



NOVEAN DREAMERS ALMANAC

1 | *CITIES & CITIZENS*

Image courtesy of Novaquark

Hello Dreamers!

If we are all sleeping on the way to our new life on Alioth, you must be dreaming this. And why is it an Almanac? Because otherwise the stupid acronym wouldn't work. This magazine is more or less a "proof of concept": It's not a newspaper, covering recent events, it's a periodical with in-depth looks at certain topics concerning the Dual Universe community. Is there even enough to write about at the Pre-Alpha stage of the game? Surprisingly yes. This issue has the theme "Cities & Citizens", because that's something I was interested in. I talked to many people from the community. And there are many more I couldn't talk to, because Dual Universe is already far to big for one person to know everything and everyone. Additionally, and by my own design, all of the first issue of the *Novean Dreamers Almanac* was done by me: I wrote, edited and illustrated it. If the feedback is positive, I'll probably look for a team. For the time being: Have fun reading.

Agilulf

What is Dual Universe?

To quote the game's developer Novaquark: "Dual Universe is a Continuous Single-Shard sandbox MMORPG taking place in a vast Sci-fi universe, focusing on emergent gameplay with player-driven in-game economy, politics, trade and warfare. Players can freely modify the voxel-based universe by creating structures, spaceships or giant orbital stations, giving birth to empires and civilizations."

You can support the game by pledging money and participate in the ongoing Pre-Alpha tests.

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Editor and responsible for the content:
Daniel Nusser
Munich, Germany

Dual Universe username: Agilulf
Discord username: Agilolfing#8694

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Very Important Questions

"How should playing Dual Universe feel like in terms of Sci-fi franchises?"

"I'm going to go out on a limb and say that I hope it's as detailed as EVE Online and Space Engineers but with the excitement and adventure of Star Wars and Star Trek. If that fails, just please don't let it be another No Man's Sky."

FleetAdmiralCoke, Terran Union

"I would definitely say Dual Universe should feel like The Expanse. Amazing show."

Cybrex, Band of Outlaws

"I would like it to be more like a Warhammer Star Trek."

ShadowLordAlpha, SilverLight Industries

"I prefer the grittier style. Something like the underground Star Wars universe or Blade Runner. Diverse and massive in scale, used and abused."

Kytheum, Empire

"I don't want it to become a 'Star Wars game' per say. What I want is to be able to build ships that give me the feeling that I'm piloting a Star Destroyer or flying a Tie Fighter, all without the constructs actually being those."

MrStarWars, The Solar Empire

"The sense of realism of The Expanse, but with elements of more advanced technology like in Halo or Mass Effect. And I love Blade Runner, so I'd really enjoy exploring some rainy, neon-lit, crime infested cities."

Code24, Objective Driveyards

"Warhammer 40k space crusades would absolutely be our jam."

Zamaro de Metus, The Eldritch Nation



Cities of World's Desire

Building communal structures in Dual Universe

French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte supposedly once said: "If the Earth were a single state, Constantinople would be its capital." In the world of Dual Universe the city of Constantinople, or Istanbul, is long gone - as is the rest of Earth. But the search

for the "city of world's desire" is very much alive. Who will build the capital that will rival all others and live throughout the ages? Many organizations have different ideas of how to achieve this. Here are some of the most prominent examples.



Image courtesy of Novaquark



When *Band of Outlaws* announced Project Tortuga in autumn of last year, they certainly made some waves. So much so that the organization dedicated to building the self-proclaimed community city now boasts over a hundred members and a spot in the community's Top Ten. The name has a ring to it: Tortuga, the legendary 17th century pirate haven in the Caribbean, which was home to a strange mix of French, English and Dutch swashbuckling adventurers. Will it be reborn?

"There will be reasons for people to come to Tortuga", Alethion of *Band of Outlaws*, the city's chief planer, tells us. "Resource deals, trade, mercenary work, entertainment, a place to live... and maybe some black market dealings. Things will become clearer." A pirate city built by a pirate organization? There might be some questions of allegiance. But *Band of Outlaws* keeps emphasizing, that Tortuga will be a "community created, neutral player hub". They only helped starting it.

"Whilst *Band of Outlaws* may be managing the city, it is a community effort and each organization will have their say and provide services and shops", Alethion explains. "We do not intend to be restrictive." Already there's an ever-growing list of partners. To name a few: Blue Moon Tavern, Dice, Vulture Corp, Himera Trade Exchange, Kraken, Vanguard, Penrose, Ark Central and Mobius Foundation. Some provide specific services, others just want to be part of it. Everyone's welcome.

The city is supposed to be more than just a trade hub. "A pirate port was a place of safe haven to those who were avoiding restrictive governments and rules", Alethion says. "And to exchange and trade their gains, have a place to chill out, get a crew or repair things." At some point there might be services available, "you don't get anywhere else". The shady stuff will exist, but Tortuga is supposed to be a secure place as well. And for that the city will probably be built in the games safe zone.



Courtesy of Tortuga City

The Sanctuary Moon of Alioth seems to be the most likely location for Tortuga. What will emerge there is supposed to be an "organically growing" city. Of course that needs planning too, maybe even more so. "The main concern will be how easy it is for people to transport cargo and get in and out efficiently", Alethion explains. "There will be main pathways for small vehicles to move around in, especially when the city becomes bigger." Much of that is still a matter of trial and error.

The vision for Tortuga is quite clear however: Organizations can rent plots of lands and build freely. There will also be certain fees, which will be determined later. But in general, the restrictions are supposed to be minimal. "There is a certain look we aim for. It is a good guideline to help create the feel, when building and living within the city" Alethion says. "Blade Runner, Altered Carbon, Ghost in the Shell or Cyberpunk 2077 are good sources of inspiration to pull from."

But with pirates and mercenaries being... well... pirates and mercenaries, how secure will living in the city actually be? The game's safe zone will certainly help, but there are always scores that need to be settled. "Vulture Corp will be assisting us regarding security of the city", Alethion explains. But it will also be the task of all of the participating organizations to contribute to the defence of the city. Historically Caribbean Tortuga had to deal with the odd invasion as well.

Band of Outlaws will do its part to safeguard the project. "The city will be governed by BOO mainly, but each organization will have a say in the development of the city", Alethion tells us. "Think of it like a council." At the start, Alethion himself will be Tortuga's chairman. But in the future he wants it to become more of a "homeowners association", with everyone voting and deciding. "It will be interesting to see the development and i am quite excited", he says.

Tortuga aims to be a true community driven project with freedom to explore all aspects of the game, be it building, trading or competing with others as part of a big group of players. The expectations are definitely high.

Role:	Community city
Location:	Sanctuary Moon of Alioth
Inhabitants:	<i>undetermined</i>
Style:	Cyberpunk



Where Tortuga wants to invite the whole community to join the fun, *Terran Union* has a bit of a luxury problem: Their member base is already so vast, that a single city might not suffice. Zackd41pro, *Terran Union*'s Minister of Infrastructure & Regional Development, has no easy task herding a group of players closing in on 750. "What I see is a capital city, which will function as TU proper, and the possibility of city states that rule under TU law", he tells us. Much is still up in the air.

The capital, which Zack gave the working title TU Central, will house most of the civil sector. "Diplomatic embassies, courthouses, educational resources, building codes, political offices and possibly libraries", he lists. Besides being a "informational hub", the capital is supposed to be a normal city with trade hubs, residential, commercial and industrial areas. Of course those are just concepts. Much of it will depend on what the game will actually allow you to do with a city.

But there are complications for *Terran Union* that are more immediate: "Because of the language barrier the capital will have rules and regulations in all languages to allow easy access", Zack explains. There are already large communities inside the organization that might have their own plans - namely the 120 predominantly German players in Hyperion Corporation. "If the Germans want to make their own city that's alright", Zack says. "It's encouraged as long as it's setup properly."

Underhand Aerial of *Hyperion Corporation* confirms, that the organization has something in the works. "There is much talk about it", he says. But since all 120 members have a say in the planning, nothing has been decided yet. Except this: Hyperion City will be built on the same planet as TU Central. Could this be an opportunity for friendly rivalries between *Terran Union's* cities? Maybe matches between "Hyperion City F.C." and "Athletico Central"? "Not impossible", we hear.

Because the size of *Terran Union's* member base forces Zack and his staff to put much emphasis on rules and administration, the capital city hasn't taken much of a shape yet. "Hopefully to some degree the distribution of land will work like in real life", Zack says. "Our buildings will go to auction or sale and as long as the land is properly zoned, it will be bought and sold as seen fit." Once there is a proper system, he sees no reason why non-members couldn't settle there as well.

"As for architectural style we are considering Asgardian with cyberpunk underlays", Zack explains. At least, that is supposed to be the basis for universal building standards, when the time comes. As for the cost of living in TU Central, the minister is cautious: "I don't want to encourage fees, but i think it's expected in some manner for a government to function properly." It will be a task for the city's official to turn the knobs - once they are appointed or elected, that's still unsure as well.

So just how many people will eventually live in the capital? "We have not polled for that", Zack tells us. "But the people will live where they want." He sees *Terran Union's* members spreading far and wide anyway. "I do have hope for having the ability to allow outposts to start out as operational sites that, with proper paperwork, can also become a city", Zack explains. Of course the Minister of Infrastructure has another troublesome task then: a way to reach all of those cities.

TU Central won't exist so much so as to attract people - the size of Terran Union will do that on its own. Will the capital be a place for foreign tourists, traders and adventurers as well? Hopefully it will be.

Role:	Member city
Location:	<i>undetermined</i>
Inhabitants:	<i>undetermined</i>
Style:	Marvel's Thor, Cyberpunk



Courtesy of Terran Union

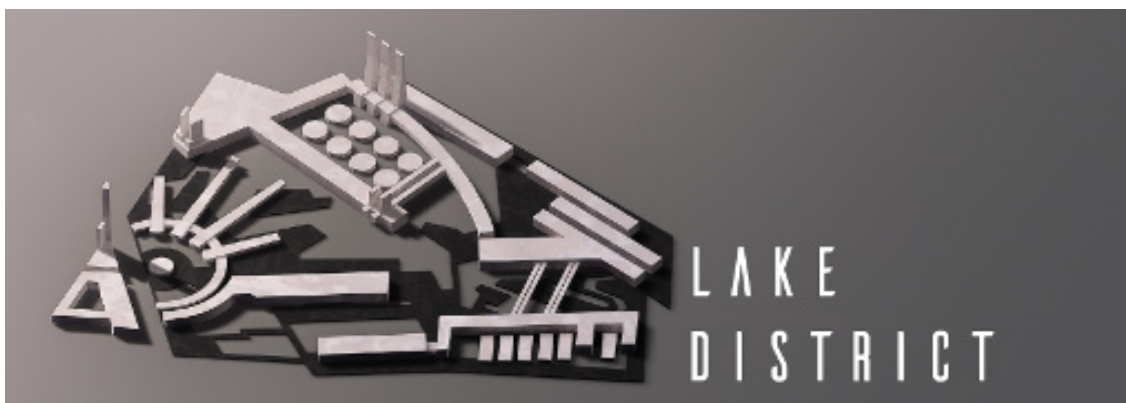


While Terran Union always is much about administration, *Empire* is an organization that thrives on appearance and aspiration. Much like the Emperor himself, Kytheum, who stakes out his claim vividly: "The Empire, being the planned nation it is, will have its flag spread across many cities, towns and settlements." Any colony can join this glorious nation of his and "claim the benefits" of free trade and, of course, being under the benevolent protection of the military.

Besides the propaganda, Kytheum and his staff put much thought in the planning of the capital city. The current plan is to first build a base of operation on Alioth and gather players and material for the grand project: A capital city on a yet undetermined planet. "I would like it just to be known as The Capital, although I can see third parties referring to it as Imperial City", Kytheum tells us. He wants to persuade corporations and companies to move there and make it a centre of commerce.

"There are plans for an imperial palace within the capital city", the Emperor explains. "We hope to centralise the city around this palace and develop the streets in a pattern that can feel like a representation of order." Plans for buildings and districts are already worked on and Kytheum provided us with some of the concepts. "At this rate, we have 27 independent corporations looking to base themselves within the Empire in some way", he says. A monumental task.

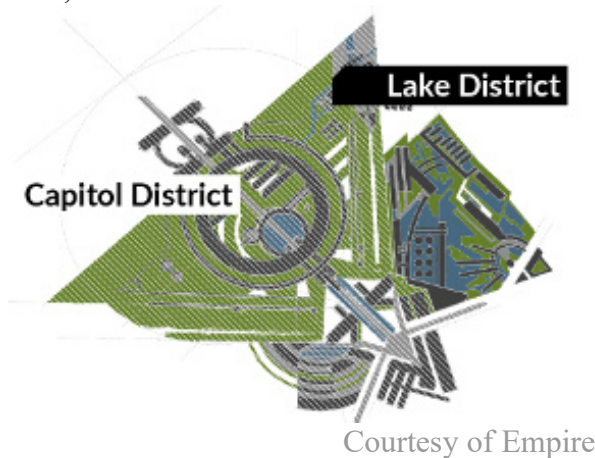
"We have prepared our sector to be as friendly to corporations as possible to become the economic capital of Dual Universe", Kytheum emphasizes. That means, for starters, no taxes or restrictions. Instead the Empire aims to rent out "prime real-estate", as the Emperor explains: "The price of land will be based on the area it is in. The closer to the palace the higher the rent cost becomes. By this the Empire gets a stable rate of income as well as being able to keep the cities active."



Courtesy of Empire

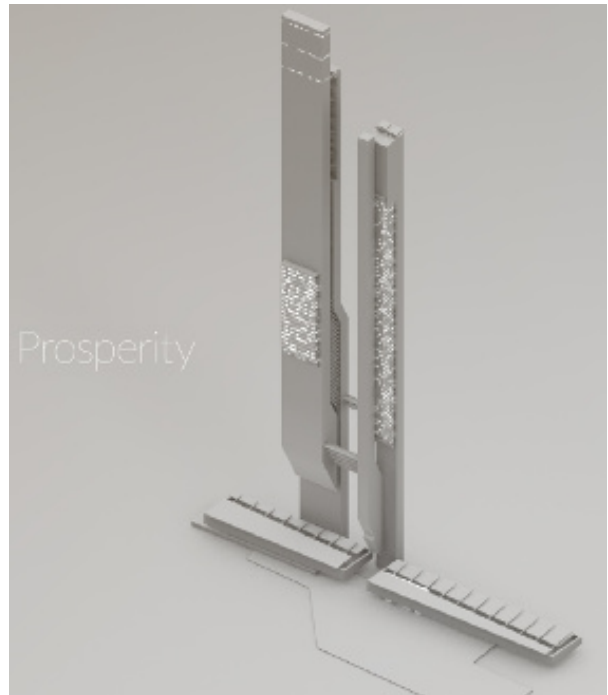
But basically The Capital is supposed to be everything - and with a cherry on top: "The city itself will be as formal and beautiful as Elysium, with a economy as vast and diverse as Shanghai, along with so many different cultures and corporations that by the amount of businesses on the street and the glowing signs advertising many products and services of all colours and shapes you will believe that the alphabet has doubled", the Emperor humbly advertises his vision.

In more technical terms Kytheum explains, that the main region will be planned out with the area divided into smaller pieces of land that corporations can choose to rent out. Going outwards and reaching the edges of the city, The Capital will eventually take a more organic approach. "There is a basic enforced area around the palace known as the capital zone, this will last only a short while and all of the tighter laws will be dropped at the end of it", he outlines the idea.



Courtesy of Empire

As for who can live in the city there seems to be a clear bureaucratic path: Non-citizens of the Empire will be "processed" and given a passport for 1 or 2 months. "Once it expires it's required that you obtain a citizenship", Kytheum explains. But that is supposed to give you access to a city that might accommodate inhabitants of "any size from the hundreds to the thousands". As for the Governor of the city - they will be directly appointed by the Emperor of course.



Courtesy of Empire

And if you see uniformed men and women in shiny boots, don't be alarmed. "The soldiers of the Empire are on rotation to prevent boredom from occurring, one of the tasks they are rotated onto is enforcement", Kytheum tells us. "They will use their powers to keep order and make sure the laws are followed. They are looking to impress superiors so they will be wanting to make a good report." But isn't it a small price to pay to be part of the "economic conquest" of Dual Universe? Surely.

The Empire has a lot planned and seems to have the motivation to do it. If the concept art is anything to go by, The Capital might be worth a visit for the architecture alone.

Role:	Member city
Location:	100 - 1000
Inhabitants:	<i>undetermined</i>
Style:	Elysium, Shanghai



With much of the city planning currently going on behind closed doors, *New Genesis* had the distinction of being one of the only organizations that actually released a city design to the public. But plans change a lot in Pre-Alpha and newly-appointed city planner The Silent Watcher tells us, that this specific city layout is "no longer current". "I made it my mission to go all out, but retaining a level of art to it", he says. "No point making a fortress that looks like garbage."



Courtesy of New Genesis / Archon Ender

The name of the city seems to be unchanged for the time being: Eden. Much of what is happening inside *New Genesis* appears to be linked with the organization's role-play and Eden is a fitting name for the crusading group. But will it be a utopia? "Personally, I'd like to see tall, futuristic white spires. Flying cities adorning the sky like great protectors of an empire, considered to be the pinnacle of science and development", The Silent Watcher explains. At least that's the dream.

On the other hand, the city planner is a realist. "I have no doubt that the first cities and forts will look and perform terribly, but I'm planning on it to act as a learning point for future designs", he says. His first plan, as he tells it, was a layout with a single overlooking tower in the middle, housing the administration, but: "I believe a building that stands out like that would be subject to the first attack in the event of an invasion", The Silent Watcher emphasizes. That's prescient.

Asked for expected number of inhabitants, most city planners we talk to don't have any clear answers. The Silent Watcher, being the technocrat he is, thinks about that a lot. Maybe too much. "When I started my position in New Genesis, I was told to expect 200 players, however I fear I'm to expect 400-500", he says. On the other hand: "I'm sure when the hype dies down we'll probably be with 100 or less on a daily basis." So basically: The city will house a lot of players. Or it will not.

"I haven't settled on any architectural designs yet", The Silent Watcher explains. "Usually, when I begin building and construction, an architectural style will emerge and develop on its own. So far that's the plan." He's not planning on anything "artistic", he says. Which does harken back to the now unused city layout *New Genesis* released. The thick walls surrounding the city made it resemble a fortress. He will keep the outline and work form there, The Silent Watcher says.

According to the city planner, the military will be tasked with defending Eden. However: "One of the major defence systems, that i plan to incorporate into one of the early cities as a test, is of my own design", he adds. "I'm unable to discuss anything about it or any other plans of this nature including security." The militaristic role-play of *New Genesis* will definitely play a role. Will it also make Eden a prime target for attacks, as The Silent Watcher fears? Only time will tell.

Eden will be a city mostly for members of *New Genesis*. Besides dreams of a "perfect balance of natural beauty and scientific wonder", as The Silent Watcher frames it, it seems to be primarily planned as a hub for the economic and military endeavours of the organization. Which doesn't mean, it can't look good: "I would like to find a Gaia like planet", the city planner says. "Plenty of greenery to enjoy, rather than a frozen wasteland or a mined out shell of a planet."

Anything else, like taxes and fees or the election of a city mayor, The Silent Watcher gladly delegates to other members of the organization. He's a builder and he will keep testing and planning until the city works. Which is probably why his inspiration is the eponymous city from "Stargate Atlantis" - because that city was already built and working, when humans found it. And it definitely contained "futuristic spires" and flew in the sky. Not the worst model then.

With all the meticulous planning, Eden should be an interesting place. The question seems to be, if you come as a tourist or as part of an invasion force. *New Genesis* is probably happy either way.

Role:	Member city
Location:	<i>undetermined</i>
Inhabitants:	100 - 500
Style:	Stargate Atlantis



As a matter of fact, Eden isn't even the only city project *New Genesis* is involved in. While Tortuga enjoys much of the limelight, there is another community city in the works. The project might not have the big publicity of the pirate haven, but nonetheless boasts a impressive list of involved organizations: SilverLight Industries, *New Genesis*, Sector Protectorate and Chromion Industrial, to name the big ones. Their cooperation in the *Aeonian Federation* includes the foundation of a city.

The project was actually birthed in the days of the Cinderfall Syndicate, where the city was called "Emberstone". To distance themselves from the past, the *Aeonian Federation* decided to rename it Horizon. But it still is a community effort. "Each will play their unique role within the Federation and it's entirely up to them as to how and what they will contribute", Lord Kittishima tells us. Of course he expects each member organization to bring their specific skills to the table.



Courtesy of Aeonian Federation

According to Lord Kittishima, Horizon will indeed be similar to the other community city, Tortuga, in a lot of ways. "It's by the people, for the people and everyone is welcome to enter, trade and purchase things", he says. But it will be policed and kept tidy with rules and regulations. On the one hand the city's mission is to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all players, but on the other hand it's supposed to reflect positively on the *Aeonian Federation* too - a "gleaming gem".

"Horizon won't just be a city either, it will serve more private roles for the member organizations", Lord Kittishima explains. The city will very much be open for everyone, so much so that it will be constructed as close to the spawn zone as possible to "lure in new players and traders". But the Grand Assembly of *Aeonian Federation* has control over the rules and the development of Horizon. The member organizations get their own land inside the city and distribute the rest.

Dunco of Silverlight Industries is tasked with working out the layout of Horizon, Lord Kittishima says. The Development Executive will have the last say, but there are already many ideas being thrown around: "The central tile will be occupied by a very large administrative tower surrounded by open space and plazas", Kittishima explains. "Horizon will feature a lot, like a colosseum and underground facilities, as well as a rapid transit system for ease of use."

"There will be a few mandatory taxes placed, but only to keep Horizon self sufficient", Kittishima says. "The Federation is not a business, but more of an organism of corporate entities." He mentions things like a low land ownership tax and fees for trading in the city. "But they will be minimal to ensure that the people who come to Horizon aren't deterred." The question of who can own or rent land inside the city will be decided by the Grand Assembly as well.

As for the policing of the city, the details are still unclear at this early state of the game, "because we can't determine what will need policing in the traditional sense", Lord Kittishima explains. It could be a job for the military, monitoring the streets of Horizon with small squads. Or there might be a separate police force. "We are always open for suggestions", the representative says. Exactly how many inhabitants will the security forces have to keep safe? The plan is: a lot.

But how will the city look like? "The overall theme and style of Horizon will be very relatable to Roman architecture, mixed with modern elements", Lord Kittishima tells us. "We want it to be functional and elegant." That at least would make Horizon stand out among the cyberpunk and futuristic designs of other cities. "Horizon will have vast markets and residential real estate", Kittishima describes his vision. A flourishing and dynamic metropolis.

Horizon wants to position itself as the first stop for players on Alioth - which means the city will have competition. But with several big organization backing it, it should work.

Role:	Community city
Location:	Alioth
Inhabitants:	<i>undetermined</i>
Style:	Roman Empire



When we ask the different organizations, where they want to build their cities, most don't have an answer this early in the game. Luckily that's not something we need to ask Novarkian of *The Cluster*, because his idea of a city isn't something stationary. "The Cluster is a group of spacefaring people living on a perpetually growing City Ship", the organization explains on their community page. "The Cluster travels from system to system to gather resources and wealth."

The Cluster is surely not the only "nomadic" group of Dual Universe, but the concept of the Cluster, a sprawling chaotic structure flying through space, has found some friends. Of course much of the realization depends on how the game will handle something like this. "I did not do much planning beyond how it will physically work in game", Novarkian says. His vision is a chaotic mix of design styles, almost organically grown. "I hope that will still be possible", he admits.

His organization is still small currently, probably too small to get the project going and then attract more players with it. "This initial build would require a sizeable work crew to construct", the *Cluster's* leader explains. "It's possible, but I may have to outsource it to a shipyard even." The core, the "Seed Ship", will probably have to be built on the ground, Novarkian says. Will there really be a growing city travelling the stars? That depends on a lot of uncertainties at this point.

"A carrier design, right now, would be far simpler and actually works", Novarkian explains. But of course that takes away a lot of the appeal of the Cluster. The original idea saw paying customers as well as temporary inhabitants travelling with the city ship from planet to planet. "Attachment and detachment may prove to be too difficult", the leader says. "But that remains to be seen." His vision will probably have to change. One idea are specially designed pods for passengers.

On *The Cluster's* community page was even talk about the City Ship becoming a marauder, that visits different worlds to plunder. There might be just a few to many stumbling blocks for realizing that idea. Admittedly Novarkian's inspirations came from the chaotic Unicomplex space city of "Star Trek's" Borg. But: "Just the artwork of their city gave me inspiration, not their conquering desires", he tells us. The space nomad stays confident: "I hope my original ideas can come true."

The Cluster has no easy task. Meeting the chaotic city ship while traveling Dual Universe would be pretty cool. If it will happen is another question. Let's hope.

Role:	Member city
Location:	Somewhere in space
Inhabitants:	<i>undetermined</i>
Style:	The Borg



Of course there are many more city projects to talk about: There's The Collective, another community city, planned by *GLSU* and of course we have myriads of capitals, that most of the big organizations are probably working on. But this article was just supposed to give an impression of the plans and visions at this early stage of the game. Much will depend on what functionality cities will have in the game and how feasible it even is, to build a big metropolis for hundreds of players.

Nevertheless many of the organizations dream big and that is what counts. Travelling the planets of Dual Universe will certainly be an adventure. And the "city of world's desire" might just be around the corner.

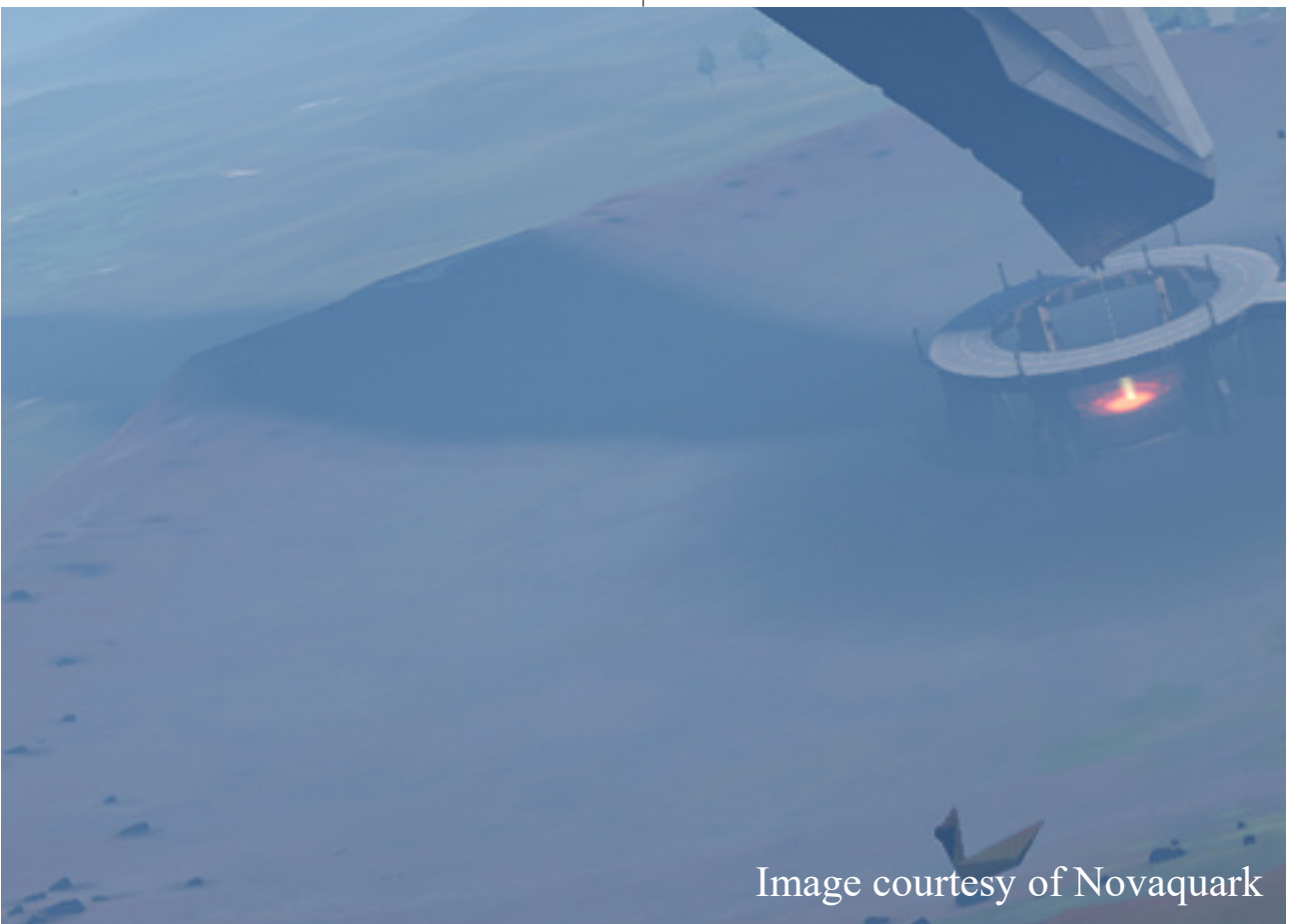


Image courtesy of Novaquark

New planet, who dis?

Media and Press in Dual Universe



The Dual Universe community has grown to an impressive size and like with all big communities it has already fractured. Things are happening in the forum, on the community page and on hundreds of Discord channels. A lot of diplomacy even takes place in private channels and never gets released to the public. Luckily there are some organizations and groups that try to gather as much information as possible from different sources. Let's talk about "the Press" of Dual Universe.

First and foremost, there's Dual Universe's most notable "news station": **Ark Central** was founded by Astrophil, who already started a similar project back in the Cinderfall Syndicate. The organization has prominent contributors from several big organizations. Ark Central presents game and community news in a quick and entertaining fashion, using pleasant production quality. There's usually a new episode released every month on YouTube, presented by FancyVader.

For those who love reading more in-depth articles and interviews about Dual Universe, there's **Outpost Zebra**. The website was started a while ago by a team of dedicated writers and releases on average two articles per month. It's less a news site and more a collection of editorials about persistent topics of the game. While Outpost Zebra is affiliated with Heimer Trade Xchange, they are officially neutral. Creative people are always welcome to contribute.

On **DU Sleepers**, Peregrin publishes short updates about the development of Dual Universe and events in the community almost daily. It's called a "Log" and that's as basic as it looks. But the wall of text does contain interesting information and chronicles most of the YouTube videos released about Dual Universe. Peregrin tends to give short personal comments about the rise and fall of organizations, so it's not exactly neutral, but entertaining nonetheless.

It's always a bit unclear what **EMP Gaming** is planning. The tight-knit gaming community has done Q&A sessions with Dual Universe organizations and community news videos on YouTube and leader Fullsend had started the short-lived news channel "Phase News". But recently the focus has gone back to just producing video content for EMP Gaming's Dual Universe organization Enzone Dawn. The old content is still there to watch and Phase News is supposed to come back later.

Another paused project: The organization GSLU did produce a Dual Universe round-table discussion called Q-Cast for quite some time, but recently stopped for the time being. With the host Glory being on hiatus from the game for personal reasons, it is unclear if and when the YouTube show will return.

Work in Progress

The **Alioth Broadcasting Corporation** aims to do radio and TV. Currently there's a 24/7 radio station called DUFM, that plays music. Talk-shows and other segments are planned, but there isn't anything of that kind being broadcast yet (or at least it is not advertised).

The **Alioth Media Group** wants to be a proper news agency in Dual Universe. The goal is to establish a network of well-informed contacts and representatives from organizations and use it to report on ongoing in-game events. At the moment, the project is still under construction and hasn't released anything yet.

There are probably other projects planned or starting up. These are usually announced on Dual Universe's "The Arkship Pub" forum.



The **Dual Universe Historical Society** is no press or news organization and doesn't want to be. But it is an invaluable resource of historical information, that's why it needs a mention in this overview. The DUHS records community events to keep for posterity. That usually happens in a dedicated channel on the organizations Discord channel, but every few months, Kurock releases a "Dual Universe State of Affairs" on Outpost Zebra, where he summarizes past events. It's a good read.



The council condemns in the strongest possible terms...

Intergovernmental organizations in Dual Universe

Years before Dual Universe even started its first Pre-Alpha test, the community had already formed countless big player groups: Corporations, empires, military orders and everything else imaginable. With the advent of the community page and a more formalized approach to the organizations format, there came talk of intergovernmental cooperation. Before there were even game characters or buildings or spaceships, the community of Dual Universe wanted a "United Nations".

At its foundation the "umbrella alliance" *Cinderfall Syndicate*, or short: CSYN, already comprised of many big organizations: Terran Union, SilverLight Industries and Objective Driveyards were among the first members, others like the Solar Empire joined later. "At the peak of its influence, Cinderfall itself was a top three organization with over 800 members across all member organizations", former official Astrophil tells us. But of course, the problems were mounting.



Image courtesy of Novaquark

In summer of 2017 Terran Union left the CSYN, other organizations followed shortly after. All those "break-ups" were amicable, but it dealt heavy blows to Cinderfall. The alliance lost more and more influence. "The failure of the Syndicate cannot be attributed to any single event, person, or chance of fate", Astrophil says. There were conflicts of interest among members, but also dramatic differences in size between the organizations. Reaching compromises became too hard.

While Astrophil contributes the failure of CSYN primarily to administration issues and missing staff, Zamaro de Metus of Eldritch Nation has a different view of the situation. Back then, he was one of the officials in Terran Union and a staunch critic of the Cinderfall Syndicate. He had problems with several members of the alliance's top brass. "They were a bit like the unelected Eurocrats in Brussels when it comes to the EU", he tells us. He didn't see a future in CSYN.

"Naturally having laws and rules in an alliance isn't a big deal, until someone tries to abuse it", Zamaro says. He especially opposed a planned charter of the alliance, which to his understanding would have given the administration of CSYN "extended powers over the member organizations" and even let them "meddle in their private businesses and diplomacy". That draft was shot down, but its replacement was problematic too. Zamaro got Terran Union to leave Cinderfall.

Whatever actuated the collapse of CSYN - and leaked documents seem to have played a role in it, as well as dorky internal sabotage - the result was devastating: More and more organizations left the alliance and autumn of 2017 saw the end of Cinderfall Syndicate. The remaining members reformed under the banner of *Aeonian Federation*, cutting all ties with the old administration. Astrophil went on to found the media organization Ark Central, having much success producing news shows.

"The Cinderfall Syndicate was an interesting and worthwhile political experiment in a game that is itself a social experiment, yet it simply lacked the right combination of elements to maintain its standing", Astrophil gives his view of the events. "Though Cinderfall may no longer exist, I do believe it has left a certain impression on the community and influenced the political culture of Dual Universe in ways that will last beyond simply the Cinderfall legacy."



Courtesy of Cinderfall Syndicate

With the end of CSYN, there was no other organization that attempted anything at the scale of the "umbrella alliance". The ideas of intergovernmental cooperation became more refined. The Aeonian Federation still existed as a trimmed down alliance, GLSU aimed at building a network of smaller groups and the juggernauts Terran Union and Band of Outlaws had their own programs of fostering cooperation and weld together "divisions" and "special interest groups".

But some of the big organizations went another way: If Cinderfall was the "United Nations", *SEN* is the "Security Council" of Dual Universe - as effective or ineffective as its real-life counterpart. "SEN isn't an alliance. It's a place for organizations to discuss possible cooperation", Zamaro de Metus says. But *SEN* does indeed have actual members: Terran Union, SilverLight Industries, Empire, Solar Empire and The Eldritch Nation. Names that have some weight in the community.

"There's nothing more than a couple of rules mutually agreed on when it was created", Zamaro says. "To join it, you need a minimum amount of members. All participation is voluntary and it has no administrative side to it whatsoever. Everyone is only there to discuss projects." *SEN* doesn't even have an official speaker. Whatever Zamaro tells us, is his own view. But if everything is voluntary and no one has any obligations, what is the point of having this "permanent summit"?

"What is done here is: Representatives can motion a proposal for a project or deal", Zamaro says. Organizations can veto those proposals, if it would affect them negatively. But that apparently hasn't happened much, because proposals themselves aren't really used this early in the game. Zamaro doesn't think there's any danger: "The only way it would stop functioning is, if a member actively vetoes every proposition made, no matter if they participate or not", he explains.

"I'm not entirely sure *SEN* is still relevant", Astrophil gives his own comment. "Even as a representative to *SEN* during my time as head diplomat for the Terran Union, I fell under the impression that each member organization did not believe itself to be a part of any sort of formal alliance." Without an effective form of enforcement of inter-organizational policies, Astrophil doesn't see *SEN* as a facilitator of cooperation and diplomacy. He calls it a "watered down version of the UN".

Notably absent from the *SEN* is Band of Outlaws. Of the top five organizations in Dual Universe only they choose to stay out of it. "We are always willing to cooperate with other organizations, but it is too early for us to commit to something so formal", Lord Void, BOOs chief diplomat, tells us. "Having seen several such groups come and go we prefer to wait and see how things play out." Some say, the important thing is to get people talking. And that is exactly what is happening in *SEN*.

As it stands, Cinderfall Syndicate didn't work out. *SEN* has yet to prove, if it works under pressure. And the game isn't even out of Pre-Alpha yet. The political landscape of Dual Universe could still change immensely. "A big factor in this is the fact, that there's multiple EVE Online corporations monitoring this game to see if its worth jumping on", Zamaro de Metus says. That potential influx of players could require a whole new system of communication and cooperation.

"I do not see a new 'League of Nations' work, if they do exactly like CSYN", Zamaro tells us. "They would have to change how it's lead." For Astrophil, the ghost of the "umbrella alliance" is still very much alive in other, smaller projects. "It remains to be seen how successful Aeonian Federation will be compared to Cinderfall", he says. Maybe the thunderstorm of the birth of Dual Universe's community has settled down a bit. Probably it's only the calm before the next storm.

Organizations Snapshot

[March 30th 2018]

Organization	Tag	Members	Affiliated with
Terran Union	TU	734	SEN TU
Band of Outlaws	BOO	310	Tortuga
SilverLight Industries	SLI	267	SEN AFED
Empire	EMPIRE	264	SEN
The Solar Empire	TSE	166	SEN
Soul Nebula	SN	159	
New Genesis	NG	154	AFED
Hyperion Corporation	HYP	120	TU
The Eldritch Nation	TEN	114	SEN
<i>Tortuga City</i>	-	114	Tortuga
<i>DU Explorers</i>	-	112	
FrogSwarm	FROG	95	
<i>Alpha Academy</i>	-	95	
Objective Driveyards	ODY	83	
Stargate Command	SC	78	TU
GLSU	GLSU	78	GLSU
<i>The Blue Moon Tavern</i>	-	77	Tortuga
Enzone Dawn	EMP	76	
The Opean Federation	TOF	72	
Polestria		67	

SEN SEN council

TU Terran Union & associates

AFED Aeonian Federation

Tortuga Tortuga City

GLSU GLSU & associates