

Label guides system review 2018_09

@allancto

Context: <https://github.com/rchain/bounties/issues/783#issuecomment-421440580>

Purpose of Label guides (evolved)

Label guides have special responsibility of representing the “interests and views” of our Cooperative as applies to the bounty system. By definition it’s difficult to speak on behalf of the cooperative overall (that’s why we introduced label guides in the first place).

Purpose 1: connection within the Community.

Nothing in the charter of the bounty system states explicitly that our work needs to be approved by the Cooperative as a whole. (@gigi: *understood. The root of this issue is that the money needs to come from whoever the "client" is (in our case RChain department)*). However it seems clear that support within the community is something we want. “Label guides” was created to provide that, first and foremost. So we should have a clear expectation that Label guides be chosen partly on the basis of their connection with opinion leaders and and people of high reputation within the community at large.

@dckc: Which charter is that? The closest thing I can think of to a charter for the bounty system is the May 25 executive committee (<https://www.gov.rchain.coop/executive-committee>) decision that supplemented the Apr 6 board decision and established the TAC based on <https://github.com/rchain/bounties/wiki/Task-Approval> and <https://github.com/rchain/bounties/wiki/Bounty-Task-Guides> . Those materials don't speak of approval by the Cooperative as a whole, but they do say "Bounty task guides knowledgeable in a number of areas (represented by issue labels) are here to align contributions with goals of the RChain cooperative"

Purpose 2: administrative.

While we depend on label guides to provide a representation of the community at large, we also need them to be familiar with the bounty system and to work within the cadence of pay_periods. This requires significant time and dedication.

Purpose of Labels

If label guiding is to reflect the goals of our community at large, labels themselves should reflect the demographics and general activity of our community. Here’s an attempt to list the the activities in our community into balanced size “chunks”.

- Investors and validators
- Developers (including tutorials, node testing, education)

- dApp entrepreneurs (including internal wallet projects, projects that deserve support but haven't gotten it yet such as DID (digital ID))
- Governance (including existing internally focused projects such as Trustmetric voting and Label guides and future projects such as "what is blockchain governance")
- Marketing (communication of what existing resources RChain provides)
- Recruiting (bringing talented people in and providing learning opportunities for contributors)
- Theory (formal verification, behavioral types, LADL, consensus mechanisms and continued innovation of the sort that brought RChain into existence in the first place)
- Other (i think we need some catch-all for issues like "blockchain forensics" which i'm going to propose to @dc, but could also be "governance")

Mechanisms

One reason the structure of our label guide system is incredibly difficult to understand is that it shares an overloaded structure in github with many other labels which have totally different properties, such as "wont_fix" and so on. This is not transparent to outsiders, but more importantly it doesn't let us focus on how the labels themselves are doing (imo). If we feel it's important to be able to mark issues with labels, there are at least two modifications to be considered:

- Make Label guide labels visually distinct from other labels (unique color? Append ":-"?)
- Establish permissions to apply labels to issues, and consensus to make modifications to existing labels or create new ones
- Suggestion: exactly one guide label per issue, certainly issues often touch multiple areas and other guides and members are welcome to comment, but there should be an assigned "goto" Label guide

@dckc: I expect "rebooted" labels to have sufficiently clear and distinct scope that multiple area labels per issue would be a bug. "permissions to apply labels" makes some sense informally; I hope we can avoid technical enforcement mechanisms. Creating and modifying labels is something the TAC does (since labels are the way the TAC delegates to guides and other trusted voters).

To ensure accountability from the label guides that they are regularly aligning bounty system work with coop goals, it has been proposed ([9/12 RAM meeting](#)) that a guide from each label post in each "review of X pay period by guides" issue (like [#925](#) for August) a summary or link of their communications with their relevant connection outside the bounty system. "Relevant connections" for each guide are to be determined, but inferred examples would include Medha P. for the Development label, Patrick M. for Marketing, etc.