

# Meet Your Engineering Team: Jessica Saussay

Get to know Propeller's world-class team in our ongoing employee spotlight. Today, we talk to [Jessica Saussay](#), who serves as a front-end software engineer on the engineering team. Jes is based in Sydney.



## What do you do at Propeller?

I'm a front-end engineer on the visualizer team. I work alongside [Andy](#), our team lead, and Mahsa, who is also a front-end engineer. We build the tools that help Propeller customers manage their site—anything from creating a measurement and rendering a report to exporting a map and organizing all the design files.

We work in two-week sprints where we can really focus on the things we choose to pull into that two-week period. Mahsa and I do a lot of paired programming. It's a great part of the job.

## What's the most interesting project you've worked on so far?

One thing I really enjoyed was working with [Tony](#) and Coops on the innovation lab team for a few weeks. It was interesting tackling different problems. I did a lot of work on lambdas,

which has been really helpful with the recent work my team has been doing to improve the customer experience of a new feature we've been beta-testing.

Tony gave me an introduction to WebGL and explained how we use it in the app. He's really passionate about this kind of stuff, and it was a good opportunity for him to share some of his knowledge across teams.

## **What's your career background?**

My career background is a little mixed. I studied digital media and worked as a graphic designer for a few years. I changed roles to a digital production supervisor at the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) where I worked with a team that looked after video compression, editing, and graphic design work.

I left the ABC to move to France and study French at a university in Angers for a year. When I returned to Australia, I had a conversation with a friend who was building an app, and they encouraged me to start learning JavaScript.

That weekend, I learned the very basics of JavaScript, and my friend said that was enough to get started. During that time, I realized that programming was something I was interested in pursuing.

I did a part-time course at General Assembly, 60 hours in total, and I managed to get a job as a developer after that. I worked for a year at Domain, a digital property portal, as a junior full stack developer, and I learned so much.

After Domain, I worked at a language education company called Berlitz, where I helped build a design system. I really grew as a developer and learned a new set of skills. After six months there, I left and came to Propeller.

## **Where did you grow up?**

I grew up in Coffs Harbour, which is five hours north of Sydney and home to the Big Banana. Australia does big things, and I think the Big Banana might have been the first of them.

Other big things include the Big Shrimp and the Big Potato. I really like the Big Potato because it looks just like a big rock. The Big Shrimp was going to be taken down because it was so faded, but they gave it a good paint job and decided to keep it.

Coffs Harbour is a really small beach town, and most people either go to Brisbane or Sydney. I had family in Sydney which is why I moved here.

## **Before working at Propeller, what's the strangest or most interesting job you've held?**

When I was studying digital media, I enjoyed working part time at a CD shop. It was a small—just me and my boss.

We also sold merch for bands, so I got to see a lot of live music during that time. One of the most memorable was Alice Cooper, which is a huge show. The shop has closed down now because CDs aren't really a thing anymore, but we still keep in touch.

## **Any talents, secret superpowers, or fun facts about yourself to share?**

I really like learning languages. When I was in school, I learned Japanese but all that I can remember now is the song "Heads, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes."

Earlier in the year, I went to South America and started learning Spanish. There's also programming languages, as well.

When I was at university, I did a bachelor of languages. I studied French and linguistics. I wouldn't say it's a talent, but I think I definitely have a passion for language.

## **What's your favorite Propeller memory?**

Definitely the Hackathon. Mahsa, Esther, and Mamo, and I worked together to build a meeting room app that used face and emotion detection to give real-time feedback on the participants' engagement using emojis, and speech synthesis. If people were looking bored, it would say something like, "I hope this meeting improves."

It was a bit of a rollercoaster. We only had 24 hours to get a prototype ready for the demo, but we were really happy with our end result.

## **Do you have an office nickname? If so, what is it and how did you get it?**

My surname is Saussay and some people pronounce it "saucy." In Australia, a lot of nicknames come from shortened surnames, so I tend to get called Saussay or "saucy." I guess if there's a nickname, it'd be one of those.

This relates to the next question about my favorite emoji.

## **What's your favorite Slack emoji and why?**

I like to use the ketchup bottle as my Slack emoji because in Australia we call ketchup, sauce.

## **What's one thing you wish people understood better about Propeller as a whole?**

I really enjoy working at Propeller. It's such a great company, and I'm constantly telling my friends this. We work on different things every sprint, and we're always learning new things. I work with such a great team; they're all really supportive.

I recently went on a site visit with Chris Illuk, and it was such a valuable experience. Now, when we talk about new features and designs, I can put a face to some of the features we're building, and I think it helps me make better decisions as a developer.

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