

[This is an excerpt from the rules. As such, it has to do a few different things in conjunction: define terms, delegate usage rights, and provide mechanics for that use.]

[The current section on player roles will have a particularly hard time doing these things in a clear way, because the game uses these very roles to delegate rights and obligations to players. This means that making this section clear and comprehensible is as difficult as it is vital.]

Player roles

Everyone that participates in a game of Chimborazo is a player of the game. Players take on one or more roles, which determine how they can interact with the game and over which aspects of gameplay they have the most agency.

Character roles

POV Character (PC)

A point-of-view character is a protagonist of the story through whose eyes their operating player experiences the narrative. A PC is owned by the player that created it through the character generation process and is always controlled by a single player at a time. A player can own only a single PC at a time.

Non-POV Character (NPC)

A non-point-of-view character is every other character involved in the narrative. There is no limit to the amount of NPCs that a player can own and control, other than what they can comfortably roleplay effectively. By default, the Master of Puppets (see below) is the owner of NPCs, however that ownership can be transferred between players at will.

Game Master (GM) roles

There are three special roles dedicated to “running the game”, a.k.a. creating and maintaining the environment for the characters to interact with. While these roles don’t all necessarily offer the same opportunities for roleplaying as the character roles, they are a vital component for making the game work and provide other unique ways to participate in the game. The purpose of the GM roles is to run the game for the players. In Chimborazo, the GMs are there to enable the sandbox play environment. They are neither antagonistic nor favourable to characters, but must remain completely neutral and objective at all times.

The game is best experienced when all three GM roles detailed below are played by different people. However, play groups are of varying size, and that might not always be feasible. Therefore, a single player can take on more than one of these roles. However, no matter how the three GM roles are divided between one, two, or three players, there can never be more than one of each of these roles in play.

(The GM roles do not need to stick with the same player. Over the course of the game, different players can take on different roles, so long as the players involved agree.)

Living Lore

Responsible for populating the world with locations, maintaining the environment, history providing information, and creating events. They are the source of all knowledge, make all decisions for the world at large, and ensure that the setting is alive and evolving in the background by maintaining continuity as time passes.

Master of Puppets

Responsible for populating the world with NPCs, roleplaying them when they interact with PCs, and maintaining continuity for them as time passes. Additionally to individual characters, they are also in charge of all decisions for character-based events (such as large or small

scale conflicts, celebrations, rituals, etc.), character factions (from guilds to nations), and even non-sapient characters (pack of wolves, elementals, etc.)

Natural Law

Responsible for enforcing and arbitrating the rules of the game, creating rulings should the current rules prove insufficient, and making all mechanical decisions when the game calls for such. It's primarily their responsibility for keeping track of narrative triggers, as well as determining how to translate new effects into effective rules for the game.

Grandmaster of the game

Any time a single player takes on all three game master roles, they become the Grandmaster of the game. Because of the enormous responsibilities they have for running the game, and all the extra duties they have during play, a Grandmaster of the game can't be overruled as normal.

Some things fall in a grey area between GM roles. Who makes nation-wide decisions, is it the Living Lore because they are in charge of cultures, or the Master of Puppets because nations are ruled by people, a.k.a. characters? Who creates challenges for the PCs, is it the Living Lore that makes the places where they happen or the Natural Law that translates effects into mechanics so that the PCs can interact with them? Who makes decisions for autonomous characters like pets, is it the Master of Puppets because they control all NPCs or the Natural Law because pets come with their behaviour automatically determined mechanically?

When it's unclear which role is in charge of something, remember that the GM roles are cooperative in nature, communicate with each other, and consider that the primary reason for the division of these roles is to reduce the cognitive load on the players taking them on, so try to divide these responsibilities as evenly as possible. When appropriate, the GMs can work

together on the problem instead of trying to figure out who should be doing what.

Roles are assigned at the beginning of a campaign and can only be changed by a unanimous agreement between all players. There are two overarching rules that govern which roles a player may select (Rule of Impartiality) and how players are expected to behave based on their roles (Rule of Cooperation):

Rule of Impartiality: The players agree that any player with a GM role can take on a PC role and any player with a PC role can take ownership of additional NPCs as long as they can avoid a conflict of interest. Such would constitute the potential for the player to be influenced in their decision making by non diegetic factors (those that don't stem from the narrative). There are two main ways to avoid conflict of interest:

- For all player roles - The player promises (and upholds that promise) that they can play the PC or NPC completely unbiased. The moment this promise is broken, the game is paused, the player instantly loses all roles granted by the Rule of Impartiality, and play resumes when the situation gets resolved by the players.
- For players without a GM role - The player's PC is not currently part of the narrative and thus isn't *directly* influenced by the actions of whatever NPC they assume ownership of.

Rule of Cooperation: The players agree to work together toward a common goal. They will communicate to understand each other's intentions, help each other, and not deliberately interfere with any players and any characters those players control. This rule is mandatory for the GM roles, except in Chimborazo: Multiverse Asunder campaigns. This rule is optional for character roles. If players agree to use it for their campaign, the collective of their PCs becomes known as "the party".

[\[Link to the main indev doc, from which this is an excerpt.\]](#)