

I People

# Play and Learn: The “Operation Egg Industry Transformation” Board Game AR Experience

Share:     

“Have you heard of cage-free eggs?”

Chia-Chi Tsai, CEO of Talent Field, a community placemaking<sup>1</sup> enterprise based in Chiayi, was invited by NTU D-School to share innovative methods for initiating discussions on egg issues with the students. Starting with a question, her answer led to the launch of the “Operation Egg Industry Transformation” board game. That’s right, she creates a “game” to help young people and adults understand the importance of transforming the egg industry.



Students playing the “Operation Egg Industry Transformation” board game.

## Issue Gamification: A New Form of Community Awareness-raising

Tzu-yi Hsu, the Operations Planning Manager at D-School and organizer of the event, said that this was the first time any of the students had played a board game that integrates public issues--in hopes of opening new horizons for problem-solving. Before the students started to play the game, Tsai explained the issues behind the game to them, that is, the inhumane treatment of laying hens at conventional chicken farms, the food safety crisis caused by drugs used on the chickens, the dilemmas faced by Taiwanese chicken farmers in the context of global competition, etc., showing the students how issues can be transformed into games so people can learn about the issues while playing the games.



Scan the cards for detailed introduction to the topic.

“This is not a very fun board game,” Tsai joked, since the players are learning while playing. However, the students said exactly the opposite in their feedback. Scott and Ray, students majoring in International Business at NCCU, threw themselves into the game and played enthusiastically. Afterwards, they couldn’t stop browsing the cards on their tablets to see more of the beautiful AR images and gather more information on the issue. Scott remarked, “I think the game’s degree of completion and issue integration are very high.” He believes that “Operation Egg Industry Transformation” employs traditional card and grid mechanisms, allowing players to gain knowledge while excitedly playing and completing the game.



Speaker Chia-Chi Tsai introducing egg issues and how they inspired her to create the board game.

## Intrigued? You Can Follow in D-School's footsteps!

In 2020, D-School launched "Game for Life: Reading and Re-designing Games for a Purpose," a course aimed at showing students how to translate issues they care about or knowledge into games for the public. D-School assistant Prof. Wen-Jie Tsai said he hopes to recruit students from different disciplines to brainstorm together, share their expertise with game interactions, and design innovative user experiences. He will work with the School of Occupational Therapy next semester to offer a class on board game design for elder players.

Having taken D-School's Introduction to Social Design, Scott strongly recommended other D-School courses to Ray. He also had an in-depth discussion with speaker Tsai on the issue of raising laying hens. The game allows for player feedback on the issues, confirming the effectiveness of this new approach to communicating issues.

<sup>1</sup>Placemaking means designing public spaces, old streets (laojie) and city squares, that are comfortable, safe, and accessible for all members of the community, regardless of age, ability, or socioeconomic status.