of a show floor where shortlisted finalists exhibited their games, and in-person workshops. The showcase served as a platform for finalists and a featured artist, some of whom have since gone on to win awards at IndieCade and IGF. The event covered its own expenses and brought in additional sponsorship to offset the cost of the rest of the conference. It was, and hopefully will continue to be, a useful lever for achieving financial solvency.

AV this year was run entirely by volunteers. However, due to very limited and short-term access to tech and lack of standardization for speaker slides and equipment, we encountered numerous issues with recording and streaming quality. Our core team of four volunteers overseeing hybridization tried their best to manage the resulting difficulties, but the workload was entirely unsustainable and will require serious consideration in order to achieve sustainability for future years of NarraScope, and a more consistent experience for our remote-first attendees. After the

conference, we reached out to presenters whose talks were not recorded with satisfactory audio/visuals for a chance to re-record their presentations. All talks can now be found on the [YouTube channel](#).

For more information and financial details, see the [NarraScope 2025 Financial Transparency Report](#).

NarraScope will return in its hybrid format in 2026 at the University at Albany, NY.

Education

Reported by Judith Pinter, Education Committee chair

In 2025, the main activity of the education committee was planning educational programming for NarraScope, offering these activities prior to the event itself, evaluating them afterward, and then working towards NarraScope 2026.

The educational offerings for NarraScope 2025 were divided into pre-workshop and jam sessions, and Friday “day of” online sessions. A Game Jam, organized by EdCom member Ruber Eaglenest was officially titled the “Platypus Jam”) launched on Wednesday 11 June. The theme was meant to low-key jam in the traditional sense of musical jam, where people gather to play and learn new things without the pressure to have something completed. The jam’s suggested theme, “Platypuses,” was meant to be literal – about the Tasmanian egg-laying venomous, electroreceptive, mammal, metaphorical (a platypus meaning something that has unexpected and contradictory characteristics), and also a reference to Zorkian platypuses, in traditional Infocom lore.

The Jam was supported by two Bootcamp workshops, running from June 11 to NarraScope Weekend. Judith Pinter offered an “Inform 7 Beginner’s Bootcamp” which had 7 days of asynchronous content, bookended by two synchronous sessions. Katryna Stark ran “Twine Beginner’s Bootcamp” during that same period, with several synchronous sessions. Both camps made use of the NarraScope Discord server, and the Inform camp also used a Slack workplace. Both of these camps enrolled well, but attendance dropped off for several reasons, including that prospective students enrolled in both bootcamps, with the intention to drop one or the other. Because we had closed registration, it was difficult to determine whether and how many people had dropped out, and there was no clear way to add more people after they had begun. The solution for this that we’ll be trying in 2026 is to have open enrollment all the way through the camp, with recordings available to late registrants.

In 2025 we did a full day of workshops on the Friday before the event. Some of these were directed to educators (the population that EdCom was created to serve), and some were skills based sessions (which attendees at NarraScope have requested).

Our Friday offerings included, Brendan Desilet’s “Baldur’s Gate 3 or Mask of the Rose: Which Makes Sense for Your High-School Classroom?”

The video game Baldur's Gate 3 appeared in 2023 to nearly unanimous acclaim. This story-rich text-heavy role-playing game staked its claim as the best of the Baldur's Gate franchise, which began in 1998, and as the best-ever computerized implementation of Dungeons & Dragons, which made its debut in 1974. Mask of the Rose registered a much more modest splash when it emerged in the same year as BG3, but it, too, was a part of a larger narrative, the massively-multi-player online game Fallen London, which began in 2009. But which of these very slick achievements of choice-based, thinking-persons' diversions has a more substantive place in a school setting for young adults? You'll find, and create, some answers in this workshop.

Ian Greener offered "Turning Serious Stories into Interactive Experiences with Ink."

This workshop will take a case study/story from a project around the experience of families in burying their loved ones during the pandemic, and turn it into an interactive narrative story. We'll discuss how to do this in ink in a step-by-step guide to both that narrative system, and how we can look for opportunities to make case studies and stories more interactive to try and foster greater engagement with them.

Joey Jones offered "Crafting Interactive Stories With ChoiceScript"

ChoiceScript is an easy to learn language for making choice-based games. It really shines in making longer experiences, with different player traits and relationships being tracked and influencing the plot. In this workshop, we'll learn how to make a game in ChoiceScript, as well as covering a number of ways of structuring interactive stories so you can offer plenty of choices while avoiding combinatorial explosion.

The committee as a whole offered "IF Educators Debate AI in the IF Classroom"

Members of the IFTF Education Committee and a Chatbot will faceoff in a debate about the use of AI in the IF classroom. To stir things up, sides in the debate will be randomly chosen (though the chatbot will be debating against its use). In the last 15 minutes, the audience will join the discussion.

Katryna Starks offered "Puzzle as Story: Researching the Roottrees"

An exploration of genres such as parser, epistolary, and Einstein puzzles; their design considerations, and a display of how they all work together within an addictive mystery narrative. Create your own Einstein puzzle at the end!

Chris Klimas offered "Intro to Chapbook"

This workshop will demonstrate some intermediate-level features of the Chapbook story format for Twine: mixing JavaScript in with regular Chapbook code, working with Chapbook's debugging tools, and incorporating multimedia. We won't get too technical, however. If you've used other Twine story formats like Harlowe and SugarCube but are

curious what Chapbook is about, this workshop will be a great way to learn.

And Ruber Eaglenest offered a Game Jam Debrief / Show and Tell for all participants in the bootcamps, or people made a game for the jam.

Gather together and present a favorite short scene from your game. This is your chance to invite people to play your game and to give and receive feedback. This Debrief is intended for participants in the Inform Bootcamp, the Twine Bootcamp, and the Platypus Jam. If you are enrolled in one of those, you will automatically be invited to this!

Added to the committee in 2025 were Mark Sample, Michael "Maka" Gradin, and Josh Stead-Dorval.

The plans for NarraScope 2026 include a big change. Because of overlap of offerings with the local host of NarraScope, the traditional Friday full day of workshops is no longer ideal. We will be offering bootcamps and workshops the week before NarraScope, Sunday through Thursday (which also allows Friday to be a day of travel). We are going to have open enrollment, and allow drop in participation from anyone registered for NarraScope. We anticipate that this will reduce registration confusion. EdCom will also host an educators roundtable session in Albany, where the future of EdCom's offerings and activities will be discussed with educators in the audience as well.

Grants

Reported by Hugo Labrande, Grants Committee chair

The grants administration committee built upon the success of the first grant cycle in 2025, with the announcement in the spring of funding for another 4 exciting IF-focused projects! IFTF funded the development of an ink-based engine, Atrament; a web tool for no-code story building, at MovingLiterature; a special issue of The Imaginary Engine Review with half a dozen of IF-related pieces of IF games criticism and reflection; and a series of workshops in London by Voidspace, focusing on introducing IF to folks in the interactive & immersive theatre space. Once again, there was great variety among the selected projects, and all 4 submitted an update before the end of the year - the projects all went well and IFTF is happy to see continued interest and an ability to help cool projects to take shape. The committee launched a third grant cycle in the fall, with winners announced in the spring of 2026.

IF Archive

Reported by Andrew Plotkin, IF Archive Committee chair

Overall, the IF Archive collection grew by 518 files and 11 gigabytes in 2025. The server's 80 GB storage volume is now 66% full. Notable contributions include IFComp 2025, a 1.42 GB upload with 85 games. (Now consuming 2.7 GB, since we keep both the big IFComp.zip and the

individual game zips.) Spring Thing included 31 games with a total of 961 MB. We also received a donated collection of CAAD, the Spanish IF Zine.

As of January 2025, the Archive team took over hosting SPAG (<https://spagmag.org/>), the English-language IF magazine that ran from 1994 through 2016.

In April, we deployed a search facility. The site's front page now offers a search bar; searches can be directed to either the Archive's file collection or to IFDB. We also added a few links to interesting files, for the benefit of newcomers who might be feeling overwhelmed by the Archive's wall of directory listings.

Unfortunately, the big news of the year was the advent of the UK Online Safety Act. This law, which took effect in July, requires web services accessible in the UK to block minors from accessing certain kinds of content.

After consultation with our lawyer, we deployed an emergency geofencing rule that blocked UK users from **all** games directories on the Archive. Most of our games are not considered adult content under the UK law, but without a full review, we were forced to restrict them all as "potentially not permissible".

(IF articles, tools, documentation, and other non-game files remain unblocked.)

With the risk of immediate legal liability mitigated, we were able to consider a long-term plan. Since all our files are available for anonymous download, implementing age verification is both unpalatable and technically infeasible. Instead, we worked out a system where Archive volunteers could mark individual games and directories as restricted.

Unfortunately (again), the Archive collection is large and our volunteer group is small. We have switched a few directories to per-file blocking -- notably `/if-archive/games/zcode` and `/if-archive/games/competition2025`. However, most games directories, including all earlier IFComp years, remain fully blocked in the UK.

We understand that restricting the body of IF history in this way is tragic -- as is the tremendous burden on our volunteers. But we are not in a position to ignore the law and its penalties.

IFComp

Reported by Jacqueline Ashwell, IFComp Committee chair

The 30th annual IFComp had another successful year, with 85 entries. The IFComp Colossal Fund raised \$10,184, 80% of which was set aside for the 56 authors who qualified for a cash prize. 16 additional prizes were also offered by donors to winning authors.

IFDB

Reported by Dan Fabulich, IFDB Committee chair

- IFDB continued growing in 2025. We got our 60,000th member rating, 15,000th game listing, and 16,000th written review.
- We ran the IFDB Awards again in 2025. I think we're pretty well ensconced as "the understudy XYZZY Awards"
- We also implemented features described at <<https://ifdb.org/news>>. The biggest new feature is Markdown support in game reviews.
- The pace of IFDB development has slowed down, significantly because I've been too busy to manage development. PRs have been sitting around (sometimes for months) waiting for me to review them. I think some stagnation for a while is OK-ish (IFDB was more-or-less completely stagnant from 2010 to 2021, and we survived), and I think it would take a lot of time for me to properly pass the torch (including hunting down someone to pass the torch to!), so I think we'll just continue with a slow pace for a while yet.

IFWiki

Reported by Jonathan, IFWiki Committee chair

This year the main improvement to IFWiki was the addition of a Games database to organise all our games pages, together with a data entry form which largely replaces the more complicated style guides. The Games database is linked with the Events database so, for example, if a game is listed on the [IFComp 2025](#) page then its placement appears automatically on the game page's own infobox. When we started using the database there were 3,500+ game pages and 3,800+ awards. Our Events database remains a valuable resource, especially with its calendar of events on the Main Page; the Software database now includes "Library" and "Other" software types; and we have a new Architecture database for storyfile formats, metadata, protocols etc. Over the course of the year there were 14,744 page edits (a record number) by 72 editors. You are all welcome to contribute by adding and editing pages.

Institutional Relations

Reported by Hugo Labrande, Institutional Relations chair

This new committee took shape in 2025, and focused its efforts in an internal inventory of existing institutional relations that IFTF has had over its existence, as a first step towards supporting the president and the board in getting an overview of our stakeholders and partners and the kinds of relationships we've had with them.

Intfiction Forum

Reported by Dannii Willis, IntFiction Forum Committee chair

2025 was a more dramatic year than usual for the Interactive Fiction Community Forum. The forum, like most IFTF sites, is hosted on Linode, who [had a major outage on July 27](#). But while the other IFTF sites quickly came back, the forum's server seemed to have suffered actual damage resulting in a corrupted database which we were unable to fix. We were then left with restoring from a backup.

The forum had two types of backups: a daily Linode (whole server) snapshot, and a weekly Discourse (the forum software) backup onto S3. Unfortunately the daily Linode snapshot from the 26th did not work: when we tried restoring it the server would not accept any network connections. Even more unfortunately, each daily Linode snapshot replaces the day before's, meaning we couldn't go back and try the one from 2 days ago. Linode also keeps a weekly snapshot, the most recent of which was from July 20, which we could restore and connect to, but using it as is would have resulted in a whole week's worth of posts being lost.

The forum backed up itself to S3 once a week, and the most recent S3 backup was from July 25. We were able to put this backup into the July 20 server and get everything back up and running [on July 30](#). All up the forum was offline for 3 days and lost about 1 day and 7 hours of posts. Now that we've seen that the Linode snapshots are not so reliable we have switched to daily S3 backups. Hopefully we won't have another server corruption event, but if we do then our backups will at least be more recent.

The forum runs on [Discourse](#) an open source forum app. The Discourse team are very responsive and have even fixed bugs I've reported within a day. So our forum runs on a modern high quality web app, and it can take advantage of recent developments in the web platform, but the trade off is that they do not support ancient browsers. They [announced this year](#) that they would be dropping support for iOS 15, Firefox <128 and Chrome <119. Although almost all of our forum members would still be on supported browsers, there were a few that would be affected. So we made the decision to switch to the extended support branch of Discourse. The change to the supported browsers would still be coming, but we delayed it by about 6 months, giving anyone affected time to find an alternative. In January 2026 we finally updated to the next version of Discourse.

Twine

Reported by Chris Klimas, Twine Committee chair

Most activity by the Twine committee in 2025 centered around the official web site, [twinery.org](#). Because the site saw downtime due to bot crawlers, static archives of the Q&A and forums sections (which have been in a read-only state for many years, but kept online so that information there remains accessible) were created. These measures were unfortunately not enough to keep up with bot demand, so the site was placed behind Cloudflare's CDN, as many of IFTF's web sites are. This change resolved the problem.

In addition to web site changes, the trademark for Twine was renewed, and 92 copies of the Twine Cookbook print edition were sold.

Financial Summary

Reported by Colette Zinna, IFTF Treasurer

In 2025, IFTF took in \$42,592.69 and spent \$47,103.55, for a net loss of \$4,510.86.

IFTF's bank accounts held \$10,426.96 at the start of the year and held \$5,916.10 at the end of the year.

The table of IFTF income and expenses is at the end of this report.

Income

IFTF's income is a mix of donations, sponsorships, and sales. This is the net income after accounting for any service fees and exchange rates. The division of income per category:

Category	Amount (USD)	% of Income
Donations	18,073	42%
Sales	14,748	35%
Sponsorships	9,772	23%
Grand Total	42,593	100%

Donations are money that people send to any IFTF program without receiving a product or service in return.

Sponsorships are specific to NarraScope.

Sales are purchases for NarraScope memberships and the print-on-demand services through IF Archive.

Income Per Program

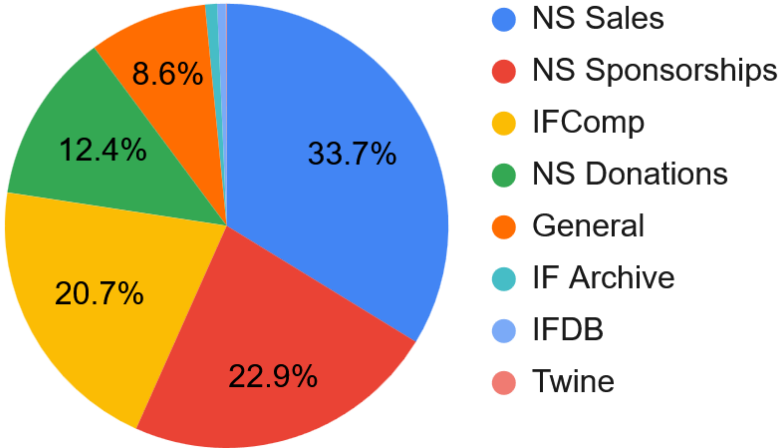
The PayPal links on IFTF's program websites identify which program a donor selected. All the income is pooled into a single bucket (funds are not restricted), but it is helpful to track which PayPal donations were elicited from which programs. The most useful case for this is tracking donations made to the IFComp Colossal Fund.

A detailed breakdown of the income per program:

Program	Category	Amount (USD)	% of Income
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NarraScope	Sales	14,375	33.7%
NarraScope	Sponsorships	9,772	22.9%
IFComp	Donations	8,818	20.7%
NarraScope	Donations	5,285	12.4%
General	Donations	3,677	8.6%
IF Archive	Sales	373	0.9%
IFDB	Donations	268	0.6%
Twine	Donations	25	0.1%
Grand Total		42,593	100.0%

Income Per Program



NarraScope sales is income from conference memberships made through Eventbrite between April to June.

NarraScope sponsorships is income from sponsors in exchange for conference specific benefits.

IFComp donations are attributed to the Colossal Fund PayPal link on the IFComp site. Notably, this does not match the number on the CF’s donation thermometer. This is because the thermometer tracks the gross donations *sent* to the CF and this report reflects the net donations *received* by IFTF after PayPal fees. There was one recurring monthly donation for IFComp, but otherwise every other donation for this was a one time donation during the CF period from August to October.

NarraScope donations are made by individuals without the purchase of a conference membership or other products or services.

General donations do not have a specific program associated with it. These come from PayPal, Patreon, checks, and other methods. After NarraScope donations and the IFComp Colossal Fund,

the majority of donations to IFTF fall into this category. These were primarily from recurring monthly donations with some one time donations throughout the year.

The following sources combined account for less than 2% of 2025 income:

IF Archive sales is income from the print-on-demand service IFTF uses for *The Inform Designer's Manual* and *The Twine Cookbook*.

IFDB donations are attributed to the PayPal link on the IFDB site. These were primarily from recurring monthly donations with a few one time donations throughout the year.

Twine donations are attributed to PayPal link on the IFTF homepage when the donor earmarks their contribution for Twine. These were from one time donations.

NarraScope and IFComp account for about 90% of IFTF income. In 2025, these two events had dedicated fundraising events and other IFTF programs did not.

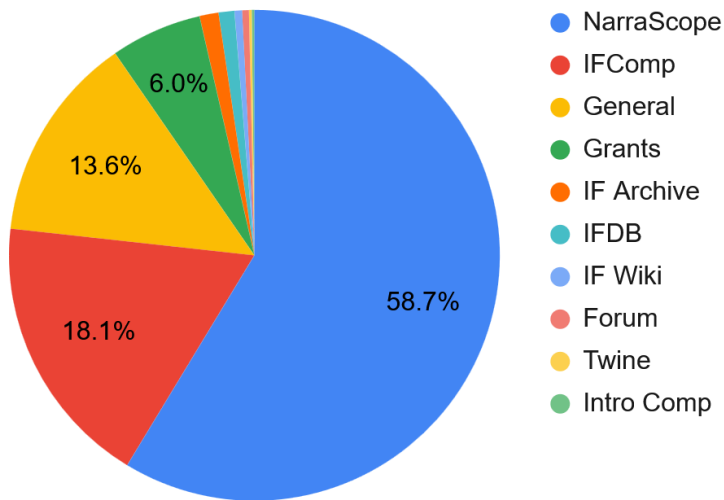
Expenses

IFTF's expenses are a mix of web hosting and maintenance fees, legal services, IFComp award disbursements, Grant disbursements, and NarraScope specific expenses.

The division of expenses per program:

Program	Amount (USD)	% of Expenses
NarraScope	(27,637)	58.7%
IFComp	(8,510)	18.1%
General	(6,429)	13.6%
Grants	(2,833)	6.0%
IF Archive	(589)	1.3%
IFDB	(492)	1.0%
IF Wiki	(234)	0.5%
Forum	(211)	0.4%
Twine	(84)	0.2%
Intro Comp	(84)	0.2%
Grand Total	(47,104)	100.0%

Expenses Per Program



NarraScope

A full breakdown of NarraScope expenses are provided in the [2025 NarraScope Financial Transparency Report](#). Differences in the NarraScope report and this final report are:

- The final net income is about \$60 more than in the NarraScope report due to a recurring donation after the report was released
- The final net expenses are about \$1,020 more than in the NarraScope report due to:
 - \$1,000 of expenses that weren't debited from the IFTF account until January 2026 but was accounted for in the NarraScope report
 - About \$20 of web hosting fees incurred in the months after the NarraScope report was released

Significantly, NarraScope 2025 resulted in a net profit to IFTF (of less than \$800) for the first time since 2022.

IFComp

The IFComp costs:

Category	Amount (USD)
IFComp Prizes	(7,898)
Web Hosting	(332)
Professional Services	(280)
Grand Total	(8,510)

- IFCComp Prizes include the prizes to IFCComp winners and PayPal fees
- Professional services were for the 2025 IFCComp logo and PayPal fees

General

General costs, not assigned to a specific program:

Category	Service	Amount (USD)
Professional Services		(4,156)
	<i>Legal Services</i>	<i>(3,225)</i>
	<i>Consulting Fees</i>	<i>(625)</i>
	<i>USPS PO Box</i>	<i>(307)</i>
Web Hosting		(1,491)
	<i>Fastmail</i>	<i>(872)</i>
	<i>Monthly charges</i>	<i>(619)</i>
Insurance		(781)
Grand Total		(6,429)

- Legal Services were significantly higher this year than prior years. These costs were due to communications regarding Twine, the effects of UK legislation on IFTF and its committees, and updating/maintaining IFTF legal documentation.
- Consulting Fees were for the Board's meetings with a non-profit consultant in late 2025. Half of the fees were paid in 2025 and the remainder in 2026.
- USPS PO Box fees are an annual charge
- Web hosting includes:
 - Fastmail renewal for 2 years of service
 - Monthly recurring charges for Amazon S3, Cloudflare, and other services
- Insurance was for the annual premium of IFTF's D&O insurance policy

Grants

The Grants program only has one category of expense: the grant funds that are distributed and their PayPal fees.

Category	Amount (USD)
Grants	(2,833)
Grand Total	(2,833)

Other Programs

The other programs that incurred expenses in 2025 accounted for less than 4% of IFTF expenses.

IF Archive, IFDB, IF Wiki, the Forum, Twine, and Intro Comp expenses were only for web hosting. The legal fees associated with Twine were counted in General costs.

Conclusion

The three programs that incurred the most expenses were NarraScope, IFComp, and Grants. The first two also bring in the most income. This is by design as they fundraise not only for their own program goals, but also to build IFTF's fund that supports all programs. This year, there was no Grants specific income to fund the Grants program, contributing to IFTF's net loss. This can be avoided in the future by running a fundraiser for the Grants program.

The legal service fees were high and also contributed to the net loss this year. IFTF pays for these legal services for the benefit and protection of its programs and is a significant reason why IFTF exists. Without IFTF, these programs would be projects run by individuals who would have to pursue any legal action using their own funds and potentially shut down those projects due to the lack of funds. IFTF can't predict the future legal services that are needed, but all IFTF fundraising contributes to paying for these services and IFTF could run specific fundraisers if these costs continue to increase.