

Research

There is a wide variety of projects that a player might wish to research, and Dust to Dust is designed with the explicit expectation that players will spend BGAs to research ritual formulas, production formulas, and the answers to obscure questions that trouble them in their sleep. Research projects tend to take one or more resources from the following list:

- Time, in the form of BGAs
- Talents, in the form of Lore skills, relevant Production skills, or other things on your character card
- Treasure, in the form of in-game currency or tagged items
- Solved puzzles or other forms of on-camera challenges of skill

Procedure

To initiate a research project of any kind, all you have to do is describe what you're doing in a BGA. Be detailed, particularly with your character's preexisting knowledge on the topic. Discuss the resources your character is willing to commit to the project. List any and all research partners; all research partners need to commit actions to the same research topic. The BGA form gives you an easy way to show how much time you're committing to that project, but committing multiple BGAs to the same project within the same group of actions suffers a certain amount of diminishing returns - so don't be afraid to do other things with your time.

Seeking the answers to obscure questions for which you have a relevant Lore skill of a high enough level does not require the expenditure of additional resources. Seeking the answers to obscure questions for which you do not have a relevant Lore skill of a high enough level typically entails travel back to a civilized area with substantial libraries and scholars, and various fees, bribes, and payments for silence.

Particularly for research of ritual and production formulas, the Plot committee decides on a number of separate steps in the project. These steps are much like a progress meter, except that in some cases you may be able to proceed out of order. For example, it is conceivable that Karl the Ritualist could seize an enemy's spell research, only to discover after some study that it represents the sixth step of a seven-step research project. If he were to begin working on that project, he would gradually complete the first five steps, do no work for the sixth step, and finish the project with the seventh step. In some cases, an item tag will indicate the applicable project; in other cases, a player may need to spend a BGA to identify the project to which a text applies as a research step.

What Not to Research

We have created this list on the principle that it is better to announce things that are simply not open to research than to build up misguided hopes or expectations.

- New Advantages
- New and better weapons (e.g., pistols), armor (threshold), or shields (Forge Magic enchants are fine, though)

- Totemic spells: these are closed lists and will not be expanded through research. If this rule is ever relaxed, we will let you know in-play. Don't expect it.
- Ancient Arts

Diminishing Returns

Spending two or more BGAs on the same project within one span of BGAs suffers from diminishing returns. The benefit to research for one character spending two actions is less than twice the benefit for spending one action. The same applies to spending in-game currency, including mystic materials; there is a point beyond which further expenditure grants less of a benefit.

Increased application of talent (higher ranks of applicable skills, or more applicable skills) does not suffer from diminishing returns. Puzzles or other challenges of skill are only available at Plot's discretion and are not guaranteed to be available; players will generally not find two such opportunities in a short span of time. In such an event, however, the research would not suffer diminishing returns.