

Simulacrum Labs — Node Operator FAQ

For BD team use when answering node operator questions.

What is Simulacrum?

Simple: Simulacrum pays you to rent out your gaming GPU when you're not using it. Companies need powerful graphics cards to train their AI, and your RTX card is exactly what they need. You install our app, leave it running, and earn money when jobs come in.

Technical: Simulacrum is a distributed GPU compute platform. Node operators contribute idle GPU compute to a network that processes UE5 simulation workloads — RL training, synthetic data generation, and ML annotation. The node client connects to our orchestrator via WebSocket, receives job dispatches, downloads client project zips from Azure Blob, executes jobs in Docker containers with GPU passthrough, and uploads results.

How much can I earn?

Simple: You earn 80% of every job that runs on your GPU. At current pricing, that's about \$0.60 per GPU-hour. How much you make depends on how many jobs are available and how often your GPU is idle. Think of it like Airbnb for your graphics card — you only earn when someone 'books' your GPU.

Technical: 80% revenue share of \$0.75/GPU-hour client rate = \$0.60/GPU-hour operator earnings. Payouts via Stripe Connect Express to your bank account. \$50 minimum threshold before payout triggers. Earnings tracked in real-time in the node GUI.

What do I need to get started?

Simple: A Windows PC with an NVIDIA RTX graphics card (RTX 3060 or better), Unreal Engine 5.7 installed (free from Epic Games), and a decent internet connection. Our installer handles everything else — Docker, drivers, the whole setup is one click.

Technical: Windows 10 21H2+ or Windows 11, NVIDIA RTX GPU (RTX 3060+, 8GB+ VRAM), UE5 5.7 installed, BIOS virtualization enabled. The node installer bundles Python 3.12.8 and includes a one-click Docker setup (WSL2 + Docker Engine + NVIDIA Container Toolkit + ML image). 7/7 preflight checks must pass before jobs dispatch.

Is it safe for my computer?

Simple: Yes. Client code runs inside a sealed container — it can't access your personal files, install anything on your system, or use your internet for anything other than the simulation job. When the job finishes, everything is automatically deleted from your computer.

Technical: Jobs execute in Docker containers with GPU passthrough, seccomp profiles, and no host network access. Client data is downloaded to %TEMP%, never to your user directories. Secure wipe (random byte overwrite + delete) runs on all job artifacts after completion. The node binary has anti-debug protections and binary integrity verification.

How do I get paid?

Simple: In the node app, go to Settings and click 'Create Account.' Enter your email, then click 'Setup Bank Account' — this opens Stripe (our payment processor) where you enter your name, date of birth, and bank account info. Once verified, earnings automatically transfer to your bank when they reach \$50.

Technical: Stripe Connect Express account created via GUI. Onboarding collects identity verification (name, DOB, SSN last 4) and bank account details. Account status visible in GUI Settings. Payouts trigger automatically when pending balance \geq \$50. Transfer schedule: weekly batch processing.

What about taxes?

Simple: If you earn more than \$600 in a calendar year, Stripe automatically sends you a 1099-K tax form. You report this income on your taxes as self-employment income. Please note: Simulacrum Labs does not provide tax, legal, or financial advice. Consult a qualified professional for your specific situation.

Technical: Operators are classified as independent contractors per our Terms of Service. Stripe issues 1099-K for operators exceeding \$600/year IRS threshold. Operators are responsible for self-employment tax obligations. Simulacrum Labs does not provide tax, legal, or financial guidance.

During Stripe setup, what do I enter for 'Business type' and 'Website'?

Simple: Select 'Individual or sole proprietorship' — that's the option for regular people, no business required. For website, enter: <https://simulacrumlabs.com> — that's our platform URL, not your personal website.

Can I use my computer while jobs are running?

Simple: You can, but your GPU will be busy with the simulation job, so gaming or other GPU-heavy tasks will be slow. Light tasks like web browsing, email, and documents are fine. The job typically takes a few minutes to an hour depending on size.

Technical: UE5 and Docker consume significant GPU resources during execution. The node monitors GPU temperature and power, enforcing thermal limits (85°C) and power limits. Light CPU tasks are unaffected. GPU-bound tasks (gaming, video editing) will compete for resources.

What GPUs are supported?

Simple: Any NVIDIA RTX card from the 3000 series or newer with at least 8GB of video memory. That includes RTX 3060, 3070, 3080, 3090, 4060, 4070, 4080, 4090, 5060, 5070, 5080, 5090. Older GTX cards can only run annotation jobs, not training.

Technical: NVIDIA GPUs with CUDA compute capability 8.0+ (Ampere/Ada Lovelace/Blackwell). Training jobs require Docker + NVIDIA Container Toolkit (SM 80+).

Annotation-only: SM 61+ (Pascal GTX 1060+). PyTorch in the Docker container is compiled for cu128, supporting SM 80-120. Blackwell (SM 120) requires PyTorch cu128+ (included in our ML image).