GG24 Technology and Mechanism Recommendations Report

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1. Executive Summary

This report outlines the findings and a phased set of recommendations from a strategic sprint conducted by Allo.Capital for Gitcoin. The aim is to define the optimal technology and mechanisms for Gitcoin Grants Round 24 (GG24), scheduled for September/October 2025, and to establish a sustainable path forward. This report reflects a strategic shift towards a phased implementation to ensure focused delivery, mitigate risks of over-scoping, and allow for iterative development based on learnings—addressing historical challenges.

Core Problem & Sprint Goal

The primary challenge is to provide Gitcoin with clear, actionable recommendations for GG24's infrastructure and core capital allocation mechanisms, enabling informed decision-making and fostering stakeholder alignment.

Methodology

The sprint involved intensive workshops with key Gitcoin stakeholders (Mathilda, Kevin, Rena), review of past program learnings, analysis of existing documentation, and exploration of solutions. The outcomes have been synthesized to support a phased approach.

Key Findings

- Significant operational overhead and user experience (UX) frictions persist with past grants platforms.
- Sybil resistance is a paramount and ongoing concern.
- A strong desire for a modular, flexible platform leveraging stable existing Gitcoin assets (where appropriate and efficient) remains, with a clear preference for a fresh start from the complexities of the deprecated Grants Stack platform.
- The core mechanisms for GG24 are confirmed as Quadratic Funding (QF), a Retroactive Funding model (Retro), and GTC Token Staking for governance and potential QF influence.
- Improving grantee, donor, and operator UX is critical.

Design Recommendations

Allo.Capital, as the build partner, proposes the following phased implementation for the GG24 platform and beyond. This approach prioritizes delivering essential functionality for GG24 while setting the stage for iterative enhancements and future innovation.

Phase 1: Foundational MVP for GG24 (Target: October 2025)

- **Focus**: Deliver core QF, Retro, and GTC Staking functionalities with robust Sybil resistance and a functional UI for essential grantee, donor, and operator tasks. Crucially, this phase includes dedicated UX research and the design of core user flows from foundational

principles to ensure past UX frictions are systematically addressed and the MVP provides an intuitive and effective experience.
- **Technology**: Strong likelihood of building upon the Allo Protocol (v2.1 or latest) and leveraging Allo Kit for modularity. Existing Gitcoin technical assets, such as the gitcoin/core UI kit, will also be evaluated for integration where they accelerate development and improve modularity. The precise implementation plan is To Be Determined (TBD) following consultation with the designated technical execution partner.
- **Emphasis**: Modularity, a plugin-based architecture for mechanisms, open-source potential, robust documentation.

Phase 2: Post-GG24 UX Enhancements & Iteration

- **Focus**: Systematically address known UX frictions identified during and after GG24. This phase will begin with a comprehensive retrospective of Phase 1.
- **Activities**: May include a dedicated design sprint to thoroughly research and prototype solutions for improved grantee, donor, and operator experiences.

Phase 3: Future Innovations & Advanced Features

- **Focus**: Explore and specify new, potentially transformative features and capabilities based on stakeholder input and ecosystem evolution.
- **Nature**: This phase will likely involve multiple, distinct milestones, potentially requiring substantial new development or reconfiguration, moving towards a "Cadillac" vision.

Rationale for Phased Approach: This methodology is explicitly recommended to avoid past pitfalls of over-scoping, ensure timely delivery of a functional GG24, maintain focus on essential requirements, and enable iterative improvement based on real-world usage and feedback.

Conclusion & Next Steps: The sprint has successfully identified a viable path for GG24. Gitcoin must now formally adopt this phased approach. Immediate next steps include:

1. Finalize the engagement with Allo.Capital for the build.
2. Initiate consultations with the technical execution partner to validate timelines and refine the technical execution plan for Phase 1.
3. Commence detailed design for Phase 1, including the critical foundational UX research and design.
4. Continue refinement of Sybil resistance strategies.
5. Further specify GTC Staking and Retro mechanisms for GG24.

2. Introduction / Problem Definition

This section sets the stage for the investigation, providing context and defining the problem being addressed by this strategic sprint.

2.1 Problem Scope

Gitcoin is currently navigating a period of significant transition, marked by the strategic decision to wind down its Grants Lab operations and the associated Grants Stack software platform by May 31, 2025. This decision, while opening avenues for innovation and a strategic reset, presents an immediate and critical challenge: the need to define a clear, viable, and robust path forward for conducting future Gitcoin Grants (GG) rounds, beginning with Gitcoin Grants Round 24 (GG24), anticipated for September/October 2025.

The core problem this sprint addresses is the urgent requirement to equip the Gitcoin team with clear, actionable recommendations for the optimal infrastructure (encompassing technology, products, potential partners, and/or necessary internal builds) and the core capital allocation mechanism(s) required to successfully plan, execute, and manage GG24. This involves not only selecting or designing appropriate technical solutions but also ensuring these solutions align with Gitcoin's evolving strategic priorities, stakeholder needs (grantees, donors, and round operators), and the lessons learned from past grant programs, including GG23 and the operations of the deprecated Grants Stack platform. The solution must address known frictions, particularly concerning user experience, Sybil resistance, and operational overhead, to ensure GG24 is effective, trusted, and sets a positive precedent for future granting activities.

2.2 Background & Context

Gitcoin has long been a cornerstone of the public goods funding landscape within the Web3 ecosystem. Its grants programs have facilitated the distribution of significant funding to a wide array of projects, fostering innovation and community growth. However, the tools and processes supporting these programs have evolved, leading to the development of Grants Stack, a comprehensive but also complex platform that has recently been deprecated.

The decision to sunset Grants Stack necessitates a comprehensive re-evaluation of Gitcoin's grants program infrastructure. This moment is not merely about replacing a software stack; it is a crucial opportunity to strategically redesign the Gitcoin Grants program by deeply exploring past learnings, offering an opportunity for a *clean slate*. Insights from GG23, the operational experiences with Grants Stack, and direct stakeholder feedback highlight several key areas for improvement:

- **Operational Complexity & Overhead**: Past systems, while powerful, often entailed significant operational burdens for the Gitcoin team and round managers.
- **User Experience (UX)**: Both grantees and donors have faced frictions in application processes, grant discovery, and donation experiences, particularly with cross-chain interactions. As one stakeholder noted regarding past platforms, they could be "10x the cost and 10x worse" due to inherent complexities.
- **Sybil Resistance**: Ensuring fair and effective Sybil resistance remains a persistent and paramount challenge, crucial for maintaining the integrity and trust of the grants program.

- **Community & Stakeholder Alignment**: Evolving the grants program requires clear communication and alignment with the diverse needs of the Gitcoin community.
- **Sustainability**: The long-term sustainability of the grants program, both operationally and financially, is an underlying consideration.

Allo.Capital was engaged to facilitate a focused strategy sprint and will be executing the build of the GG24 platform. Our team has extensive expertise in designing and implementing on-chain capital allocation mechanisms and a deep, historical understanding of Gitcoin's mission and operational context. This sprint aimed to cut through the complexity and provide Gitcoin with a clear, well-researched set of options for GG24.

2.3 Sprint Goals & Objectives

The primary goal of this focused sprint was:

To equip Gitcoin with clear, actionable recommendations for the optimal infrastructure (technology, products, partners, and/or builds) and core capital allocation mechanism(s) to successfully conduct Gitcoin Grants Round 24 (GG24) in September/October 2025.

The specific objectives to achieve this goal were:

- **Enable Informed Decisions**: Allow Gitcoin to make informed, timely decisions for GG24 execution.
- **Provide Researched Foundation**: Offer a well-researched basis for the technical and mechanistic aspects of GG24.
- **Foster Stakeholder Alignment**: Promote alignment among key Gitcoin stakeholders (Mathilda, Kevin, Rena) on the immediate path forward for GG24.
- **Define Requirements**: Articulate concise requirements for GG24 infrastructure and mechanisms, drawing from stakeholder insights and past program learnings.
- **Identify & Evaluate Technology Solutions**: Research and assess potential technology solutions for hosting and operating GG24.
- **Identify & Evaluate Mechanisms**: Research and assess suitable capital allocation mechanisms for GG24, prioritizing Sybil resistance, builder experience, and donor clarity.
- **Present Shortlisted Approaches**: Analyze and present viable technology and mechanism approaches, detailing their respective pros, cons, risks, and estimated complexities for GG24 implementation within a phased strategy.
- **Deliver Recommendations**: Provide a documented set of recommendations for the preferred approach and rationale for GG24.
- **Address Key Considerations**: Ensure recommendations consider improved grantee UX, simplified cross-chain UX for users, effective Sybil resistance strategies, and access to historical grant data (though full migration was out of scope).

2.4 Scope of Investigation

This sprint was intentionally scoped as Phase 1 of a broader strategic initiative, focusing on the immediate, time-sensitive needs for GG24 to ensure the delivery of actionable recommendations for its core functionality.

In Scope for this Sprint

- Documentation of the process followed to arrive at decisions for GG24.
- Detailed recommendations for products, partners, and/or builds to run GG24, framed within a phased approach.
- Mechanism recommendations for the GG24 round.
- Strategic design considerations around the recommended mechanism(s) for GG24.
- Focus on foundational Builder/Grantee UX for core tasks in GG24, including dedicated UX research and design from foundational principles.
- Focus on foundational Cross-chain UX for core tasks in GG24.
- Focus on effective Sybil resistance for GG24.
- Consideration of how historical grant data can be accessed or utilized for GG24 without requiring full migration.
- Preparation for posts to the Gitcoin governance forum to share results with the community.

Out of Scope for this Sprint

- Developing a high-level, long-term Gitcoin Grants strategy (beyond the foundational elements for GG24).
- Formulating broad partnership strategies (unless directly tied to a specific recommended technology/platform for GG24 Phase 1).
- Execution of large database migration from the deprecated Grants Stack platform.
- Addressing overall code hygiene of any existing Gitcoin codebase or improving general Gitcoin documentation not pertinent to GG24 Phase 1 recommendations.
- Inheriting or resolving all historical tech debt of Gitcoin's anti-Sybil history (the focus is on effective solutions for GG24).
- Creating a comprehensive community strategy or communications plan for deploying GG24 (recommendations are technical/mechanistic).
- Defining the GG24 funding strategy or a detailed sustainability model for Gitcoin Grants / DAO.
- Developing a robust social/communications strategy for running GG24.
- Designing a permanent, long-term governance structure for Gitcoin Grants.
- Full UI/UX design and front-end/back-end development for enhanced or "Cadillac" features (this sprint provides strategic recommendations to inform subsequent design/dev in Phases 2 and 3).

3. Findings

This section details the key findings from the sprint, including insights into the current state of Gitcoin Grants, the needs of its primary stakeholders, the exploration of potential solutions, and critical considerations for GG24. These findings underpin the rationale for the recommended phased approach.

3.1 Key Insights from Current State Analysis

The initial phase of the sprint (Day 1) focused on dissecting the current state of Gitcoin's grants programs, drawing heavily on operational experiences (Mathilda's perspective), learnings from past rounds like GG23, and the history of the now-deprecated Grants Stack platform. Several critical insights emerged:

Operational Overhead is a Major Pain Point:

- Running grants programs, particularly with the complexity of previous platforms or multifaceted rounds like GG23, imposed a significant operational burden on the Gitcoin team and round managers. This included manual processes, complex configurations, and extensive support requirements.
- Mathilda highlighted "knowledge bottlenecks" and the desire for "operational clarity" and better "process documentation" to alleviate this.

User Experience (UX) Needs Significant Improvement:

- **Grantee UX**: Application processes were often seen as cumbersome ("submission friction"). Grantees desired clearer expectations, better feedback, persistent profiles across rounds ("continuous application flows"), and improved project discoverability.
- **Donor UX**: Donors faced challenges with clarity on matching mechanisms, understanding the impact of their donations, and navigating cross-chain donation processes. Simplification and transparency are key. Highlighted needs for "highly effective project discoverability" and clear QF visualization.
- **Operator UX**: Round managers need more intuitive tools for setup, management, and dispute resolution. Noted desires for "seamless payouts," "bulk reject/approve," and "data dashboards".

Sybil Resistance Remains Paramount but Challenging:

- Sybil attacks continue to be a primary threat to the integrity and fairness of grant rounds. While various measures have been implemented, finding effective, scalable, and user-friendly Sybil resistance is an ongoing challenge.

- The Passport system (now Human Passport) was acknowledged as a valuable tool, but its integration, evolution, and the overall anti-Sybil strategy require continuous attention. The desire for effective Sybil defense was a constant refrain.

Learnings from Deprecated Grants Stack Platform:

- **Strengths (Acknowledged from past)**: Recognized for its robust data capabilities, comprehensive grantee onboarding, and ability to handle complex round structures.
- **Weaknesses (Leading to deprecation)**: Criticized for its high complexity, significant cost to maintain and operate, limited community involvement in its development, slow iteration cycles, and being "overbuilt" for some needs. Its sunsetting was seen as an opportunity for a "clean slate".

GG23 Learnings:

- **Positives**: Explored new application types and diverse round structures, showing a willingness to innovate. The GTC Staking experiment in GG23 was noted as "hugely successful" as a POC.
- **Negatives**: Suffered from operational difficulties, community confusion due to complexity, and persistent Sybil issues, reinforcing the need for simplification and better defense.

Communication and Alignment are Crucial:

- Clear communication about round mechanics, eligibility, and outcomes is vital for all stakeholders.
- Internal alignment within the Gitcoin team and broader alignment with community expectations are necessary for program success and trust.

Data Continuity is a Concern:

- While a full migration of historical data from the deprecated Grants Stack platform was out of scope for GG24, access to and utilization of this data (e.g., for grantee reputation, Sybil analysis) is important. Solutions for GG24 need to consider how this historical context can be leveraged.

Indexer Infrastructure Challenges:

- The current Indexer-v2 system presents significant operational challenges, including an overly complicated and unstable codebase that requires constant maintenance and frequently experiences downtime. This infrastructure burden diverts attention from core development work and creates reliability issues.
- The decision to transition to Ponder represents a strategic shift toward next-generation indexing technology that offers a simpler implementation approach, easier local

development, streamlined deployment, and the ability to index historical blockchain data while significantly reducing maintenance overhead.

Desire for Modularity and Flexibility:

- There's a recognized need for future grants infrastructure to be more modular and flexible, allowing for easier adaptation to different round types and evolving needs without the monolithic nature of past solutions. Kevin, in particular, emphasized a shift towards "network-driven mechanisms and operations". Existing Gitcoin assets like the gitcoin/core UI kit and the Allo Protocol/Kit are seen as foundational pieces for this modularity.

Financial Sustainability is a Top-Level Concern:

- Kevin highlighted the "lack of a clear path to financial sustainability" for Gitcoin as a critical problem for Gitcoin 3.0, which implicitly impacts the design and operational model of the grants program.

These insights, primarily drawn from Day 1 ("Mathilda Day") and reinforced throughout the sprint, painted a clear picture of the challenges to be addressed and the opportunities for improvement in designing the approach for GG24.

3.2 Stakeholder Needs & User Stories

A significant portion of Day 1 was dedicated to understanding the specific needs, pain points, and desired experiences of the primary stakeholders involved in Gitcoin Grants. This was achieved through direct discussion and the generation of user stories.

A. Grantees/Builders

Grantees are the lifeblood of the ecosystem, seeking funding to build and innovate. Their experience with the grants process directly impacts their ability to contribute.

Key Pain Points:

- Complex and time-consuming application processes.
- Lack of clarity on application status and evaluation criteria.
- Inconsistent experience across different rounds or platforms.
- Difficulty in showcasing project progress and impact effectively.
- Concerns about the fairness of funding distribution due to Sybil attacks.
- Profile information not persisting across rounds, requiring repetitive data entry.

Desired Outcomes & User Stories (for Phase 1 MVP, with enhancements in Phase 2):

- "As a grantee, I want to easily and quickly apply for a grant with clear guidelines, so I can spend more time building."
- "As a grantee, I want my project profile and history to be easily accessible and updatable, so I don't have to re-enter information for every round."
- "As a grantee, I want to understand how my application will be evaluated and receive timely feedback, so I know where I stand."
- "As a grantee, I want a fair chance at funding, knowing that robust Sybil resistance measures are in place."
- "As a grantee, I want to easily share updates on my project's progress with donors and the community, so I can demonstrate impact."

B. Donors

Donors contribute capital, often with the expectation of supporting valuable public goods and seeing their contributions make a difference.

Key Pain Points:

- Complexity in understanding matching mechanisms.
- Difficulty discovering projects aligned with their interests.
- Clunky or confusing donation processes, especially across different chains.
- Lack of transparency regarding the impact of their specific donations.
- Concerns about funds being diverted by Sybil attackers.

Desired Outcomes & User Stories (for Phase 1 MVP, with enhancements in Phase 2):

- "As a donor, I want to easily discover projects that I care about, so I can support initiatives aligned with my values."
- "As a donor, I want a simple and secure way to donate, regardless of the blockchain the project is on."
- "As a donor, I want to understand how my donation will be matched and amplified, so I feel my contribution is impactful."
- "As a donor, I want to see evidence of the impact of the projects I support, so I know my money is making a difference."
- "As a donor, I want assurance that the grants program is fair and resistant to manipulation, so I can trust the allocation process."

C. Round Managers/Operators

Operators are responsible for setting up, managing, and ensuring the smooth execution of grant rounds. Their efficiency directly impacts the program's success.

Key Pain Points:

- High operational overhead and manual effort in configuring and managing rounds.
- Lack of intuitive and flexible tools for round setup and customization.
- Significant time spent on fraud detection and dispute resolution.
- Difficulty in communicating round rules and updates effectively to participants.
- Challenges in accessing and analyzing round data for reporting and improvement.

Desired Outcomes & User Stories:

- "As a round operator, I want simple and flexible tools to configure and launch a grant round with different parameters, so I can tailor it to specific needs."
- "As a round operator, I want effective and largely automated Sybil detection tools, with clear processes for review and appeal, so I can ensure round integrity efficiently."
- "As a round operator, I want a clear dashboard to monitor round progress, identify issues, and manage participants, so I can run the round smoothly."
- "As a round operator, I want easy ways to communicate with grantees and donors throughout the round, so everyone is informed."
- "As a round operator, I want access to comprehensive data and analytics post-round, so I can report on outcomes and identify areas for improvement."

Understanding these diverse stakeholder needs was fundamental to defining the core requirements for any GG24 solution. The emphasis throughout was on simplification, transparency, fairness, and efficiency, delivered iteratively through the phased approach.

3.3 Solution Space Exploration (Technology & Mechanisms)

Day 2 of the sprint ("Kevin Day") transitioned from understanding problems to exploring potential solutions for GG24, focusing on both the technology stack and the capital allocation mechanisms. The discussions aimed to define a "desired state" and brainstorm pathways to achieve it, keeping in mind the September/October 2025 timeline for GG24.

A. Technology Stack Approaches

The team considered several high-level strategies for the underlying technology:

- **Build (from Scratch or Leveraging Modern Core Assets)**: Developing a new, streamlined platform. This approach would prioritize leveraging modern, modular Gitcoin assets like the gitcoin/core UI kit (with necessary improvements) and Allo Protocol/Kit, rather than building everything from absolute zero or inheriting from the deprecated Grants Stack platform. This remains an option if a custom solution is deemed better/cheaper/faster after technical consultation.
- **Partner/Integrate (Leverage Existing Platforms/Tools)**: Utilizing third-party services. Less emphasis for core functionality but relevant for supplementary tools (e.g., Human Passport).

- **Hybrid Approach (Current Leaning for Phase 1)**: Combine building core, essential Gitcoin-owned components (potentially leveraging gitcoin/core for UI, Allo Protocol v2.1/latest for contracts and Allo Kit for modularity, Ponder for data indexing) with strategic integration of best-in-class third-party tools. This balances control with efficiency. The decision to adopt Ponder over Indexer-v2 addresses critical infrastructure challenges by providing a simpler, more maintainable indexing solution that reduces operational overhead while enabling access to historical data through Open Source Observer.

A key takeaway was the confirmation of Allo.Capital as the build partner, with the understanding that the precise technical execution plan, especially regarding the use of existing Gitcoin codebase (like gitcoin/core and Allo Protocol) versus custom development, would be finalized after consultation with the designated technical execution partner. The priority is a working, UX-friendly solution, delivered on time and cost-effectively, without inheriting legacy code from the deprecated Grants Stack platform if it doesn't offer clear advantages.

B. Capital Allocation Mechanism Exploration

The stakeholders confirmed their desire for repeating the core mechanisms for GG24:

- **Quadratic Funding (QF)**: Remains central. Considerations include simplifying its explanation, ensuring robust Sybil resistance, and enhancing UX for matching visualization. The new platform will replace the QF functionality of the deprecated Grants Stack, likely leveraging Allo Protocol contracts and Ponder for efficient data indexing.
- **Retroactive Funding (Retro Mechanism)**: A distinct mechanism for mature teams. Focus on clear eligibility, impact evaluation, and transparency. The existing RetroFunding tool provides a reference for a new build on Allo Protocol with Ponder indexing, eliminating the maintenance burden of the previous Indexer-v2 implementation.
- **GTC Token Staking Mechanism**: A key offering for governance (e.g., domain selection, round parameters) and potentially QF influence. The successful GG23 POC contracts are a starting point, with indexing to be implemented using Ponder's lightweight architecture for improved reliability and reduced maintenance overhead.

The primary focus for GG24 is to deliver these three mechanisms with a robust and user-friendly experience, leveraging stable components like Ponder for data indexing and the Allo Protocol/Allo Kit for core functionality, and evaluating assets like gitcoin/core where feasible and efficient. The strategic shift to Ponder addresses the operational challenges of maintaining complex indexing infrastructure while providing a foundation for future scalability.

3.4 Key Considerations for GG24

Throughout the sprint, several cross-cutting themes and requirements emerged as critical for the success of GG24. These considerations must be central to the design and implementation of any chosen solution, particularly for the Phase 1 MVP:

- **Sybil Resistance (Overarching Priority)**: Effective, multi-layered strategies are crucial. Human Passport is the current placeholder.
    - *The system needs flagging, review, and transparent dispute resolution.*
- **Improved User Experience (UX) - Grantees, Donors, Operators**: Foundational UX for core tasks is essential in Phase 1, with significant enhancements planned for Phase 2.
    - *Simplicity, clarity, streamlined processes, and effective communication are key.*
- **Modularity & Flexibility (for future-proofing)**: The Phase 1 build must be modular to allow for easier adaptation and evolution.
    - *Allo Protocol, Allo Kit, and potentially an improved gitcoin/core are envisioned as key enablers.*
- **Data Access & Continuity**: Access to relevant historical grant data (without full migration for GG24 from the deprecated Grants Stack) is important.
    - *The GG24 platform will capture comprehensive data via Ponder's indexer, while historical Gitcoin data remains accessible through Open Source Observer.*
- **Timeline Feasibility for GG24 (Sept/Oct 2025 Launch)**: The phased approach directly addresses this.
    - *Phase 1 scope must be realistically implementable, pending technical partner confirmation.*
- **Operational Efficiency & Reduced Overhead**: The new system must significantly reduce manual workload.
    - *Automation and intuitive tooling are key.*
- **Clear Communication & Documentation**: The platform must facilitate clear communication.
    - *Comprehensive documentation for users and operators is essential from Phase 1.*
- **Community Trust & Transparency**: Transparent mechanisms and processes are vital.
- **Cost-Effectiveness**: Development and operational costs must be sustainable.
- **Infrastructure Reliability & Maintainability**: The indexing solution must be stable and require minimal maintenance overhead.
    - *Ponder's architecture with simple implementation (3 core files: config, schema, handlers) ensures reliable data indexing without the operational burden of complex legacy systems.*
- **Cross-Chain Functionality**: Foundational multi-chain support (e.g., Arbitrum, Optimism, Celo) from day one for core functions, with UX simplification as a focus for later iterations.

4. Justification for A Phased Approach

Before detailing the specific recommendations, it is crucial to underscore a fundamental strategic shift: the adoption of a focused, phased approach for the development of the GG24 platform and its subsequent evolution. This recommendation stems directly from the sprint's findings, particularly the analysis of past challenges and the urgent need for a successful, timely, and sustainable grants program. This phased strategy allows for *focused execution* on immediate priorities, ensuring *manageable effort* for each stage. It embraces *iterative improvement*, with each phase building on the last, and maintains *user-centricity* by prioritizing critical needs early, including foundational UX

research and design from the outset. This commitment to *transparency* in goals and progress will be key throughout the process.

Gitcoin stands at a critical juncture. The sunsetting of the Grants Stack platform offers a "clean slate," but also carries the risk of repeating past mistakes if ambitions are not carefully managed against resources and timelines. The history of large, monolithic builds often highlights issues of over-scoping, delayed delivery, and difficulty in adapting to evolving needs.

Therefore, this report strongly advocates for a *departure* from such patterns. The proposed phased approach is designed to:

1. **Ensure Focus and Prioritization**: Concentrate initial efforts (Phase 1) on delivering the absolute essential features required for a successful GG24. This means a relentless focus on core QF, Retro, and GTC Staking mechanisms, robust Sybil resistance, and a functional, clear UI for the three key stakeholders (grantees, donors, operators).
2. **Mitigate Risk**: By breaking down the development into manageable phases, we reduce the risk of project overruns, budget escalations, and failure to meet critical deadlines like the September/October 2025 target for GG24.
3. **Enable Iterative Development & Learning**: Each phase will build upon the last, incorporating learnings from real-world usage and stakeholder feedback. This "build-measure-learn" cycle is vital for creating a platform that truly meets user needs and adapts to the dynamic Web3 ecosystem. Phase 1 will provide the foundation; Phase 2 will refine it based on GG24 experiences; Phase 3 will explore further innovations.
4. **Promote Modularity and Long-Term Sustainability**: Designing in phases encourages modular architecture, making the system easier to maintain, update, and extend over time. This is key for fostering an open-source ecosystem where community contributions can thrive.

This phased strategy is not about diminishing ambition; it is about channeling it *effectively*. It is a pragmatic recognition that building the "Cadillac" from day one is often a recipe for disappointment. Instead, we recommend building a lean, reliable, and effective vehicle for GG24, and then iteratively upgrading and expanding its capabilities.

This is Gitcoin's opportunity to demonstrate a renewed commitment to disciplined execution, user-centric design, and sustainable development. Adopting this phased approach is the most critical first step towards ensuring GG24 is not just a grants round, but a successful relaunch of Gitcoin's granting infrastructure, setting a positive trajectory for years to come. We urge all stakeholders to embrace this strategy as the foundational principle guiding all subsequent decisions for GG24 and beyond.

5. Design Recommendations

Based on the sprint findings and the strategic imperative for a focused approach, Allo.Capital recommends the following phased implementation plan for the GG24 platform. This plan prioritizes a successful GG24 launch, followed by iterative enhancements and strategic evolution.

5.1 Technology Assumptions & Technical Partner Consultation

The technical foundation for Phase 1, and potentially subsequent phases, requires careful consideration. Our current working assumptions, which must be validated and refined with the technical execution team, are as follows:

- **Leveraging Allo Protocol & Allo Kit**: There is a strong inclination to build upon the existing Allo Protocol (v2.1 or the latest stable version) for its smart contract infrastructure and to utilize the Allo Kit SDK for developing modular components and ensuring composability. This approach aims to leverage proven, audited code and accelerate development. The "smart components" philosophy of Allo Kit also aligns with the stated future direction for assets like gitcoin/core.
- **Evaluation of Existing Gitcoin Assets**: Phase 1 will evaluate leveraging relevant existing Gitcoin technical assets, such as the gitcoin/core UI kit. The *Gitcoin Engineering Handover* indicates gitcoin/core has been used to build applications like Checker and RetroFunding but also notes it requires further work (documentation updates, build process improvements, theming capabilities for whitelabel solutions, and evolution towards more "smart" components). The use of gitcoin/core or components from it will depend on whether this accelerates development and enhances modularity for the new platform, considering the effort needed to address its current state versus building components with Allo Kit or other solutions.
- **Plugin-Based Architecture for Mechanisms**: A core design principle for Phase 1 will be to adopt a plugin-based architecture for funding mechanisms. This involves leveraging Allo Protocol's strategy pattern to ensure that QF, Retro, and Staking are implemented as modular, interchangeable plugins, facilitating future extensibility and the potential addition of new allocation strategies without rearchitecting the entire system.
- **Flexibility and Pragmatism**: While Allo Protocol/Kit and potentially an improved gitcoin/core are current leanings, the ultimate decision on the precise technical stack and implementation plan will be made after thorough consultation with the technical execution team. This consultation will assess whether custom solutions (or significant modifications) might be better, cheaper, or faster for specific components to meet GG24's critical path. The priority is a working, UX-friendly solution, delivered on time and cost-effectively.
- **No Obligation to Inherit Deprecated Grants Stack Code**: There is no mandate to inherit or use any code from the *deprecated Grants Stack platform or its associated legacy backend services* if doing so does not provide clear advantages in terms of time, cost, or quality for

the new GG24 platform. The focus is on a clean, maintainable, and effective solution, leveraging useful, modern assets where pragmatic.

- **Ponder as Core Data Source**: Ponder will serve as the primary indexing solution for on-chain data across all phases. This indexer technology offers a simple implementation approach with easy local development, simple deployment, and the ability to index historical blockchain data. Historical Gitcoin data will be accessible through Open Source Observer.
- **Human Passport for Sybil Resistance**: Human Passport will be the initial integrated Sybil resistance mechanism, with the platform designed to accommodate potential future alternatives or supplementary tools.

The technical execution team's expertise will be crucial in performing technical due diligence, confirming the feasibility of timelines, estimating effort, and co-designing the optimal technical architecture for Phase 1. This report's recommendations are contingent upon this collaborative validation process.

5.2 Phase 1: Foundational MVP for GG24

This phase is laser-focused on delivering the essential functionalities for a successful Gitcoin Grants Round 24 by the target timeline of September/October 2025.

A. Core Features & Functionality

- **Quadratic Funding (QF) Mechanism**:
    - Core on-chain QF contract deployment and integration (likely Allo Protocol based).
    - Functional UI for grantees to apply to QF rounds.
    - Functional UI for donors to discover projects and donate, with clear (even if basic) visualization of QF matching impact, *including estimated matching at checkout*.
    - Admin interface for setting up and managing QF rounds. The underlying QF calculation logic (potentially adapting from the existing Python-based calculator if appropriate, but ensuring seamless platform integration) will be implemented as part of the new platform.
- **Retroactive Funding (Retro) Mechanism**:
    - Simplified Retro funding process.
    - UI for eligible projects/teams to apply or be nominated.
    - Mechanism for evaluation (e.g., by badgeholders, potentially off-chain for simplicity in v1) and distribution from a predefined pool.
    - Admin interface for managing Retro rounds.
- **GTC Token Staking**:
    - Core staking contract deployment (building on GG23 POC).
    - UI for users to stake GTC.
    - Initial utility focused on governance (e.g., domain/theme selection voting for future rounds, potential for boosted QF influence as per GG23 experiment).
    - Admin interface for configuring staking parameters.
    - Implementation of GTC staking indexing using Ponder.

- **Sybil Resistance Integration**:
    - Integration of Human Passport as the primary Sybil resistance tool.
    - Basic UI flows for users to connect/verify with Passport.
    - Admin capabilities for reviewing flagged accounts and managing appeals (streamlined process).
- **Functional User Interface for Core Tasks**:
    - **Grantee Portal & Operator/Admin Panel:** Strong consideration will be given to leveraging and adapting existing components from gitcoin/core for the Grantee Portal (including simplified grant application and profile management, *laying the groundwork for continuous application flows*) and Admin Panel (including tools for round setup, application review with bulk actions, and payout management, aiming for operational efficiencies like seamless payouts and handling 200+ projects). This is based on reports that foundational elements for these are available in gitcoin/core, while acknowledging and addressing any necessary improvements to gitcoin/core itself during Phase 1.
    - **Donor Portal**: Project listing and discovery (basic filtering/search) and donation interface. The checkout flow for the Donor Portal will likely require new development.
- **Multi-Chain Support**: Deployable and functional on specified EVM chains from day one (e.g., Arbitrum, Optimism, Celo) for core mechanisms. Initial focus on single-chain transactions per round, with foundational work for future simplified cross-chain experiences.

B. Key Emphases for Phase 1

- **Dedicated UX Research and Foundational Design**: Crucially, Phase 1 includes dedicated UX research and the design of core user flows (grantee, donor, operator) from foundational principles. This is to ensure past UX frictions are systematically addressed and that the MVP provides an intuitive and effective experience, rather than replicating previous problematic interactions.
- **Adopt a Plugin-Based Architecture for Mechanisms**: Leverage Allo Protocol's strategy pattern to ensure funding mechanisms (QF, Retro, Staking) are implemented as modular, interchangeable plugins, facilitating future extensibility.
- **Modularity**: Architecture designed with modular components (e.g., using Allo Kit and potentially elements from gitcoin/core) to facilitate future upgrades and maintenance.
- **Open-Source by Default**: All custom code developed should be open-sourced with clear licensing to encourage community contribution.
- **Robust Documentation**: Essential for users (grantees, donors, operators) and developers from the outset. This includes API documentation if applicable.
- **Security**: Smart contracts must be audited. Security best practices applied throughout development.

C. Scope Boundaries for Phase 1

- UX will be functional and clear, but not feature-rich or highly polished. Deeper UX enhancements are deferred to Phase 2.
- Advanced features (e.g., complex analytics, highly personalized dashboards, sophisticated governance beyond initial staking utilities) are out of scope for Phase 1.
- Full data migration from the deprecated Grants Stack platform is out of scope; historical Gitcoin data will be accessible through Open Source Observer for GG24 functions as needed. The Ponder indexing solution will handle all new on-chain data capture.

5.3 Phase 2: Post-GG24 UX Enhancements & Iteration

Following the successful completion of GG24 and a thorough retrospective, Phase 2 will focus on systematically improving the user experience and iterating on the platform based on learnings and feedback. A tentative target for delivering initial Phase 2 enhancements could be ETHDenver (early the following year), pending GG24 outcomes and resource availability.

A. Core Focus

- **GG24 Retrospective**: Conduct a comprehensive review of GG24 involving all stakeholders (grantees, donors, operators, Gitcoin team, Allo.Capital, technical execution partner) to identify pain points, successes, and areas for improvement. (Targeted for November 2025)
- **Targeted UX Enhancements**:
    - **Grantee Experience**: Improve application flows (e.g., "continuous applications"), profile management, feedback mechanisms, and project update tools.
    - **Donor Experience**: Enhance project discovery (advanced filtering, categorization, recommendations), QF impact visualization, and cross-chain donation UX. Introduce features like "I just donated" social sharing cards.
    - **Operator Experience**: Improve admin dashboard usability, add more sophisticated reporting/analytics, streamline dispute resolution, and enhance communication tools. Implement features like AI-assisted application review (e.g., Gitcoin Checker). Leverage Ponder's efficient indexing capabilities to enable real-time analytics, advanced query capabilities, and enhanced data visualization tools for round monitoring and post-round analysis.
- **Dedicated Design Sprint(s)**: Potentially conduct focused design sprints to deeply explore and prototype solutions for the most critical UX frictions identified.
- **Mechanism Refinements**: Based on GG24 data, refine parameters or minor aspects of QF, Retro, or GTC Staking mechanisms if clear improvements are identified.

B. Process

- Prioritize enhancements based on impact and effort.
- Continue agile development practices with regular feedback loops.
- Maintain focus on modularity to allow for targeted upgrades.

5.4 Phase 3: Future Innovations & Advanced Features

Phase 3 represents the longer-term evolution of the Gitcoin Grants platform, moving towards a more feature-rich, experience. This phase will be re-evaluated and scoped based on the outcomes of Phases 1 and 2, stakeholder priorities, and emerging opportunities in the ecosystem. It will likely consist of multiple, distinct milestones.

A. Potential Areas of Exploration

- **State-of-the-Art Grantee Experience**: Highly intuitive application processes, rich project profiles with on-chain attestations (e.g., EAS integration), seamless progress reporting tools.
- **Exceptional Donor Experience**: Advanced project discovery algorithms, highly engaging donation interactions, personalized dashboards, "Proof of Donation" receipts/badges (e.g., NFTs). Leverage Ponder's efficient data indexing to enable sophisticated donor analytics, contribution tracking across multiple rounds, and dynamic impact visualization.
- **Sophisticated GTC Staking & Governance**: Expanded GTC utility, richer governance interfaces, deeper integration with platform operations.
- **Comprehensive Operator Panel**: Advanced analytics, customizable round creation tools, integrated communication suites. Utilize Ponder's lightweight architecture to enable real-time data streaming, custom dashboard creation, and complex cross-round analytics with minimal infrastructure overhead.
- **Advanced Cross-Chain Functionality**: Seamless cross-chain interactions, potential for L2 donation aggregation for mainnet pools.
- **Plugin Architecture & Strategy Marketplace**: Developing a robust plugin architecture for funding mechanisms, potentially evolving into a broader "strategy marketplace" where different allocation models can be easily deployed.
- **New Mechanism Exploration**: Researching and implementing entirely new capital allocation mechanisms beyond the initial QF, Retro, and Staking. Ponder's simple implementation approach will facilitate rapid prototyping and testing of new funding mechanisms with easy historical data analysis and mechanism performance tracking.

B. Approach

- Each major feature or innovation in Phase 3 will require its own detailed specification, research, design, and development cycle.
- This phase represents a *significant* ongoing investment in the platform's future.

5.5 The "N+1" Principle: Continuous Learning and Evolution

Underpinning this entire phased approach is the "N+1" principle – a commitment to continuous learning, iteration, and evolution of the Gitcoin Grants program and its underlying technology.

- **Learning from Each Round (N)**: Each grants round (N), starting with GG24, should be treated as a learning opportunity. Data, feedback, and operational insights must be systematically collected and analyzed.
- **Informing the Next Round (N+1**): These learnings will directly inform improvements and potential new mechanisms for subsequent rounds (N+1). The current mechanism set (QF, Retro, GTC Staking) is optimal for GG24, but the platform and processes should be designed to accommodate future evolution with multiple mechanisms.
- **Framework for Iteration**: The programmatic framework elements (sensemaking, domain identification, etc., detailed in Appendix B) will support this N+1 iteration, providing a structured way to identify needs and explore new solutions.
- **Mechanism Exploration Beyond GG24**: While GG24 focuses on the core three mechanisms, the N+1 principle explicitly includes exploring, testing, and potentially integrating alternative or complementary capital allocation mechanisms in future phases, guided by ecosystem needs and community input. The process used to define the GG24 mechanisms can serve as a model for this future exploration.

By embedding the N+1 principle, Gitcoin ensures that its grants program remains adaptive, resilient, and increasingly effective over time.

6. Conclusion & Future Vision

This strategic sprint and the resulting phased recommendations provide Gitcoin with a clear, actionable, and pragmatic path forward for Gitcoin Grants Round 24 and beyond. The decision to sunset the Grants Stack platform, while presenting challenges, has created a pivotal opportunity to rebuild with a focus on sustainability, user experience, and modularity. The adoption of the proposed phased approach is paramount to navigating this transition successfully, avoiding past pitfalls of over-scoping, and ensuring the timely delivery of a functional and effective platform for GG24.

Key Conclusions Reiterated

- A new, user-centric platform for GG24 is an urgent necessity.
- The core mechanisms for GG24 (QF, Retro, GTC Staking) are well-defined.
- Sybil resistance and improved UX for all stakeholders are critical success factors.
- A phased implementation is the most responsible and effective strategy. This includes dedicated foundational UX research and design from the outset for the MVP to directly address past user frictions.
- Technology choices will prioritize proven, modular solutions and aim for cost-effectiveness and timely delivery.

Immediate Next Steps

1. **Gitcoin**: Formally adopt the phased approach outlined in this report.

2. **Gitcoin**: Finalize the engagement with Allo.Capital for the build phase.
3. **Allo.Capital**: Initiate immediate consultations with the technical execution team to validate Phase 1 technical plans and timelines.
4. **Allo.Capital**: Commence the detailed design and development of the Phase 1 MVP, including the foundational UX research and design.
5. **Allo.Capital**: Continue to refine Sybil resistance strategies and further specify the GTC Staking and Retro mechanisms for GG24.
6. **Gitcoin**: Develop a community communication plan for the GG24 strategy.

Future Vision: Building a Resilient and Community-Driven Grants Ecosystem

Beyond the immediate needs of GG24, this phased approach lays the groundwork for a more resilient, adaptive, and community-driven future for Gitcoin Grants. We envision:

- **An Open and Collaborative Ecosystem**: With an open-source platform and robust documentation from Phase 1, the goal is to foster significant community involvement in the maintenance, enhancement, and extension of the grants software. This includes contributions from individual developers, other DAOs, and ecosystem partners.
- **The "N+1" Iteration in Practice**: The platform and its surrounding processes will embody continuous improvement. Learnings from GG24 will directly shape GG25, and so on. This includes evolving existing mechanisms and exploring new ones as the public goods landscape changes.
- **Gitcoin "Eating Its Own Dogfood"**: Future iterations could see Gitcoin itself using its grants platform to fund improvements to the platform – for example, a dedicated grants round for community-developed modules, UI enhancements, or new Sybil resistance tools.
- **Documentation and Modularity as Cornerstones**: World-class documentation and a highly modular architecture will be critical for long-term success, lowering the barrier to entry for contributors and ensuring the platform can adapt without requiring complete overhauls.
- **Evolving Governance and Stewardship**: The GTC Staking mechanism introduced in Phase 1 is just the beginning. Future phases can explore deeper integrations of community governance into all aspects of the grants lifecycle, from sensemaking and domain definition (as outlined in Appendix B) to mechanism selection and results ratification.

By committing to this focused, iterative, and community-centric vision, Gitcoin can not only deliver a successful GG24 but also solidify its role as a leader in innovative and effective public goods funding for the long term. This strategic reset, guided by the principles of disciplined execution and continuous learning, will set a positive trajectory for the future of Gitcoin Grants.

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8. Appendices

Appendix A: Design Space Exploration & Research Methodology

This section outlines the structured approach taken during the GG24 Strategy Sprint to explore potential solutions, gather necessary information, and analyze findings to arrive at actionable recommendations.

A.1 Overall Approach

The GG24 Strategy Sprint adopted a highly intensive and collaborative approach, condensed into a three-week period, with a core three-day IRL alignment workshop series from May 20th to May 22nd, 2025. The overarching methodology was designed to:

- Establish a Shared Understanding: Begin by deeply understanding the current state, past learnings (from GG23, deprecated Grants Stack platform, etc.), existing frictions, and diverse stakeholder perspectives within Gitcoin.
- Define the Desired Future State: Collaboratively envision the ideal characteristics and success metrics for GG24 and, by extension, future Gitcoin Grants programs.
- Explore the Solution Space: Systematically brainstorm, research, and evaluate potential technology stacks and capital allocation mechanisms suitable for GG24.
- Synthesize and Prioritize: Analyze the explored options against defined requirements and criteria, leading to the identification of viable approaches.
- Formulate Actionable Recommendations: Develop concrete recommendations for the preferred approach(es), including considerations for implementation, risks, and trade-offs.

The sprint was facilitated by Allo.Capital, leveraging structured workshop techniques, expert input on capital allocation and ecosystem dynamics, and a focus on achieving alignment among key Gitcoin decision-makers. The process emphasized respectful urgency and commitment over consensus to ensure timely progress and actionable outcomes.

The three core workshop days were themed to guide the exploration:

- **Day 1 (Mathilda Day)**: Current State, Frictions & User Stories: Focused on operational realities, past program analysis, and defining user needs.
- **Day 2 (Kevin Day)**: Desired State & Future Vision: Explored ideal future states, brainstormed solutions, and began evaluating options.
- **Day 3 (Rena Day)**: Gantt Chart Planning for GG24: Centered on practical implementation planning for shortlisted options, risk assessment, and defining next steps.

Subsequent activities in Week 2 and 3 involved further research, validation of assumptions, synthesis of workshop outputs, and the drafting of this recommendations report.

A.2 Data Collection Methods

A multi-faceted approach was used to collect the data and insights necessary to inform the recommendations:
Stakeholder Workshops & Interviews (Primary Data):

- **Intensive Workshops**: The core of the data collection involved three full-day workshops with primary Gitcoin stakeholders:
    - Mathilda (Grants Program Lead)
    - Kevin (Gitcoin Steward, focus on ecosystem vision)
    - Rena (Executive Director, focus on organizational strategy and execution)
      These sessions involved structured discussions, brainstorming exercises (e.g., user story generation, solution ideation), and facilitated debate to capture diverse perspectives, pain points, requirements, and desired outcomes. Daily notes from these workshops served as the primary raw data.
- **Pre-Sprint Interviews**: The initial proposal mentioned that Allo.Capital's understanding was informed by prior interviews with Mathilda, Kevin, Ed, and Rena, providing foundational context.
- **Planned Post-Workshop Interviews (KOLs)**: A plan to conduct follow-up interviews with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) in the ecosystem to validate assumptions and gather external perspectives.

Document Review (Secondary Data)

- **Past Program Analysis**: Discussions explicitly reviewed learnings from Gitcoin Grants Round 23 (GG23) and the operational history of the deprecated Grants Stack platform.

- **Internal Gitcoin Documentation**: The sprint drew upon the collective knowledge and existing internal understanding of Gitcoin's operations, challenges, and past initiatives held by the participating stakeholders, including the "Gitcoin Engineering Handover," "Allo Grants Tech - V.0," "GG Sprint," and "Tools/Dependancies" documents.
- **Allo.Capital Proposal & Planning Documents**: The sprint proposal itself, along with internal Allo.Capital planning documents (timelines, presentation slides), provided a framework and initial hypotheses that were tested and refined during the sprint.

Market Scanning & Expert Knowledge (Tertiary Data):

- **Technology Solutions**: Discussions on Day 2 involved brainstorming and evaluating various existing technology platforms, tools, and approaches relevant to grants management. This drew upon the collective market knowledge of participants and facilitators.
- **Capital Allocation Mechanisms**: The sprint leveraged Allo.Capital's expertise and the participants' knowledge of various mechanisms (QF, MACI, etc.) and Sybil resistance strategies. Review of the GG23 GTC Staking Experiment documentation also informed this area.

A.3 Analysis Techniques

The analysis of collected data was an iterative process integrated throughout the sprint, culminating in the synthesis presented in this report. Key techniques included:

- **Thematic Analysis**: Raw notes from workshop discussions were reviewed to identify recurring themes, key pain points, common requirements, and convergent or divergent stakeholder perspectives. For example, Sybil resistance, grantee UX, and operational overhead emerged as critical themes.
- **User Story Mapping**: On Day 1, user stories were generated for different stakeholder groups (grantees, donors, operators). These were analyzed to understand specific needs and desired functionalities, directly informing requirements definition.
- **Comparative Analysis (Solution Evaluation)**:
    - During Day 2, potential technology and mechanism solutions were brainstormed. These options were then implicitly and explicitly compared against a set of emerging criteria (e.g., feasibility for GG24, Sybil resistance, UX impact, cost, modularity).
    - Pros and cons for different approaches (e.g., build vs. buy/partner) were discussed and weighed.
- **Gap Analysis**: The process involved understanding the current state (Day 1) and the desired future state (Day 2), then identifying the gaps that GG24 solutions would need to bridge.
- **Prioritization**: Through facilitated discussions, especially on Day 2 and Day 3, there was an implicit prioritization of requirements and solution characteristics based on urgency for GG24, impact, and feasibility. The focus on an MVP for GG24 is an example of this.

- **Risk Assessment**: On Day 3, potential risks associated with shortlisted options and their implementation plans were identified, and mitigation strategies were discussed.
- **Decision-Making Framework**: The sprint facilitated the development of an emergent decision-making framework based on the agreed-upon goals for GG24, key stakeholder priorities, and the evaluation criteria discussed. This framework guided the selection of the final recommendations.
- **Synthesis and Reporting**: The final stage of analysis involves synthesizing all findings into this structured report, mapping them to the "Design Methodology Report Template" to ensure clear communication of the problem, process, findings, and recommendations.

The combination of these data collection and analysis techniques aimed to ensure that the recommendations for GG24 are well-grounded in stakeholder input, past learnings, and a realistic assessment of available options and constraints.

Appendix B: Framework for Future Ecosystem Development

This appendix outlines strategic and programmatic framework elements necessary for the long-term success, scalability, and community-driven evolution of Gitcoin Grants. While the core GG24 platform (Phase 1-3) provides the technological backbone, these programmatic elements address the broader grants lifecycle, including sense-making, domain identification, round theme ratification, continuous learning, and iteration. This work would be initiated alongside or following GG24, with Mathilda leading the foundational framework, and Allo.Capital *potentially* collaborating on iteration and improvement for GG25 and beyond. This aligns with concepts like the DDA framework and sensemaking processes discussed during the sprint.

Key Programmatic Elements for Future Consideration

1. **Sensemaking & Domain Identification Framework**:
    - **Objective**: To continuously identify and prioritize critical ecosystem needs and impactful funding domains.
    - **Potential Process**:
        - Launch regular Pain-Point Surveys to gather input from the broader community.
        - Crowdsource Domain Ideas (e.g., via dedicated forum categories or ideation platforms).
        - Cluster & Ratify Domains: Employ methods for semantic clustering of ideas (potentially AI-assisted), followed by community discussion and ratification.
        - Define Domain Specifications: For each ratified domain, collaboratively create a clear specification (e.g., editable table on a forum) outlining its name, definition, examples of impactful projects, key performance indicators (KPIs), and indicative funding amounts/targets.
    - **Tooling Support**: Evaluate and potentially integrate or build lightweight tools for survey distribution, idea submission, semantic clustering, data visualization (e.g., heat maps of interest areas), and CSV exports to support this process.

2. **Round Theme Ratification Process**:
    - **Objective**: To establish transparent, community-centric, or steward-led processes for selecting and ratifying themes or specific domains for upcoming grant rounds.
    - **Integration**: This process should be supported by the GTC Staking mechanism integrated into the platform, allowing GTC holders to participate in theme selection or prioritization.
3. **Comprehensive Documentation & Learnings Repository (Round Ops Playbook / "N+1" System)**:
    - **Objective**: To create a robust system for capturing, organizing, sharing, and acting upon learnings from each grant round.
    - **Content**: Should include quantitative metrics, qualitative feedback from all stakeholder groups, operational notes from round managers, council deliberations (if applicable), and documented outcomes.
    - **Purpose**: This repository is crucial for the "n+1" iteration principle, ensuring that insights from one round directly inform improvements and strategic adjustments for the next.
4. **Repeatable Grant Round Lifecycle Blueprint (Inspired by DDA Framework)**:
    - **Objective**: To define and refine a standardized yet adaptable lifecycle for grant rounds.
    - **Potential Stages**:
        - **Sensemaking**: Rigorous analysis of ecosystem challenges and opportunities (see point 1).
        - **Domain Definition**: Establishing clear scopes and KPIs for funding domains.
        - **Cultivating Expertise (Domain Councils)**: Potentially establishing "Domain Councils" composed of subject matter experts (through nomination, election, or GTC-staked roles) to provide ongoing advisory, refine domain specifics, and enhance the legitimacy of funding decisions within specialized areas.
        - **Capital Allocation**: Executing tailored funding mechanisms (QF, Retro, etc.) via the platform, appropriate for the specific domain and project maturity.
        - **Impact Assessment & Learning**: Post-round analysis of outcomes against KPIs, feeding back into the learnings repository.
    - **Evolution**: This blueprint *could* be an initial guide for Mathilda in GG24 operations and collaboratively refined for GG25 and subsequent rounds.
5. **Enhanced Governance Integration**:
    - **Objective**: To deepen the integration of GTC staking and other community governance tools into the programmatic aspects of the grants lifecycle beyond initial theme selection.
    - **Examples**: Community voting on specific round parameters, participation in dispute resolution oversight, or electing members to Domain Councils.
6. **Builder Journey Mapping & Support**:
    - **Objective**: To improve the end-to-end experience for grantees (builders).

- **Implementation**: Develop and implement a "Builder Journey Checklist" covering key stages: Awareness → Onboarding → Application → Funding → Build Support → Impact Reporting.
- **Associated Assets**: Create and maintain clear documentation, tutorial videos, FAQs, and potentially offer incentives or support programs at different stages of this journey.

Implementation Considerations

- These programmatic elements represent an ongoing strategic initiative, with foundational aspects potentially being piloted alongside GG24 and iteratively developed for GG25 and beyond.
- Success requires close collaboration between Allo.Capital (while executing on the software), Mathilda for her programmatic leadership, Kevin for vision alignment, Rena for organizational support, and active participation from community stakeholders and stewards.
- Resource allocation for these programmatic efforts (community management, process facilitation, tool development/integration) needs to be considered alongside the technical platform development.

This framework aims to ensure that Gitcoin Grants has robust technology and also effective, transparent, and adaptive processes that maximize impact and foster strong community co-ownership.

Appendix C: Gitcoin 3.0 Vision Paper Outline

This outline is conceptual, based on themes from the GG24 Strategy Sprint, particularly discussions on "Day 2, Kevin Day" regarding Gitcoin's desired future state and the "GG Sprint" document's emphasis on sensemaking and network-driven approaches. It is intended as a starting point for Gitcoin to develop a comprehensive Vision Paper.

Preamble

- The Evolving Landscape of Public Goods Funding.
- Gitcoin's Legacy and the Imperative for Gitcoin 3.0.
- A Call to Action: Building a More Networked and Adaptive Future.

I. Our Core Vision: Empowering Communities to Fund What Matters

- **Vision Statement**: Gitcoin 3.0 aspires to be the leading decentralized platform and ecosystem for identifying, funding, and supporting public goods that are critical for a thriving open web and a better world. We envision a future where community intelligence and collective action dynamically allocate resources to the most impactful initiatives.
- **Mission**: To build and steward modular, transparent, and community-governed infrastructure that empowers diverse communities to fund their shared needs effectively and sustainably.

II. Guiding Principles for Gitcoin 3.0

- **Community-Centricity & Decentralization**: Prioritizing community ownership, governance, and participation in all aspects of the grants process. Shifting from hierarchical to network-driven operations.
- **Modularity & Adaptability**: Designing flexible mechanisms that can evolve with ecosystem needs, rather than monolithic platforms.
- **Impact & Effectiveness**: Focusing on measurable outcomes and ensuring resources flow to projects creating tangible public good.
- **Transparency & Accountability**: Maintaining open processes and clear reporting to build trust and ensure responsible stewardship of funds.
- **Sustainability**: Developing robust economic models for the GitcoinDAO and the grants programs themselves.
- **Collaboration & Composability**: Fostering an ecosystem where Gitcoin's tools and primitives can be integrated and leveraged by other organizations.

III. The Gitcoin 3.0 Ecosystem: Key Pillars

A. **Dynamic Sensemaking & Domain Identification:**

- "Listening First": Continuously identifying critical ecosystem needs and problem domains through community-driven sensemaking (surveys, data analysis, expert consultations).
- From Raw Insights to Ratified Domains: Processes for clustering community inputs, proposing, and ratifying specific funding domains with clear KPIs.

B. **Modular Capital Allocation Mechanisms:**

- **Beyond QF**: While QF remains a core tool, supporting a diverse toolkit of mechanisms (RetroPGF, GTC-staked curation, direct funding, etc.) tailored to different domain needs and project maturities. This aligns with the "N+1" principle.
- **Mechanism Design Driven by Demand**: Working backward from identified problems to select or design the most appropriate funding tools.

C. **Empowered Community Governance & Stewardship:**

- **GTC Utility**: Meaningful roles for GTC in governance, staking for curation/influence, and potentially fee-sharing models.
- **Domain Expertise**: Cultivating "Domain Councils" or expert bodies to guide funding within specific areas, ensuring legitimacy and informed decision-making.
- **Transparent Decision-Making**: Clear processes for round parameter setting, mechanism selection, and dispute resolution.

D. **Robust & User-Centric Infrastructure:**

- The GG24 Platform (Phased Development) as a Foundation: Building a scalable, secure, and user-friendly platform for grant applications, donations, and round management.
- Shared Primitives: Developing core components (identity, data indexing like Indexer-v2, UI kits like gitcoin/core and Allo Kit) that can be reused and extended.
- Focus on Builder & Donor Experience: Radically improving the journey for all participants through iterative UX enhancements (Phases 2 & 3).

E. **Sustainable Economic Engine:**

- Exploring diverse revenue streams for the DAO and matching pools.
- Aligning incentives to ensure the long-term health and growth of the ecosystem.

IV. Measuring Success in Gitcoin 3.0

- Impact on Funded Projects and Public Goods.
- Growth and Diversity of the Gitcoin Community (Builders, Donors, Stewards).
- Resilience and Adaptability of Funding Mechanisms.
- Transparency and Trust in the Grants Process.
- Financial Sustainability of the GitcoinDAO and its Programs.

V. The Path Forward: Iteration, Collaboration, and Co-creation

- **GG24 (Phase 1 MVP) as a Stepping Stone**: Learnings from GG24 will directly inform the evolution towards the full Gitcoin 3.0 vision through Phases 2, 3, and the "N+1" process.
- Commitment to Open Development and Community Feedback.
- **Inviting Collaboration**: Partnering with other organizations, developers, and researchers to build the future of public goods funding.
- **A Living Vision**: This paper represents our current understanding, and will evolve as we learn and grow with our community.

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