

RYAN LAUKAT

# EMPIRES OF THE VOID

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## Rule Book

Kickstarter Rule Book Ver. 1  
By Ryan Laukat

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# INTRO

*By the time Captain Markan realized Earth was losing the war against the Znu, it was too late. Earth's shield fell and the Znu scorched the surface to an irradiated wasteland. In desperation and for the survival of the species, she sent Earth's massive Worldship on a decade-long journey to uncharted space. Their destination was the fringes of the galaxy, where there was a chance to gain a foothold and grow in strength again, and perhaps find new allies for the fight against the Znu and Decima empires. Learning of this plan, the great empires sent their own Worldships, following Earth to the edge, determined to stake their own claim and win the war for the fringe.*

In *Empires of the Void II*, each player has been given command of a mission by an alien empire to establish a foothold at the fringe of the galaxy. The game begins when their massive Worldships reach the fringe, where they must explore, wage war, use diplomacy, and construct buildings to gain victory. The fringe is sparsely populated with many sentient species struggling to survive, leaving huge regions of planets open for exploration and colonization. Many species are eager to ally themselves with a powerful empire to gain security and stability in a chaotic and difficult time.



*2-5 players, 30 minutes per player, age 13+*

# COMPONENTS

- Rulebook
- System Boards (8)
- Starting System Boards (2)
- Empire Boards (5 for each empire)
- Worldships (1 for each empire)
- Action Cards (7 for each system)
- Event Cards (2 for each system)
- Control Cubes (60)
- Influence Markers (75)
- Credit Tokens (40)
- Victory Point Tokens (50)
- Goods Tokens (15 in each of 3 types)
- Building Tokens (25 in each of 3 types)
- Starfarer Tokens (one set for each empire)
- Star Sloop Tokens (4 for each empire)
- Warbot Tokens (14)
- Heecrix Invader Tokens (3)
- Nomad Orbital Station Token (1)
- Commander Token
- Alien Ally Tokens (1 for each system)
- Alien Unit Tokens (4 for each system)
- Bomb Tokens (10)
- Dice (14)
- Mid-Campaign Card
- 1st Scoring Card (5)
- 1st Player Card
- Parasite Token

# SETUP

1. Place the empty starting spaces in a column in the center of the play area depending on the number of players (there should be one empty space per player).

2. Give each player (or let each player choose) an alien empire board. Give each player the following components that match their empire/color:

**Star Sloop Tokens**

**Starfarer Tokens**

**Influence Tokens**

**Control Cubes**

**Worldship Token**

*Note: Each alien empire board lists a special power that the alien gives.*

Each player must place one of their control cubes on the starting space of the command track on their player board (this space is different depending on the number of players).

Also, give each player a "**1st Scoring**" card.

3. Choose the systems that you will use and set up the action card deck. Choose a number of systems to use in the game depending on the number of players.

**2 Players: 5 Systems**

**3 Players: 6 Systems**

**4 Players: 7 Systems**

**5 Players: 8 Systems**

*System Requirement: The Tan Fu and Meezle III systems must be played together. If you are using one, you must use the other.*

*Note: If this is your first game, we recommend playing with a maximum of 4 players and not using the Tan Lok system.*

Once you have chosen the system boards, combine the 7 action cards for each of these systems into one deck and shuffle (remaining, unused cards should be returned to the game box). Place this deck face down and deal 4 cards to each player. These cards make up each player's hand. A player may look at the cards in their hand at any time, but should keep these cards secret from the other players until they are played.

Randomly pick 1 event card for each system you have chosen and shuffle these into the deck. Place unused event cards in the game box.

Cut the event deck in half (approximately) and place the "Mid-Campaign" card face down on top the bottom half. Place the top half of the deck face down on top of this card and place the entire deck face down near the play area.

4. Place the ally tokens and their corresponding alien unit tokens for each system board being used in a row near the play area.

5. Shuffle the system boards face down and place them on the table according to the recommended configuration on page xx (depending on the number of players).

6. Give each player five of each building (city, base, academy). Each player must place each set of five buildings in the appropriate row on their player board on the circle spaces. Place any unused buildings in the game box.

7. Place the goods tokens face down in a pile and mix them up.

8. Place the credit tokens, victory points, and Warbot tokens near the play area. This is the supply. Give each player **7 credits** from the supply.

9. Choose a start player. Give this player the commander token and the 1st Player card. Starting with the active player, each player chooses one region on the starting spaces at the edge of the system boards and **places on it their worldship, one Starfarer token, and one Star Sloop token.**

**The game is now ready to begin.**



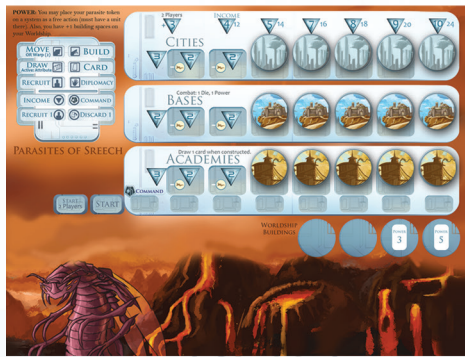
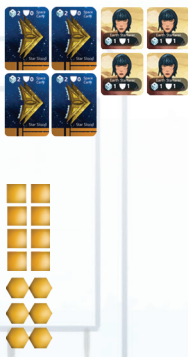
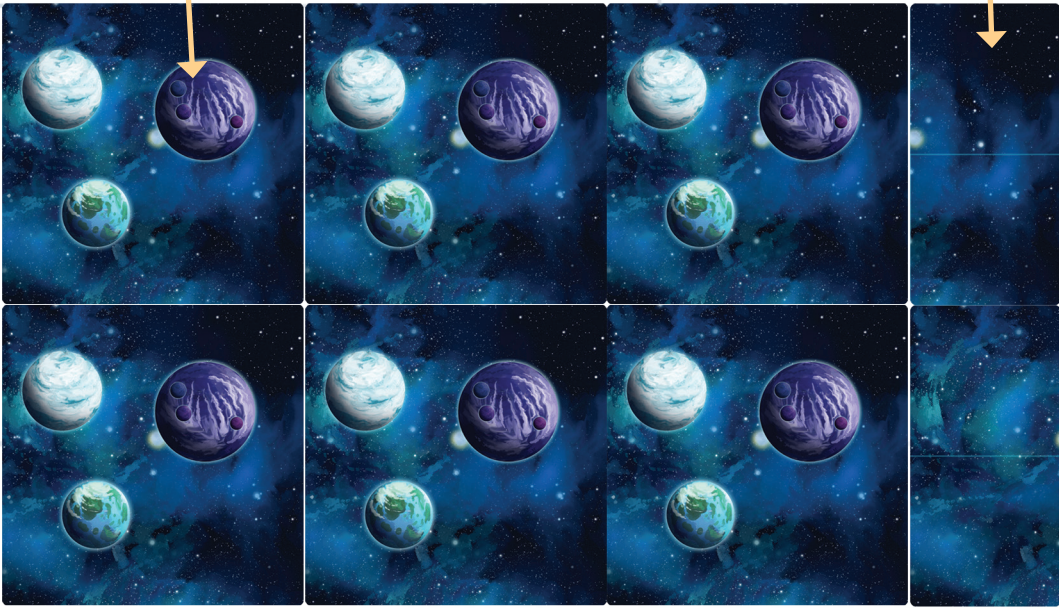
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Command Track Start

# GOAL

The goal of the game is to control the fringe of the galaxy! This control is measured in VICTORY POINTS. Players will score and collect victory points twice in the game. Players also gain 1 victory point each time they win a battle. Some action cards also grant victory points.

# TERMS

These are some important terms and concepts that will come up in this rule book.

**Active Player:** The first player in the round. This player chooses the action for the round.

**Region:** Each system board is divided into six regions: four space regions and two planet regions. Regions are separated by borders. Planet regions contain victory point symbols.

**Planet Capital Region:** The larger of the two regions on a planet, and home to a sentient alien species. Planet Capitals contain an alien unit image, image of the planet surface, and ally benefits.

**System:** All of the regions on a system board make up a system.

**Unit:** A cardboard, square-shaped token representing various troops in a player's forces. A region may never hold more than 3 of one player's units. A Star Sloop counts as a unit. A Worldship also counts as a unit, even though it is not a square token.

**Control:** A player takes control of a region by moving units there (but not through). Planet region control is marked with a player's control cube, and a player **does not** need to keep units there to retain control of it. Space region control, on the other hand, does not give any benefits (in most cases) and is not marked with a cube. When a player moves their units out of a space region, they lose control of it.

**Influence:** Each system is inhabited by a unique alien species. The player with the most influence markers in a system is allied to that alien. Influence markers are placed on the planet surface image in each system.

**Command:** A representation of an empire's ability to move and perform specific actions. Each player keeps track of their command total with a cube on the command track on their empire board. Each player starts with 3 command (4 if playing with two players). When a player spends a command, the player moves the cube on the track one space to the right. A player may not spend command if they reach the last space on their track. The last space on the track is determined by how many academies a player has built. If a player reaches the end of their command track, they must reset their command in order to spend it again.

**Credit:** Credits are a resource that players use to pay for buildings and units. Any time a player "gains or collects income", that player collects credits according to the track at the top of their empire board (described further on pages 12 & 13).

**Goods:** Goods are collected from the board when moving, and can be placed in the building tracks on a player's empire board to reduce the cost of buildings (described further on page 13).

**Power:** A player's total attack value during a battle. The player with the highest power wins a battle (ties go to the defender).



# System Board

This symbol is a reminder that you must battle the alien inhabitants when you move to this space if it is uncontrolled.

Victory Point Symbol (and building space)

Goods Symbol

System Name

Planet Description

Control Cube Spot

Planet Capital Region

Alien Unit



Surface Image (Influence goes here)

Allied Victory Points (not building spaces)

Special Ability (and other info)

## Six Regions



## PLAYING THE GAME

The game is played in rounds. Each round, the active player chooses and performs one action. After this, in clockwise order, each player may follow the action (*which is performing the same action chosen by the active player*) **OR** pass.

- The active player is the player with the commander token.
- The active player cannot pass.
- If a player passes, that player gains their income or resets their command, or takes another passing action.
- When all players have taken/followed an action or passed, the active player gives the commander token to the player on the left and the next round begins.

## ACTIONS

Each of the possible actions are described below:



### **ACTION: Move or Warp**

A player may choose to move **OR** warp.

#### **Move**

A player chooses a number of their units in one region to move. This is called a group. The player moves this group one region at a time. The group can only move to adjacent regions. Each region moved to costs the player one command. The group can move any distance, as long as the player pays one command for each region. The Worldship cannot move with a group.

The group may pick up any of the player's units it meets as it moves. The group may not drop off units and continue moving.

If the group enters a region that contains any other player's units, the group must stop and a battle begins immediately. If the group enters an uncontrolled planet capital region, the group must stop and a battle begins immediately.

Units cannot exist or move in space without an accompanying Space Sloop or Worldship. Units can move between adjacent planet regions without a Space Sloop. Units can move between a space region containing a Worldship and an adjacent planet region without a Space Sloop.

#### **Warp**

A Worldship (and accompanying group of units) can move to any revealed **space** region on the board for 2 command.

The Worldship may never enter a planet region.

Note: A group may never contain more than 3 units. The Worldship does not count toward this limit. For example, a player could have a Worldship and 3 Starfarers in the same region.

#### **Unit Limit**

If a group ends its movement or warp on a region and there are more units than 3 owned by that player in the same region, the player must immediately remove their units from the region and return them to the supply until the unit limit of 3 is met.

#### **Explore**

When moving (*not warping*), players may explore new systems. When the active player moves one region beyond the edge of a system board toward an unrevealed system board, the player immediately turns the system face up. The player may turn the board in any direction, but it must stay in the same place. The player puts their group on the new system in the appropriate, adjacent region.

When a player explores a new system, the player is encouraged to read aloud the thematic description (the text above the image of the planet surface).

As soon as the new board is placed, a random good from the good pile must be placed, face up, on any regions containing a goods symbol. If a region contains more than one goods symbol, it receives a good for each symbol.



## Battle

If a group ends its movement in a space containing units owned by another player, or if the group ends in an uncontrolled planet capital region, then a battle begins immediately.

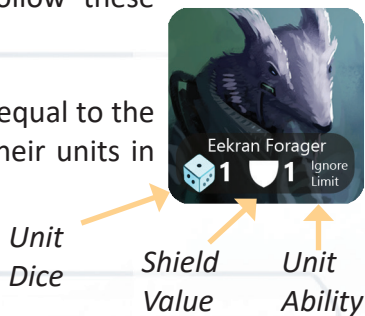
*Note: There are many different units in the game, and it is common for two players to own the same type of unit at the same time. Players normally keep track of the units they own by keeping them with control cubes (on planet regions), Star Sloops (which have the player's color), or with their Worldship (which is also in the player's color). It is important to keep track of each player's respective units if a group enters another player's region (because, of course, the two players might own some of the same units). As soon as the battle ends, the units will be in their own regions again and this won't be an issue.*

The player that moved units into the region is called the attacker. The player with units that were already in the region is called the defender.

Players now determine their total power. The player with the highest power will win the battle (ties go to the defender).

To determine power, follow these steps:

1) Both players roll dice equal to the dice total depicted on their units in the region.



2) Each player takes the highest result on **one die** from all dice rolled and adds the shield value depicted on all their units in the region to that one die result. All other die results are ignored.

3) Each player must play a card from their hand (if they can), placing it on the table, face down. When both players have played a card, the cards are revealed simultaneously and the power value added to their highest die result (the power value is the number in the top right corner of the card).

4) The player with the highest total power (highest die + shield value + action card value) wins the battle and gains 1 victory point. Ties go to the defender. The winner discards their played card.

5) The loser can choose to keep their played card **OR** discard it and draw a new card. The loser must immediately move all their units on the region to their Worldship. If there are more than 3 units on the region with their Worldship, the player must return units to the supply until the 3 unit limit has been met. The loser must also remove their control cube from the region if it was a planet region.

If a player is attacking an uncontrolled planet capital region (that doesn't contain a control cube from another player), the alien inhabitants attempt to defend their home. The attacker's units battle against 1 of the depicted alien units on the region (the player to the left rolls dice for this alien unit). After rolling and adding shields, the alien inhabitants add the value of the top card of the event deck to their result, but this card is not revealed until the attacker chooses an action card to add to their own result.

If a player attacks a planet capital region, that player loses all influence in the system regardless if the planet capital region is controlled by another player or uncontrolled, because the alien inhabitants do not like invaders!

## Goods

If the group ends their movement in a region that contains a goods token, the player collects the token and may place it on one of their building tracks on their empire board, as explained on page 13. If a region contains more than one goods token, the player may pick up all tokens.

## Control Cube

If the group ends their movement on a planet region, the player places a control cube in the region to show that they now control it. If there is a control cube from another player in the region, it is returned to that player.

A player's control cube stays on a planet region even if that player does not have any units there. It is removed only if another player takes control of the region.



## ACTION: Build

A player builds any number of buildings from building rows on their empire board.

For each building, the player must have an unused space to build. Each player starts with three building spaces on their empire board (labelled "Worldship"). Additionally, each victory point symbol on a planet region that a player controls gives one space for a building. Each built building uses up one of these spaces.

The player must pay the credit cost for each building that the player builds, returning the total credit amount to the supply. The credit cost is determined by adding up all the visible credit amounts in the row to the left of the building token. Goods can cover up some of these credit amounts, reducing the cost of all buildings in the row (explained further on page XX).

After the player pays for a building, the token is removed from its row on the player board and placed either on a planet region or on the "Worldship" spaces on the player's empire board.

A player must always build the left-most building in each of the three rows. Buildings are paid for and placed one at a time.

Each building gives a different benefit.

- Cities increase a player's income.
- Bases add 1 die and 1 shield to the owner when a combat takes place on the region where the base is located (and bases can roll and participate in a battle even if other defending units are not present). Bases on a Worldship can participate in any battles where the Worldship is present.
- Academies increase a player's command and allow the player to draw 1 action card when built.

If a player loses control of a region that contains buildings, the buildings are not removed or destroyed, and the player retains any benefits on their empire board (for income, command, and victory points).

Each building token removed from a building track reveals one or more victory point symbols. This victory point is counted during scoring.



## ACTION: Card

A player may play an action card from their hand. The card must say "Action" below the name of the system to be used as an action. The player pays the listed cost (and must meet any other requirements specified in the cost). The player reads the title of the card aloud. The player then reads aloud and performs the directions listed below the cost. *At this time, the player may also read aloud the flavor text at the bottom of the card.*

Many events direct a player to place influence on a system. In this case, the player places influence in the box that shows the images of the planet surface. If there is a event card on this box, influence is placed on top of the event card.

If a player has the most influence in a system, that player is allied with the inhabitants and immediately claims the appropriate alien ally token and any unused alien unit tokens related to the system.

If players are tied for influence on a system, the player with the ally token retains it. An opponent player must place **MORE** influence to claim the ally token from that player.

An ally token gives a number of benefits to the player that owns it. These are:

- When performing the Recruit action, the player may recruit the allied alien units. Even if a player loses the ally token at a later time, they do not lose any of the alien units they recruited.
- Each ally token gives a special ability, listed below the picture of the alien unit. The ability applies to the player for as long as they retain the ally token.

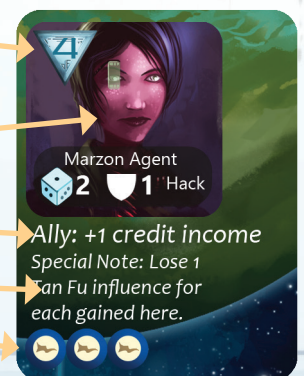
Alien Unit Credit Cost

Alien Unit

Allied Ability

Other Info

Ally Victory Points





The player with the most influence in each system is also rewarded a number of victory points during scoring, as depicted below the allied special ability. If multiple players are tied for the most influence, they all gain the victory points.



### **ACTION: Draw Cards**

A player may draw action cards from the deck up to their hand limit (which is 4 cards). A player may not discard action cards before drawing, or at any time unless they are used for an action, combat, or diplomacy.

If the event deck runs out, reshuffle the discard pile to make a new draw pile. This triggers the end of the game, described on page 12.

If a player draws an event card, the player should read the text on the card immediately and place it on the image of the planet surface in the correct system. If there are any influence markers there, they should be placed on top of the event card. Event card effects are immediate and last as long as the card is visible.

After a player reads and plays an event card, the player should immediately draw again until they reach their hand limit.

If a player draws an event card for a system that is not yet revealed, the card should be placed near the board. When the related system is revealed at a later time, the event card should be placed on it and will take immediate effect.

#### **Bonus Credits (ACTIVE PLAYER)**

The active player also collects 2 credits.



### **ACTION: Attempt Diplomacy**

A player may attempt to place an influence marker on a system. The player must have at least one unit in the system.

First, the player chooses any number of cards from their hand and plays them face up. The player then rolls a die. If the die result is equal to or below the sum of the power number of all cards played, the player places one influence on the system, claiming the ally token if they meet the requirements as described in the "ACTION: Card" section on the previous page.

The cards played do not need to match the system name.

Any played cards are discarded, regardless if the player succeeds or fails. If the player fails, they do not place an influence on the system.

*Designer's Note: This action is not the most efficient way to place influence on planets. It is meant to be a way to get rid of a hand of cards that a player doesn't want, or to place an influence on a system even if a player does not have a specific card for that system.*



### **ACTION: Recruit Units**

A player may pay for units and place them on the board. A player may recruit any number of units.

At the start of the game, players may recruit Starfarers, Star Sloops, and Warbots. Each ally token that a player owns allows that player to recruit a new type of unit as well (alien units do not need to be recruited on their own system).

The player must pay credits to the supply for each unit they recruit. Unit cost is listed on a player's player aid card or on ally tokens.

Once paid for, recruited units are immediately placed on the board. A player can place recruited units on the space region that contains their Worldship, or on a planet region they control that contains at least one building. When placing units, remember that no region can ever contain more than 3 units at once.

If a player loses an ally token on a future turn, the player keeps any recruited alien units from that token.

## PASSING

If a player (that is not the active player) decides to pass instead of following the action, that player may take one of the these "passing actions":

### Collect Income

A player collects credits equal to their current income level, as depicted at the top of a player's empire board. A player starts with an income of 5, but this increases for every city that the player builds. A player may never have more credits than their credit limit, which is the small number in the corner next to their income level.

### Reset Command

A player moves their command marker on their command track back to the starting space (which is different depending on the number of players in the game).

### Recruit 1

A player may recruit 1 unit. This action works in exactly the same way as the standard recruit action, except that a player may not recruit more than 1 unit.

### Discard and Gain 1 Bomb

A player may discard 1 of their action cards and gain 1 bomb token. When the player engages in combat, before rolling, the player may pay bomb tokens. Each token gives the player +1 power. Used bomb tokens are returned to the supply.

### Any Action (5 Player Game)

If playing with 5 or more players, a player can pay 2 command to perform any standard action.

## 1ST SCORING CARD

At the start of the game, each player is given a 1st Scoring card. At the end of a player's turn, that player may choose discard this card to collect victory points. A player does not need to be the active player to do this. A player may only use this card once per game.

The amount of victory points that the player collects is determined by the following:

1. Building Tracks: Each built building gives one or more victory points. At the start of the game, there are also 6 negative victory points that must be covered up with goods or will be counted against a player's total.
2. Influence: Any systems where a player has the most influence (or is tied for most) give victory points.
3. Control Cubes: Each controlled planet region gives the controlling player a number of victory points.

*Example: At the end of Kim's turn, she decides to play her 1st Scoring card. She immediately scores victory points. On her building tracks, she has built a total of 4 buildings, revealing 4 victory points. Also on these tracks, 2 negative victory points remain uncovered by goods tokens. She has the most influence on a system that gives 3 points. On the board, she controls 3 planet regions, each of which give 1 point. The total that she collects is  $4(\text{buildings}) - 2(\text{uncovered}) + 3(\text{ally}) + 3(\text{planet regions}) = 8$  victory points.*

## Mid-Campaign Card

If a player draws the Mid-Campaign card, all players must immediately play their 1st Scoring cards if they have not yet played them.

The player that draws the Mid-Campaign Card continues to draw until they have 4 action cards.

## GAME END

When the last card of the event deck is drawn, this triggers the end of the game. Play continues as normal until the player with the 1st Player card is the new active player. At this point, there is one more round (with each player getting one last turn to be the active player). After this, the game ends.

Each player collects victory points at the end of the game as if they had played their 1st Scoring Card.

The player with the highest total sum of victory points at the end of the game is the winner!

*If players are tied, the player with the most influence on the board wins. If still tied, the player with the most credits wins.*



# EMPIRE BOARD

When a player gains a good, they may place it in one of the building tracks. A good covers up a cost for all buildings in the track, and on the first two goods spaces, a negative victory point.

If playing with 2 players, each time a player collects income, they collect 2 extra credits.

Income Track (Starts at 5, but can increase by for each city the player builds)

Buildings go on these circles at the start of the game. When a player builds a building, it reveals victory points as well as additional credits, increasing the cost of the next building in the row. The next base would cost 9 credits.

**POWER:** When you retreat, you may retreat units to any locations you control, not just your Worldship. Also, start with 1 random good.

**MOVE OR Warp** **BUILD**

**DRAW** (Active: Attribute) **CARD**

**RECRUIT** **DIPLOMACY**

**INCOME** **COMMAND**

**RECRUIT 1** **DISCARD 1 & GAIN BOMB**

**5+ Players ANY ACTION**

**CITIES** (Combat: 1 Die, 1 Power)

**BASES** (Draw 1 card when constructed.)

**ACADEMIES** (COMMAND)

**START 2 Players** **START**

**POWER 3** **POWER 5**

**NOMADS OF EARTH**

If playing with 2 players, the command track has an extra space, giving each player 1 extra command.

If playing with 3+ players, this command track has 4 command. Each academy built gives a player +1 command. The end of the command track is the space before the next unbuilt academy.

Each player may build up to 3 buildings on their worldship (placing them here if they do). The 2nd and 3rd spaces require a sum of power to be discarded if the player wants to build on them.

## PLACING GOODS

When a player gains a goods token, the player may place it on a goods slot on one of their three building tracks. Goods tokens must be placed from left to right, and once a good has been placed in a track, all future goods of the same type that a player gains must be placed in the same track. Placing goods in a track covers up part of the cost for all buildings in the track, and sometimes it covers a negative victory point. When a player gains a good, it need not be placed immediately—the player can set it aside to trade with other players or place it at a later time.

## UNIT ABILITIES

Star Sloop: **Space Carry**- The Star Sloop can move through space. A Star Sloop travelling with a group allows (non-space) units to move through space.

Eekran Forager: **Ignore Limit**- These units do not count against the unit limit for a space (which is normally 3).

Marzon Agent: **Hack**- Each Marzon Agent unit can disable one opponent Warbot or Star Sloop in battle. A disabled unit does not roll dice and its shield value does not count.

Tanlokian Reader: **Mind Read**- During combat, if you have a Tanlokian Reader, your opponent must play their action card face up before you choose your action card. This also applies to battles against uncontrolled planet capital regions. If both the defender and the attacker have the Mind Read ability, neither side can use it.

Virshian Zealot: **Space**- These units can travel in space without a Star Sloop, and they can "carry" other units like a Star Sloop.

Silastian Technician: The arrow symbol means that for each one of these units travelling with a group, that group can move +1 space without paying a command.

Sentinian Researcher: **+2 dip**- When attempting diplomacy, for each Sentinian Researcher you own in the system where you are attempting diplomacy, add 2 to the power value of your played cards.

## ALLY ABILITIES

Tan Lok: When tied on influence, you always claim the Alien Ally token (which means that to claim a token from another player, you need not have **more** influence than they do). All players tied with the most influence all gain victory points as normal.

Silast: You may build one more building on a region than there is space (each victory point symbol on a territory gives one space normally).

Aros: You are not required to place the same type of good on the same building track (you can place any type of good on any track, even if the goods on the track are different).

Sentina: As a passing action, you may draw 1 action card.

## ACTION CARD CLARIFICATIONS

### EMPIRE SPECIAL ABILITIES

Each Empire has their own special abilities.

Earth: When you lose a battle, you may retreat to any region that you control, not just your Worldship. Also, start the game with 1 random goods token.

Znu: You may warp as a passing action. You also may move through enemy units in space without stopping to fight them.

Eehg: You have +1 command on your command track. You also start the game with +5 credits.

Decima: Your action card hand limit is 5. You may also reroll any 1s results on dice in combat.

Sreech: Your Worldship can hold 4 buildings instead of 3. Also, you start the game with a parasite token. When you are the active player, as a free action, you may place this token on a system where you have at least 1 unit. You gain the ally ability of the system where your parasite token is (even if you are not allied with the system). You only gain access to the ally ability, and you may not recruit units from the system, nor do you gain the ally victory points.

## DESIGN CREDITS

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Playtesters: Malorie Laukat, Brandon Laukat, Andrew Frick, Brenna Asplund, Alex Davis...

Thank you to everyone who helped with the development of this game. Empires of the Void had many iterations over the years and I want to thank the many people that contributed to testing those many versions, all of which helped me arrive at the final game.

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