

# Regen Rio de Janeiro Program – Gitcoin Grants 23 Impact Report

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## 1. Program Overview

**Regen Rio de Janeiro** emerged as a groundbreaking localist experiment within Gitcoin Grants 23 (GG23), representing the first quadratic funding round in Brazil entirely dedicated to regional impact. Hosted by [GreenPill Brasil](#) in partnership with [Fabulosa Lab](#), with advisory from [Regen Coordination](#), and cultural facilitation from [Regenerative Resources Protocol](#). This initiative sought to bridge the digital world of regenerative finance (ReFi) in the emergent web3 cyberspace with the vibrant ecosystem of grassroots organizations in Rio de Janeiro. The round was not only an opportunity to allocate \$13,000 in quadratic funding matching, but also an educational infrastructure designed to onboard dozens of projects into the world of web3, cultivate a regenerative public culture, and seed an ecosystem capable of stewarding its own local regenerative economy.

From the outset, **our approach was rooted in inclusivity, coordination, and a belief in community sovereignty**. Through workshops, open channels, multilingual resources, and hybrid events, we worked to ensure that every project, regardless of its familiarity with web3, could meaningfully participate. But this experiment went far beyond distribution. Regen Rio was also a testbed for new models funding programs, one that considers identity, trust, engagement, and inclusiveness key features when funding what matters. Aiming to combine the unique insights of place-based actors with the tools and possibilities of decentralized networks, while creating awareness and educating.

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## 2. A Layered Approach to Crypto Regenerative Funding

The Regen Rio program was structured in **three distinct but interconnected funding layers** to allocate the **\$29,000 USD** raised.

1. **Quadratic Funding Round** - \$13,000 matching pool allocated to projects
2. **Impact Setup & Documentation (via Karma GAP)** - **\$7,000 USD** reserved for post-round **direct impact setup rewards**
3. **Commitment Pooling (via Sarafu Network)** - **\$5,000 USD** (in cREAL) as seeding fund for a **Regen Rio Commitment Pool** hosted on [Sarafu.network](#)

In addition to the **\$25,000** matching pool allocated to projects, the **Regen Rio** team used **\$4,000 USD** for program operations, coordination, documentation, and workshops.

We used the QF round as a [subscription](#) for a **3 stage program**. The QF round ran from April 2–16, 2025. During this time, **21 projects** from different parts of **Rio de Janeiro Estate** engaged local and global supporters via Gitcoin's builder and explorer platforms, the final matching distribution respected Gitcoin's **20% cap per project** and ensured a fair spread across the ecosystem. The **Impact Setup** started on **April 24 and ended on May 9**, and the **Commitment Pool** stage will open in June.

We successfully reached our goals for the round, to get **at least 500 donations, 100 unique donors** and **10% of the matching funds**. In the table below (Tab. 1) you can see the overview results of the round.

Tab. 1 - Regen Rio de Janeiro Round Results Overview

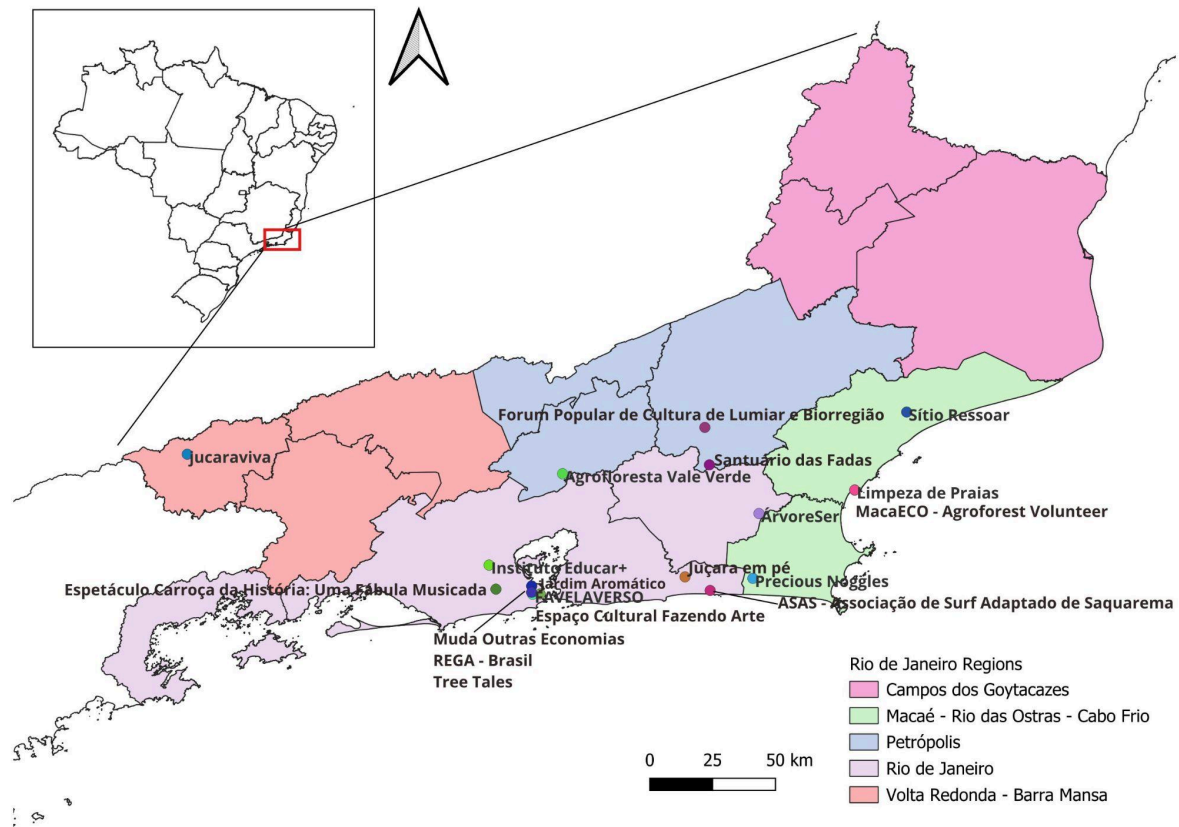
Category	Value
Total Matching Pool	\$13,000 USDGLO
Total Raised via Crowd	\$1,302.02
Total Donations	564
Unique Donors	134
Main Donation Tokens	CELO (322), USDGLO (214), cUSD (29)
Projects Funded	21
Median Donation	\$1.22
Average Donation	\$2.89

The main tokens used were \$CELO and \$USDGLO, probably because of past interactions our community did in CELO blockchain and gitcoin rounds.

## Bioregional Collaborations

The map above (Fig. 1) visualizes the geographic spread of the 21 projects funded through the Regen Rio de Janeiro program across the state's diverse bioregions. From the coastal hubs of Macaé and Saquarema to the mountainous zones of Petrópolis and the vibrant urban core of Rio de Janeiro.

Fig. 1 - Distribution of the 21 projects in Rio de Janeiro on the different regions of the state.



This spatial distribution reveals a **growing mesh of interdependencies**. Several of the grantees had crossed paths before but were reconnected through this program, and these renewed ties are already translating into tangible collaboration. Some examples:

- **Grantees actively supporting onboarding of others**, extending technical help and communication support.
- A **NFT campaign** was [proposed](#) to recover funds lost by two projects, showcasing collective accountability.
- Early **fund reallocation proposals**, where projects volunteered to redistribute part of their allocations to aid peers facing setbacks.
- The co-creation of [impact documentation guides](#), helping onboarded teams align with open-source and Web3-native practices.

This landscape is the early manifestation of what we call **Bioregional Finance**, a system where public goods are funded not just by individual donation events, but by **local trust networks** and **layered coordination mechanisms**. This is only the beginning of a regenerative funding model grounded in territory, culture, and relational depth.

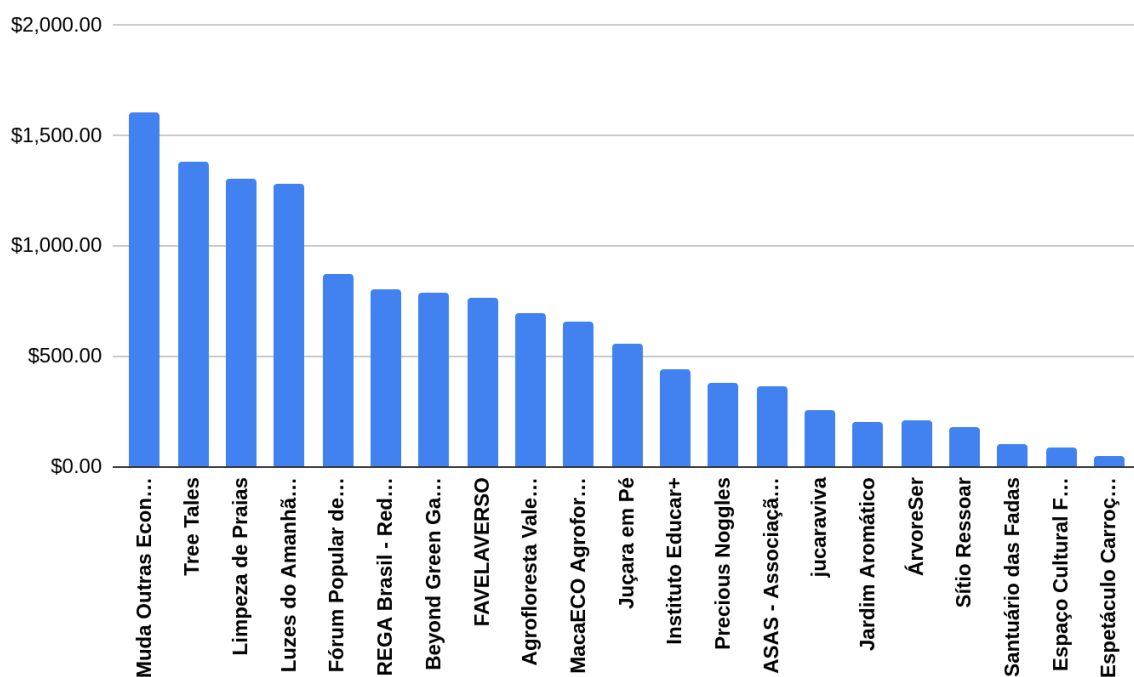
# 3. Program Results and Fund Allocation

You can see the [program's preliminary results here](#).

## 1st Layer - Quadratic Funding

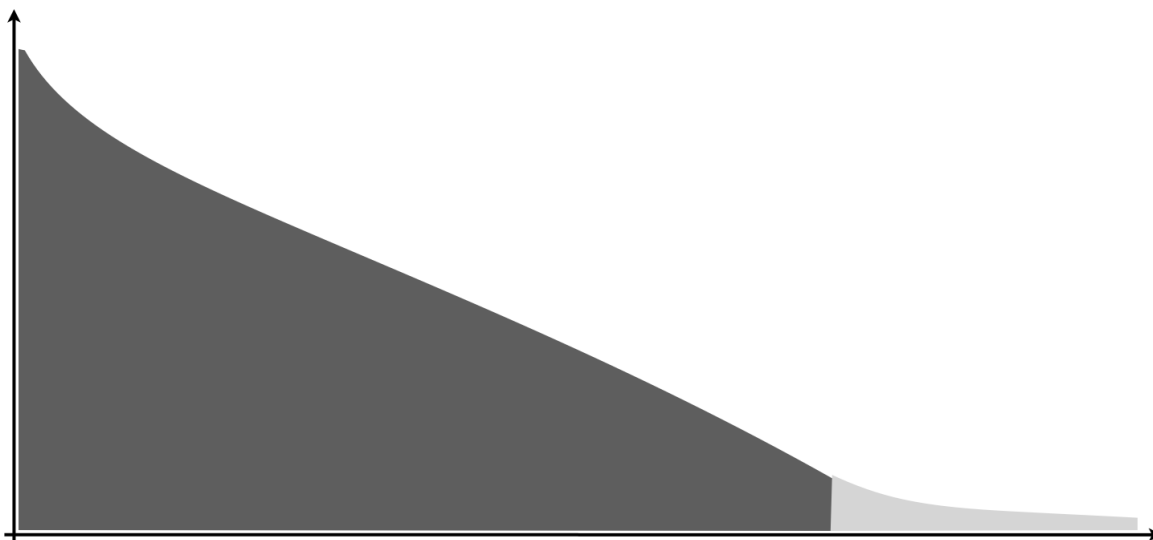
**Quadratic Funding** was designed to reward projects that gather broad community support, amplifying the influence of grassroots backing over large individual contributions. This created a dynamic where visibility, accessibility, and community resonance play a key role. The bar graph above (Fig. 2) displays the distribution of QF matching funds across the 21 projects selected for the Regen Rio de Janeiro program. As seen, a few projects, such as **Muda Outras Economias**, **Tree Tales**, and **Limpeza de Praias**, emerged as standout recipients of funding, while a longer tail of projects received progressively smaller allocations.

Fig. 2 - Bar Graph of Regen Rio de Janeiro Matching Distribution



This outcome is not an anomaly but rather a well-documented feature of open grant mechanisms like quadratic funding. As explained by the Bitcoin and Ethereum Localism community in their [Long Tail Public Goods Funding](#), funding distributions in democratic, internet-native systems often follow a **power law distribution**: a small number of projects (the “short tail”) concentrate most of the visibility and support, while the “long tail” represents a multitude of emerging initiatives still building community awareness and reach.

# More Even Distribution



Projects covered a wide range of themes: regenerative agriculture, agroecology, local medicine, youth engagement, and community infrastructure, all operating within the state of Rio de Janeiro. Each received a combination of crowd donations + matched funds (visible on [Gitcoin Explorer](#)).

To guide the results and ensure integrity, we applied a **hybrid matching mechanism**:

- 50% based on **COCM Sybil Protection**
- 50% based **Gitcoin Passport** and a filtered **Trusted Wallet List** with differentiated matching scaling: e.g., Tier 1 (PayPal only) vs Tier 3 (full participation + trusted wallet), built through the onboarding and participation journey, which we also [Airdropped 44 Groweco](#) tokens to join [our community in Gardens](#).

The **Trusted Wallet List** was compiled via multiple data sources:

- Impact Miner bounties completed
- Attendance at workshops and community calls
- Form submissions
- [POAP](#) distribution (limited due to technical gaps, which we aim to improve)

We gonna keep the access to the [file](#) closed, but you can ask for permission to audit the list.

## Key Insights

- **Muda Outras Economias**, *Tree Tales*, and *Limpeza de Praias* received the highest allocations. However, **some top-funded projects did not engage in subsequent stages** like Karma GAP or the Commitment Pool.

- In the case of Muda Outras Economias, high Passport scores from donors pushed their contribution toward the matching cap, despite their limited interaction with later program requirements.
  - The use of a **hybrid Sybil defense model** (50% Bitcoin Passport Score with a list of 47 trusted addresses, 50% Cluster of Common Matching (COCM) helped distribute matching more equitably, balancing donor diversity with identity reliability.
  - Conversely, **projects with strong offchain impact but modest online traction** received less in this phase, despite their relevance and regenerative value.
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## 2nd Layer – Impact Setup Results

The second phase of the Regen Rio program centered on **impact alignment and accountability**, using [Karma GAP](#) as the key infrastructure to register and publicly track the intentions of each participating project. Participation in this stage was **optional**, but required for access to the second layer of funding. All the grantees registries data were imported to KarmaGAP and projects were asked to:

- Create or update a public profile on Karma GAP
- Define clear **impact goals**
- Describe planned activities and outputs
- Share expected outcomes and geographical scope
- Related funding sources and dependencies

Unlike the first layer, this fund allocation was **non-competitive and unconditional** designed to:

- Reward engagement and intentionality
- Support projects regardless of popularity or donor network
- Lay the foundation for a impact framework and culture of **trust-based coordination**

This stage helped shift the narrative from **competitive fundraising** to **collaborative impact planning**, forming a bridge between awareness and visibility, to impact scoping and sovereign accountability. To support this, we ran personalized onboarding sessions in Portuguese, hosted 1-1 calls, and distributed [guides](#) and templates. This was a capacity-building effort that equipped projects with long-term reporting tools, a necessary step toward future retroactive funding mechanisms and improved transparency.

A total of **12 projects** completed this process by the extended deadline of May 9, 9:00 PM UTC 2025. These projects became eligible to share a **direct grant of \$7,000 USD**, distributed equally (~\$583 per project).

## Key Highlights

- Several **underfunded projects in QF** reached this stage and unlocked new resources, validating the importance of a layered approach.
- Projects reported that the process of writing and publishing their impact goals was a moment of **strategic clarity and internal organization**.
- Some top-performing QF projects did not complete this step, which resulted in a more balanced and equitable distribution of total funds across the cohort.

Over **15 projects** already successfully completed their profiles and setups and will get access to the commitment pooling, and we're making an [extra effort](#) to have all 21 before moving. This step will lay the groundwork for a future culture of open reporting and mutual accountability, already aligned with the [Common Impact Data Standard \(CIDS\)](#).

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## 3rd Layer – The Regen Rio Commitment Pool

The third and final layer of funding on the Regen Rio de Janeiro program is a [community-managed resource pool](#) hosted on [Sarafu.network](#), which will be seeded with **\$5,000 in cREAL**, and it will serve as an open infrastructure for **shared credit, mutual aid, and voucher-based resource allocation**.

All projects that completed the Karma GAP phase are eligible to participate. The pool will open formally in **June 2025**, with a co-designed roadmap and public documentation of all voucher redemptions, we hope the **Commitment Pool** benefits coordination between participating projects, but different from grants. Instead, the pool is designed to:

- **Encourage long-term collaboration** among different projects and people
- **Foster local resource exchange** (e.g., logistics, space, food, skills, knowledge)
- **Reward action toward shared ecosystem value creation**
- **Empower local Governance and Coordination**

The system will allow both **non-monetary and monetary exchanges**, so we hope to see the Commitment Pool becoming a living prototype of **bioregional coordination**, allowing the continuation of ecosystem building beyond one funding cycle and opening the door to new funding from municipalities or aligned sponsors to join a shared pool with defined public interest objectives.

### Next Steps:

- Hosting co-creation sessions for **pool goals and priorities**
- Launching **voucher templates** and onboarding projects
- Monitoring circulation and project-to-project exchanges

This approach turns cREAL into a trust signal, a medium for regenerative coordination, and an anchor for local economic resilience.

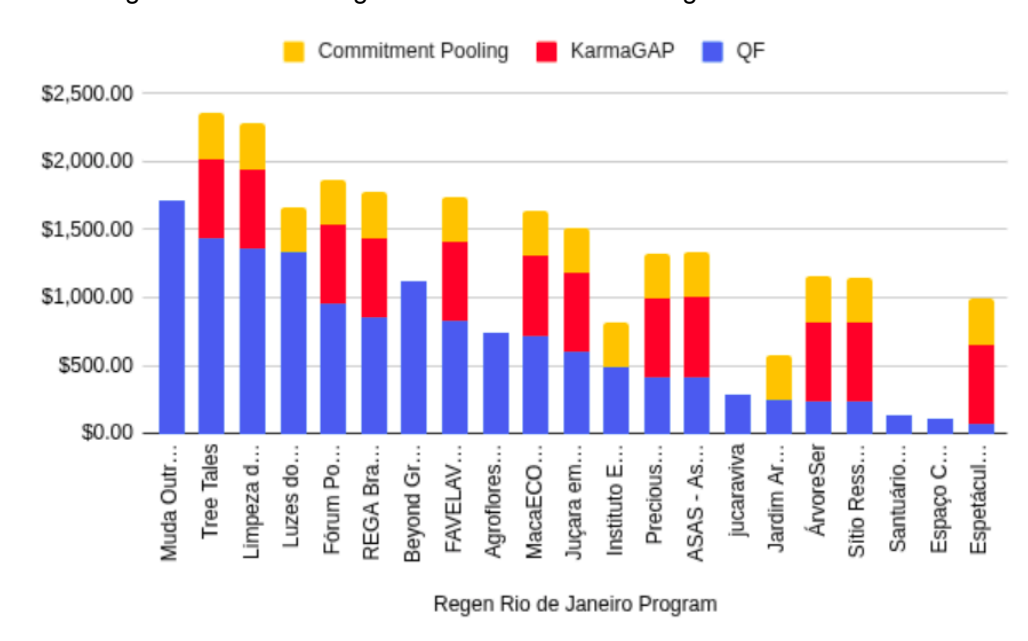
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# 4. Why Layered Funding?

In the Regen Rio QF round, **we witnessed** this classic **power-law pattern**: a steep left curve of high-performing projects followed by a long tail of equally valuable but less-funded initiatives. This illustrates the essential dynamic of quadratic funding, it amplifies community signaling and provides visibility to projects still forming their donor bases. While some projects in the tail may not yet have strong community outreach, they often represent high-potential regenerative initiatives deserving of continued support. To counterbalance this dynamic, **a layered funding architecture showed to be a good alternative**. Because it ensures that participation in the QF round, while important, is **not the determinant variable of impact funding**, reducing the influence of Power Law.

In the graph below (Fig. 3) you can see that projects that did not secure top-tier QF results still have opportunities to unlock resources through subsequent phases, in our case **Karma GAP Setup** and **Commitment Pool collaboration**, but these funding layers could be designed in a way that could reflect the core ethos or purpose of communities. Support must be accessible and not contingent only on popularity, but also on preparation, integrity, and willingness to collaborate.

Fig. 3 - Regen Rio three stages of fund distribution pattern



Rather than treating QF as a filter or final decision-making mechanism, we designed a **layered funding** to align with our goal of **empowering bioregional coordination** and helping projects build durable impact infrastructures.

This meant:

- QF helped raise visibility and awareness.
- Karma GAP provided structure and accountability for project commitments.

- The Commitment Pool will foster collaboration and shared goals through a community-governed fund.

The structure was intended not only to allocate funds, but to **guide and support regenerative culture building**, offering multiple paths for projects to gain support, recognition, and growth.

## 5. Insights & Challenges

### Regen Rio de Janeiro Audience

Based on one of our surveys with 28 participants, we gathered valuable insights about the user profile involved in the Regen Rio de Janeiro program:

- Over **50%** of respondents use **MetaMask** as their primary wallet.
- **10%** reported using the **Rainbow Wallet**.
- A significant **68%** had **never donated to Gitcoin** before this round.
- And notably, **85%** had **never participated in any GreenPill Brasil activity** prior to the Regen Rio program.

These numbers reveal the transformative onboarding potential and the challenge of this kind of round that mixes web3 education, web3 onboarding and funding. Introducing a majority of participants to decentralized tools and regenerative finance for the first time.

### Community Coordination vs Centralization

A central tension we encountered was **balancing inclusivity with operational integrity**. Onboarding dozens of new organizations into Gitcoin, while ensuring technical fluency, consistent messaging, and deadline adherence, revealed just how steep the learning curve of web3 can be, particularly in non-English-speaking regions.

At times, this demanded fast-paced decisions, boundary setting, and a degree of centralized stewardship to uphold collective commitments. While not always easy, these actions were necessary to protect the shared trust and fairness of the program.

### Peer-Led Support Models

The round reaffirmed the importance of **peer-led learning**. The projects that were most successful in completing onboarding and maximizing donations were those who joined our Telegram channels, attended workshops, and helped one another. This reflects the

deeper regenerative ethic we aim to cultivate: one of co-responsibility, non-rivalry, and mutual uplift.

## Outreach & Retention

Despite a strong start, we observed a drop in participation toward the end of the application and fundraising phases. This highlighted the need for:

- Earlier and clearer communications on deadlines and requirements
- More consistent messaging across platforms
- Additional scaffolding for grantees unfamiliar with best practices and security protocols, wallets, web3 tools and impact documentation.
- **Enhance wallet safety and best practices onboarding**, including clearer training around hardware wallets, safe storage of seed phrases, and recognizing social engineering tactics.
- We'll also advocate for **safer off-ramps and DEX options**, reducing reliance on centralized exchanges not yet adapted to the ecosystem.

## Matching in USDGLO

Although we initially planned to process all funding in **cREAL**, we didn't listed the token in time with Gitcoin Grant Stack team, so we ultimately opted to **distribute the matching and the direct impact setup funds in USDGLO**, because it's a token the community is already used to use and would reduce friction for grantees. Since many participants were new to web3, adding extra steps, like converting cREAL or trying to apply on gitcoin with Valora wallet, could introduce unnecessary risk or confusion.

As a result, **cREAL was reserved exclusively for the Commitment Pool**, where its utility and local relevance could be better contextualized and explored through community-driven exchanges.

## Operational Risks & Incidents

Despite our best efforts at support and education, two serious incidents occurred:

1. **Lost funds due to centralized exchange incompatibility**

One project sent its USDGLO donation to a Celo wallet on Coinbase. Unfortunately,

Coinbase doesn't yet support USDGLO, resulting in those funds becoming inaccessible. We're currently exploring if there's any pathway to recovery via Coinbase support.

## 2. **Wallet hack resulting in full drainage of funds**

A second project experienced a complete wallet drain. The private keys had reportedly never been stored digitally, only in a physical notebook, and the project leader affirms he didn't click on suspicious links or install new apps.

Using blockchain forensics [tool](#), we tracked the recipient wallet and found recurrent inflows from multiple sources and increased activity over the last 30 days. While the exact cause is still unclear, we're working with the affected project and cybersecurity practices to further investigate using blockaid.

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# 6. Community Engagement & Education

The Regen Rio round was as much a **capacity-building initiative** as a funding mechanism. We prioritized inclusion, literacy, and creative onboarding strategies to make web3 tools more accessible for grassroots organizations unfamiliar with blockchain environments.

## **Key Engagement Channels:**

- **Onboarding Guide (PT):** [Gitcoin Application Guide](#)
- **Gitcoin Builder Support:** 1-on-1 via Zoom, WhatsApp, Telegram
- **Live Events:** Greenpill Brasil Weekly calls + 1 hybrid [Fundraising in Web3 Workshop](#) (March 15, 2025) + [1 KarmaGap Workshop](#) + [Off-Ramp Workshop](#)
- **Instagram Campaigns:** Reels, tutorials, and poetic storytelling - more than [6500 views](#) in the last month.
- **Twitter campaign:** Regen Rio Tweets and threads - [more than 8000 views in the last month.](#)
- **Valora Wallet Training:** [Loom Video 1](#)
- **Quadratic Funding Explainer:** [Loom Video 2](#)

We also used [Slido](#) for asynchronous Q&A and voting during the workshop, and hosted a **Telegram group with 100+ members** to guide grantees through the process.

 *The onboarding bounty program via [Impact Miner](#) allowed contributors to earn rewards for helping projects onboard into web3 ecosystems, rewarding support in a regenerative economy format.*

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# 7. Governance Experiments & Legacy Structures

We believe that **funding without governance is insufficient**. So alongside the technical execution, Regen Rio invested in governance tooling and experimental structures for coordination beyond the round itself.

## Legacy structures used:

- [Karma GAP](#): Impact setup, public profiles, goal tracking;
- [Safe Multisig Wallet](#): To manage Regen Rio funds and setup a basic governance structure for Regen Rio local projects;
- [Sarafu Network](#): Community commitment pool (voucher-based);
- [Impact Miner](#): Bounties and contributor incentivization;
- [Hypercerts](#): [REGEN RIO #1 QF ROUND](#)

All decisions about resource allocation beyond the QF round involved participation and were published transparently. You can see the preliminary results here.

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# 8. Meta-Learnings & Reflections

## Inclusion Is Not Plug & Play

Bringing social-environmental projects into web3 requires **translation — not just language, but logic, rhythm, and trust-building**. From token approval friction to wallet safety misunderstandings, the need for empathetic, embedded onboarding is clear.

## The Best Infra Is Cultural

Our most effective tools weren't smart contracts they were rituals: weekly calls, Telegram groups, open Google Docs, Looms, poems, check-ins. **Regeneration starts with how we treat people**, not only what tech we deploy.

## Fiat Donations & Crypto Takes More Than UX

The experiment with **PayPal donations** via [gf.normie.tech](https://gf.normie.tech) was promising but highlighted the need for **matching policy clarity** and expectations management.

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# 9. Recommendations & Future Pathways

## Toward a Regenerative, Post-Stack Ecosystem

With the sunsetting of Gitcoin's Grants Stack and Grants Labs in May 2025, Regen Rio de Janeiro becomes not only a regional experiment in funding public goods, but a *living transition case* for the future of regenerative grant infrastructure. As Gitcoin returns to its core focus on the Grants Program and broader ecosystem coordination via Allo Protocol and Passport, and shifts toward a leaner and more community-led structure, we believe local rounds can lead the way in prototyping what's next. We hope the following reflections can contribute to a richer, more plural approach to funding design:

## Protocol Design & Culture

The Regen Rio de Janeiro program surfaced important design insights for the future of regenerative rounds. Many of the challenges we faced were not technical, they were cultural, relational, and often tied to the gap between protocol design and the realities of community onboarding. So we propose the following principles for future protocol design:

- **Attestations over applications:** Let verified context replace bureaucratic gatekeeping.
- **Composable sybil protection:** Allow communities to choose their own signals.
- **Native support for multilingualism:** Don't outsource accessibility to volunteers.
- **Funding as coordination infrastructure:** Not just payout logic, but social architecture.
- **Matching as recognition:** Not only a financial lever, but a signal of community values.

## Hybrid Sybil Resistance Models

We combined algorithmic detection models (Passport and COCM) with a community-verified trusted wallet list, built through bounties, POAPs, and active participation. This hybrid model helped us mitigate sybil risks without excluding first-time users or newcomers with limited onchain history or passport score. We believe this pattern could be essential for increasing accessibility in rounds with non-crypto-native audiences.

## Layered Funding Allocation

Instead of viewing quadratic funding rounds as the single allocation moment, Regen Rio's layered model (QF → Karma GAP → Commitment Pool) allowed us to:

- Support early-stage, high-trust projects even if they lacked popularity in the QF round.
- Reward engagement and data transparency (Karma GAP) with real funding.
- Catalyze new collaborations via the Sarafu Pool, where projects coordinate and co-finance actions together.

**Why it matters:** In a post-GGS world, where programmable rounds may be harder to orchestrate centrally, layered models allow flexibility and deeper alignment across ecosystems, grantees, and values.

## Design for Emergence, Not Just Efficiency

Some of the program's most meaningful outcomes emerged outside the QF timeframe: projects co-creating tools, launching mutual support campaigns, writing guides together, and proposing pooled experiments. This points to a broader design principle, protocols should not only optimize for distribution mechanics, but also make room for relationship building, trust development, and collective authorship.

## Nurture Bioregional Autonomy

From content in Portuguese to the use of local stablecoins like cREAL, from wallet onboarding guides to regionally resonant rituals, Regen Rio foregrounded the importance of working *with* the grain of local realities. Multilingual infrastructure, off-ramp support, and collaborative onboarding are not marginal needs, they are central to creating plural, regenerative networks of value.

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# 10. Closing Thoughts

The most important takeaway from Regen Rio isn't technical, it's philosophical. The success of a funding round shouldn't be measured only by funds distributed, but by:

- Collaborations formed (e.g., grantees creating NFTs to support peers who lost funds)
- Shared infrastructure created (e.g., onboarding guides, translations, templates)
- Trust built over time and across contexts

Layered allocation, hybrid sybil resistance, and modular tooling are simply expressions of a deeper shift: from funding *projects* to cultivating *commons*. As funding infrastructure continues to evolve, we offer these reflections not as feature requests, but as an invitation:

- To treat protocol design as a form of culture building.
- To see trusted wallet registries and translation workflows as coordination scaffolding.
- To value rounds not only by capital flows, but by the social and civic tissue they help weave.

If Regen Rio contributed to this wider shift, even just a little, then it was worth the experiment. We hope this report serves as a reference for other communities navigating this transition, and that our learnings echo far beyond Rio.

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## Gratitude

This round wouldn't have been possible without the support of:

- **Bitcoin Grants Program** (technical infrastructure, matching funds)
- **Celo Public Goods** (funding, blockchain used)
- **Kevin Owocki** (ETHLocalism Fund)
- **Fabulosa Lab** (event hosting + local coordination)
- **Regen Coordination** (methodology + strategic guidance)
- **Mahesh and Antonio** (KarmaGAP support)
- **VR Glocal (ReRe Cultural Facilitator)**

And all the **grantees and contributors** who dared to explore a new model of regenerative funding in Brazil.