

Bitcoin Design Foundation Grant Proposal Project fit assessment

Quick ways to check if your project idea is solid and aligns with the community and Foundation before writing a full proposal.

Choose Your Path

Different people prefer different ways to validate their ideas. Pick the approach that feels right for you:

1. [Self-Assessment](#) - Quick, private evaluation you can do right now
 2. [Community Discussion](#) - Share ideas and get input from experienced community members
 3. [Foundation Assessment](#) - Direct conversation with the Foundation admins for fit evaluation
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Self-Assessment

Answer these questions honestly. If you can answer "yes" to most of them, your project is likely a good fit. If some of the questions are intimidating or hard to answer precisely, simply continue and respond as well as you can. It does not have to be perfect.

Foundation Alignment

- ☐ My project will directly improve Bitcoin user experience or design
- ☐ I'm committed to making all work open source and publicly available
- ☐ I plan to collaborate with and share learnings with the [Bitcoin Design Community](#)

- ☐ My project addresses a real problem that Bitcoin users or developers face

Scope & Feasibility

- ☐ I have a realistic timeline for my project scope
- ☐ I have (or can develop) the skills needed to execute this project
- ☐ My funding request is proportional to the project scope and timeline
- ☐ I can work independently and manage my own schedule

Community Value

- ☐ Other people in the Bitcoin ecosystem will benefit from my work
- ☐ My project builds on or complements existing Bitcoin design efforts
- ☐ I'm excited to share my process and learnings publicly
- ☐ My work will be usable/valuable even after the grant period ends

Your Readiness

- ☐ I understand what I want to create and why it matters
- ☐ I have a realistic timeline and approach in mind
- ☐ I'm prepared to engage with the Bitcoin Design Community
- ☐ I can articulate the problem my project solves

Results:

- 12+ checkmarks: Strong fit! Consider developing a full proposal or reaching out for Foundation assessment
 - 8-11 checkmarks: Good potential, but consider refining your approach and getting feedback
 - 4-7 checkmarks: Some concerns - a community or Foundation assessment would be valuable to clarify fit
 - Under 4 checkmarks: This project may not be the right fit for Foundation funding
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Community Discussion

The Bitcoin Design Community is a great place to refine your ideas and get input (though final fit assessment comes from the Foundation admins).

How to Get Good Community Input

1. Join the Community

[Bitcoin Design Discord](#) → #foundation channel

Introduce yourself and your background briefly

2. Share Your Idea Effectively

Brief template for community feedback requests:

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Hi everyone! I'm considering applying for a Bitcoin Design Foundation grant and would love some quick feedback.

Background: [2-3 sentences about you and your experience]

Project idea: [3-4 sentences describing what you want to create and why]

Specific questions:

- *Are there similar projects I should be aware of?*
- *What would make this most valuable to the community?*
- *How might I refine my approach?*
- *[Any other specific concerns or questions]*

Thanks for any input!

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3. What You'll Get

- Suggestions for improving your approach

- Connections to relevant people and projects
- Reality checks on scope and timeline
- Insights about community needs
- Input on project ideas and methodology

Community Discussion Benefits

Engaging with the community before applying can strengthen your proposal.

What's helpful:

- Brainstorming with other potential applicants
- Learning from recent grantees
- Getting input on project approach and methodology
- Understanding community needs and priorities
- Connecting with potential collaborators

Remember: Community input is valuable for refining your ideas, but Foundation admins provide the official assessment of project fit.

Foundation Assessment

The Foundation admins provide official assessment of project fit and guidance on the application process.

When to Reach Out for Assessment

- You want official confirmation that your project fits Foundation priorities
- You have questions about funding amounts or project scope
- Your project approach is unusual and you want guidance
- You're ready to move toward a full application and want input on your direction

How to Request a Check-In

Email: apply@bitcoindesignfoundation.org

Subject: "Project fit question - [Brief project description]"

Include:

1. Brief background (2-3 sentences about you)
2. Project summary (1 paragraph describing your idea)
3. Specific question (What exactly do you want feedback on?)
4. Timeline (When are you hoping to submit a full application?)

Example:

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Subject: Project fit question - Lightning payment UX research

Hi,

I'm Sarah, a UX researcher with 2 years experience in open-source. I've been using Bitcoin for 6 months and recently started exploring Lightning.

I'm considering a research project to identify common UX pain points in Lightning mobile wallets through user testing with 15-20 participants. The goal would be to create actionable design recommendations that wallet developers could implement.

My main question: Is user research a good fit for Foundation funding, or do you primarily support other types of design work? Also, what timeline would be realistic for this type of project?

I'm hoping to submit a full application in the next 2-3 weeks.

Thanks,

Sarah

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What to Expect

Response time: 3-5 business days

Format: Brief email response, possibly suggesting a short call

Outcome: Clear guidance on fit + suggestions for strengthening your approach

Things to look out for...

These are signs your project may not be a good fit, or simply needs more feedback and refinement. Don't see all of these as instant blockers, more as areas to dig into further.

Scope Issues

- Your deliverables are vague or hard to define
- You haven't thought through a realistic timeline
- Your project scope doesn't match your available time commitment
- The funding request seems disproportionate to the expected outputs

Alignment Issues

- Your project doesn't directly relate to Bitcoin UX/design
- You can't commit to open source licensing
- You prefer to work privately without community engagement
- Your project primarily benefits a single company or closed-source product
- Your project is primarily about development (consider OpenSats or Brink instead)

Readiness Issues

- You haven't used Bitcoin or engaged with the design community
- You need the Foundation to help you figure out what to build
- You can't dedicate significant time to the project
- You're not comfortable working independently

FAQ: Project Fit Questions

"Is my project too small/big?"

The Foundation funds projects of various sizes and timelines. Focus on impact and feasibility rather than absolute scope. A small, well-executed project that benefits the community is better than an overambitious one.

"Are there projects you definitely won't fund?"

We don't fund:

- Closed-source or proprietary work
- Projects unrelated to Bitcoin design/UX
- Individual learning/education (unless it produces community value)
- Marketing or promotional content
- Work that primarily benefits commercial entities
- Development-focused projects (better suited for OpenSats, Brink, or other dev-focused organizations)

"What if someone else is working on something similar?"

Similar projects aren't necessarily a problem. Consider:

- Is there room for multiple approaches?
- Could you collaborate rather than compete?
- What unique perspective or methodology do you bring?
- Is the need large enough to support multiple solutions?

"I'm new to Bitcoin - can I still apply?"

Yes! But you should:

- Spend time understanding the ecosystem and existing projects
- Engage with the Bitcoin Design Community first
- Consider starting with a smaller, learning-focused project

- Partner with more experienced community members

"What about ongoing work vs. defined projects?"

Both work! Defined projects need clear deliverables and timelines. Ongoing work (like fellowships) needs structure, accountability, and measurable community benefit.

Next Steps

If Your Project Seems Like a Good Fit:

1. Develop your idea further using the [Grant Application Worksheet](#)
2. Engage with the community to refine your approach
3. Review successful examples to understand strong applications
4. Write your proposal when you're confident in your approach

If You're Unsure:

1. Get community feedback - others have been where you are
2. Start smaller - consider a more focused initial project
3. Build relationships - engage with the community before applying
4. Learn more - spend time understanding Bitcoin design challenges

If It's Not a Good Fit:

1. Consider other funding sources that better match your project
 2. Adjust your approach to better align with community goals
 3. Contribute to the community in other ways to build relationships
 4. Keep the Foundation in mind for future projects that might fit better
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Remember that the Foundation team wants to see great projects succeed. These assessment tools are designed to help you determine fit early, not to create barriers. When in doubt, ask!