

Proposal: *Polkadot Hackathon: North America prize pool*

Proponent: Tribe/AngelHack `13Ghf2T883ZobjngC1BAgR1BWvK2P7qP37gGxHDVff3fjbmw`

Date: May 30, 2022 - July 11, 2022

Requested Allocation: \$297,000 USD

**DOT amount calculated via EMA on 17 May 2022 at GMT+0 0721hrs - 1 DOT ~ 14.34 USD.
\$297,000 USD ~ 20,711.2971 DOT*

Short description:

Continuing the success of Polkadot Hackathon: APAC Edition (in collaboration with Web3 Foundation and Parity Technologies) that took place in Quarter 4 2021, AngelHack aims to continue with the organisation and execution of the Polkadot Global Series with the focus on the North America region next.

Bringing the North America edition to new heights, the hackathon will focus even more on the following four categories - **creating understanding of technology, bridging gaps in the Web3 space, incentivising with larger prize pool and tightening operations.**

This is to ensure a seamless and positive experience for the participants, while aiming to achieve the following goals

- Attract more developers to the Polkadot ecosystem
- Encourage community participation
- Promote building and participation across parachains
- Provide learning opportunities for builders and developers
- Increase the amount of Substrate developers

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1. Summary

Last year, AngelHack successfully organised, promoted and executed (in collaboration with Web3 Foundation and Parity Technologies) the [first event of the Polkadot Global Series, taking place in the APAC region](#). We would like to continue the series, with the next event focusing on North America. Hackathons are a key part of developer adoption initiatives for the greater Polkadot ecosystem which have yielded great results in the past.

The upcoming Polkadot hackathon will be executed during May 30 and July 11. AngelHack is submitting this proposal for the funding of \$297,000 USD to cover the prizes for the upcoming hackathon and administrative fees associated with it. All details about the hackathon can be found within this document.

2. Background information

a. Proposal background

The *Polkadot Hackathon Global Series* is a series of hackathons, each with a particular geographical focus. Expanding the Polkadot and Substrate developer base is of critical importance for the ecosystem and having a localised approach carries great strategic value. By focusing on a particular region, we are able to seek out local partners, communities and networks, providing much better and intimate exposure. As the world gradually opens up, this approach will start to exponentially bear fruit. Long-form virtual hackathons, paired with in-person meetups, hacking events and other “offline” activities provide a great platform for developer adoption.

In that respect, *Polkadot Hackathon: North America* is the second event in the Polkadot Hackathon Global series. Even though the geographical focus is on North America, the event is open to anyone around the world. The hackathon will take place during the months of May and June, exact dates are yet to be determined. Based on our experiences and information gathered during the APAC event, first in the Global Series, we are aiming higher by planning a larger event both in participant numbers and prizes as well. The hackathon is organised, promoted and executed by the AngelHack team, in collaboration with the Web3 Foundation and Parity Technologies.

On a higher level, Polkadot hackathons have clear goals: attract more developers to the Polkadot ecosystem, encourage community participation, promote building and participation across parachains, provide learning opportunities for builders and developers, increase the amount of Substrate developers. We believe that these goals are closely aligned with other developer adoption and support initiatives across the Polkadot ecosystem.

b. Team background

[AngelHack](#) is a leader in innovation management, running end-to-end innovation and consulting initiatives for corporates, government entities and nonprofit organisations.

The company is a global hackathon organisation with a history of a decade of successful hackathons in over 164 cities globally and 53 countries. The company's developer community is 250,000 members strong, which gives this event great help in the outreach processes.

AngelHack has been trusted by companies of varying industries to run more than 10,000 hackathon projects till date.

AngelHack is also a subsidiary of [Tribe](#), the 1st Singapore Government-supported blockchain ecosystem builder that drives the future of Web 3.0 together with blockchain companies and entrepreneurs, while rallying the support of governments, corporates and academic institutions. Tribe partners with a variety of global stakeholders who have committed to co-innovate with Tribe by providing industry expertise as well as regional support. Within the network, Tribe acts as a super connector that drives innovation through global partnerships. Tribe's network works alongside a global community of mentors who have been carefully curated to provide both business and technical expertise in various industries and geographies.

For reference, Tribe has already successfully submitted a separate proposal, called [Learn-and-Earn Campaigns for Polkadot Hackathon Global Series 2022](#). Tribe is currently on-track to deliver what was initially outlined in the proposal.

3. What is the purpose of the treasury funds

The total amount of \$297,000 USD will be fully dedicated towards the prize pool of the hackathon.

Considering that the Hackathon is targeted mainly toward a North American audience (but open to a global audience), the Prizes will be paid exclusively in USD or other regulatory compliant stablecoins.

The funds will be distributed to winning teams. Tracks and prizes are defined in *Section 5d* and *Section 5e*. Judging criteria and submission requirements can be found under *Section 5f* and the judging panel is under *Section 5j*. Success metrics and goals can be found in *Section 5i*.

4.Looking back: APAC hackathon 2021

The *Polkadot Hackathon Global Series* started in the Asia Pacific region on **October 22nd, 2021**. The hacking happened over the span of six weeks, and concluded just before Christmas. The event was heavily focused on onboarding new developers to Substrate through the 'Build a blockchain' category, providing workshops, office hours and mentor support. As an experimental category, the hackathon also included a 'Docathon', which provided prizes for creating documentation. As a "catch-all" category, the hackathon also had an 'Open hack'.

The target audience (geographically) was in the Asia Pacific region. Although the hackathons are open to anyone, regardless of location, most participants were based in the APAC region, led by India.

In terms of skill level, hackathon participants were mostly developers that have not built anything with web3 technology in the past.

The post-event survey (218 responses) has also revealed that the majority of hackers are familiar with languages used in web development and application development, most prominent languages include Python, Javascript and HTML.

At the APAC event we gave away a total of USD \$30,000 in three categories. Six projects were voted for a prize by the judges, two projects won based on votes by the community voting.

During the eight weeks of the hackathon we had over 1200 registrations with 25 project submissions in total.

a. Learnings

Hackathon success can be largely broken down into four categories: technology, marketing, prizes, and operations. Technology refers to the usefulness and attractiveness of the technology which is used for hacking. Marketing is concerned with branding, outreach, audience alignment and various other methods to reach the right people. Prizes need to be large enough to make it worthwhile for hackers to participate and finish working on a submission. Operations on the other hand refers to everything concerning the event schedule, speakers, technical support, swag distribution, etc.

Based on the above and our experience with the hackathon, we put together a list of learnings to make the subsequent event better, even more impactful and more approachable for devs. The learnings are organised by the four categories mentioned in the previous paragraph. The list is non exhaustive.

Technology

- Polkadot and Substrate are attractive for developers. The names have a massive pull and the technology stack is very robust.

- Substrate can be difficult to get in for newcomers without prior knowledge or experience. It takes a while to learn, master and truly think about how to build a unique and custom chain.
- The Polkadot network has on-boarded its first parachains, opening up the floodgates to solutions built with technologies available across the ecosystem, not only Substrate.

Marketing

- The marketing and outreach process was largely successful. Expanding into specific regions gives the advantage of building more localised communities and forging a network in places where a global event would mostly not go.
- Most hackers were web and/or application developers. We have also seen a vast amount of students and junior developers.

Prizes

- The prize pool was insignificant and not comparable to the prize pools of competing protocols, which is demotivating for some hackers.
- The challenge and tracks were very broad, which can be difficult to navigate for newcomers.

Operations

- Workshops with higher level content were better attended. Practical examples were perceived better than theory.
- Office hours have proven to be a good outlet to connecting with developers, brainstorming and troubleshooting.
- Chat support can be more focused and contained to a dedicated channel on Discord
- Team formation is very difficult in a fully online environment. Social gatherings and trivia nights have been helpful to bridge that gap, but only to a small extent.
- Long-form hackathons are well received and desired by the participants.
- Polkadot Pathways' challenge format of the [hackathon knowledge map](#) was very helpful in providing a structured learning path.

All of these learnings will be incorporated into the next hackathon in order to ensure its evolution and success.

More information can be found [in the following document](#).

5. Plans for the North America Edition

a. Timeline

The exact timeline for the upcoming event is not set in stone as it depends on multiple factors and can move if needed. We are currently working with the dates mentioned below.

1. Opening pre-hackathon phase, open up Polkadot Pathways for participants: May 16 2022
2. Opening Ceremony, start of the hacking period: May 30 2022
3. Hacking period: May 30 - July 11 2022
4. Judging period: July 12 - July 17 2022
5. Announcement of winners and closing ceremony: July 18 2022

A more detailed schedule of all events (workshops, mentor hours, etc) will be available after the opening of the pre-hackathon period.

b. Format and platform

The *Polkadot Hackathon: North America Edition* will be a long-form, online hackathon. It will feature a pre-hacking period of about two weeks, hacking period of about six weeks and a post-hacking period (judging, closing ceremony) of about two weeks. The hackathon will be hosted on [Devpost](#), which is one of the largest hackathon platforms in existence. By making use of this platform we can maximise our success and provide a smooth experience for everyone involved. Team size can vary, anything from solo hacking to a team of maximum four people.

c. Tracks and prizes

The main objective when designing the hacking tracks was to focus on topics, rather than on specific technologies (e.g. NFT track vs. Build with Substrate). By doing so, hackers are presented with topical categories that immediately give context. Instead of defining closed challenges within these tracks, hackers will be presented with a list of ideas they can pick up and build. The exact messaging for the tracks and the list of ideas is currently a work in progress and will be announced at the start of the pre-hackathon period.

- **Interfaces & Experiences:** Track dedicated to building all kinds of UI/UX, interfaces and experiences.
- **DAO & Governance:** Track for new DAOs, DAO tooling, new governance mechanisms, governance pallets and other solutions advancing DAOs and governance.

- **DeFi:** Builders can make use of this track for all kinds of DeFi related solutions, like DEXs, AMMs, stablecoins, etc.
- **NFT:** Gaming, art, collectibles and other NFT use cases can fit into the NFT track.
- **Web3 & Tooling:** Track for all kinds of tooling and applications expanding web3.

In addition to the above, parachain teams that want to participate in the hackathon will be able to run their own challenges/bounties and sponsor their own prizes. This way a participant can win a track prize and also a parachain team prize. These prizes will be capped at a certain amount to prevent bidding wars.

d. Breakdown of prizes

The total amount of the treasury funds will be fully dedicated towards the prize pool of the hackathon, in the following breakdown:

Track	1st place	2nd place	3rd place
Interfaces & Experiences	USD\$20,000	USD\$15,000	USD\$10,000
Web3 & Tooling	USD\$20,000	USD\$15,000	USD\$10,000
DAO & Governance	USD\$20,000	USD\$15,000	USD\$10,000
DeFi	USD\$20,000	USD\$15,000	USD\$10,000
NFT	USD\$20,000	USD\$15,000	USD\$10,000
Grand Prize	USD\$30,000		
Community Choice	USD\$15,000 (3x USD\$5,000)		
Total requested amount: USD\$270,000			

e. Judging criteria

The submissions will be scored according to the following criteria:

1. Ecosystem impact and usefulness

How impactful and useful is the submission in the Polkadot/Kusama/Substrate ecosystem?
What (business) value does it create and how does it contribute to the ecosystem?

2. Web3 Contribution and Advancement

How does the submission contribute to and advance Web 3.0 as a whole?

3. Originality, Creativity and Innovation

How new and novel the submission is versus existing technologies? Is it an innovative idea or an improvement of an already existing solution? Could it be used as a stepping stone for projects in the future? Was there a new approach applied to solve a problem?

4. Technical Difficulty

What is the level of skill or knowledge required to build the submission? Is the project technically impressive or complex? How simple or complex is the information architecture behind it?

5. Mass Usability

How feasible is the idea? How adaptable is it across other integrations? How sound is the business model? Is it sustainable in the long run?

Details of the submission requirements can be found [in the following document](#).

f. Target audience and marketing plans

Our objectives remain the same for the entire Global Series and include expanding outreach to developer communities globally (with a special focus on North America for this event), increasing awareness and adoption of Polkadot, Substrate and Kusama, increasing the number of chains built with Substrate and grow the number of dapps in the entire Polkadot ecosystem.

The target audience includes existing developers from the Polkadot communities, existing blockchain-natives who have not built on Polkadot yet, and those who are not yet familiar with blockchain, but are interested in deepening their knowledge and joining the community.

Some marketing channels that will be utilised: social media, blogs, PR, targeted community outreach, email newsletters and advertising.

In particular, we can lean on two large hacker communities: AngelHack's 250,000+ hacker community and Devpost's 500,000+ hacker community. Combining efforts, coupled with attractive prizes will result in a much larger pool of developers registering for the hackathon.

Besides reaching out to the already existing community members of our partners, we are actively working on expanding our network by continuously reaching out to regional universities and student clubs that have blockchain and Rust on their curriculum.

g. Knowledge sharing and onboarding

As mentioned above, the target audience is fairly broad in terms of seniority and skill level. To best support onboarding and learning opportunities for all participants, we are designing multiple different ways to get going.

During the first two pre-hackathon weeks we will be hosting educational challenges for the newcomers to help them learn as much as possible about the technology and the ecosystem. The goal with this pre-event is to engage the community members and help them get onboarded before the main event. The challenges will allow the participants to understand more about Polkadot and Substrate, look under the hood and with the gained knowledge they will be able to work on an actual project based on their interest and potentially win a prize.

As a next step, workshops will be held to share knowledge and teach about specific topics. Workshops will be conducted by Web3 Foundation and Parity Technologies, as well as by various ecosystem teams. The full schedule will be published during the pre-registration period. Even though the event will be focusing on North America, the workshops are planned to be held in two slots, so those who don't live in the US time zones can also join.

To also make sure critical information is available to everyone, we put together a very detailed technical resources documentation, which includes the most important sources to look through, links to videos and communication platforms. It is essential that newcomers have a single resource which they can navigate from, including all necessary documentation, hackathon information, schedules, etc. Since many ecosystem teams will be participating as mentors, sponsors and have their own challenges, the presence of such a resource is even more important as it eases navigation through the ecosystem.

h. Office hours and support

Besides the workshops mentioned above, hacker support will be available during regular (live) office hours and in the form of chat on Discord. Support includes technical input/feedback as well as help with hackathon logistics, documentation, or other challenges the participants might encounter. Office hours will be held twice a week during the entire duration of the hackathon.

The guiding principle is to consolidate support channels, making the experience better for both the participants and mentors. As opposed to relying on public support channels like in the past, we will direct everyone to dedicated channels for the hackathon.

i. Judging panel

Because the event includes multiple ecosystem teams as mentors and prize contributors, the judging panel also needs to reflect that. Aside from Web3 Foundation and Parity Technologies

judges, the judging panel includes prominent figures from a range of ecosystem teams. The judging panel is not yet final and will be updated on a rolling basis.

Currently confirmed judges include:

- Bill Laboon, Director of Technical Educations, Support and Community @Web3 Foundation
- Radha Dasari , Technical Educator @Web3 Foundation
- Benjamin Weiß, Director of Ecosystem Success @Parity Technologies
- Gautam Dhameja, Director of Solution & Services Delivery @Parity Technologies
- Emre Surmeli, Technical Educator @Web3 Foundation
- Galen Danziger, CTO/Co-founder @ MouseBelt
- Dominik Harz, CTO @ Interlay
- James Bayly, Head of Business Development @ OnFinality / SubQuery Network
- Kevin Neilson, Developer Relations Engineer @ Moonbeam
- Dimitri Zhelezov, Co-founder @ Subsquid
- Maarten Henskens, Head of BD @ Astar Network
- Hoon Kim, CTO @ Astar Network
- Bruno Škvorc, Founder @ RMRK
- Shelven Zhou, Lead Researcher @ Phala Network
- Luke Fan, CTO @ Crust Network
- Daniel Gamboa, Head of Product Builder DAO @ Figment
- Shumo Chu, Co-founder @ Manta Network
- Dudley Needham, Developer Relations @ KILT Protocol

j. Mentors

Mentors are a critical part of the hackathon equation. Since we are anticipating higher participation numbers, an increase in the available mentors is also needed. There are three mentor pools the hackathon is tapping into: Web3 Foundation and Parity mentors, ecosystem teams mentors and community mentors. This expanded mentor support will not only improve the hackers' support but also generate a better community feeling.

Onboarding of mentors is ongoing; the full list will be published during the pre-hackathon phase. During this time, a public call will also be issued to find selected community mentors that are willing to be part of the experience.

Currently confirmed list of mentors include:

- Sacha Lansky, Developer Advocate @ Parity Technologies
- Alejandro Martinez Andres, Support Engineer @ Parity Technologies
- Dan Shields, Support Engineer @ Parity Technologies
- Jimmy Chu, Runtime Engineer @ Parity Technologies

- Jorrin Bruns, Support Engineer @ Parity Technologies
- Bruno Galvao, Support Engineer @ Parity Technologies
- Dominique Saripapazoglou, Integrations Engineer @ Parity Technologies
- Galen Danziger, CTO/CoFounder @ MouseBelt
- Greg Hill, Software Engineer @ Interlay
- Sander Bosma, Software Engineer @ Interlay
- Theodore Bugnet, Software Engineer @ Interlay
- James Bayly, Head of Business Development @ OnFinality / SubQuery Network
- Henry Duong, Developer Relations Engineer @ Moonbeam
- Alberto Viera, Developer Relations Manager @ Moonbeam
- Erin Shaben, Developer Relations Manager @ Moonbeam
- Massimo Luraschi, Developer Advocate @ Subsquid
- Jake Hemmerle, Substrate Runtime Developer @ Astar Network
- Bruno Škvorc, Founder @ RMRK
- Yuri Petusko, CTO @ RMRK
- Shelven Zhou, Lead Researcher @ Phala Network
- Hang Yin, Lead Developer @ Phala Network
- Mingshi Song, Ambassador Development @ Crust Network
- Song Chou, Ambassador Development @ Crust Network
- Yash Sharma, Developer Relations Lead @ Figment
- Holly Weckler, Developer Marketing Lead @ Figment
- Rogan, Technical Support Analyst @ Figment
- Shumo Chu, Co-founder @ Manta Network
- Brandon Gomes, CTO @ Manta Network
- Dudley Needham, Developer Relations @ KILT Protocol

k. Collaborating ecosystem teams

Discussions have started with multiple ecosystem teams about collaboration. We are currently having discussions with them about how to bring them onboard and make sure both them and the participants can bring out the most of the upcoming hackathon.

List of participating ecosystem teams (in progress):

- [OnFinality](#) & [SubQuery](#)
- [Phala](#)
- [Acala](#)
- [Astar Network](#)
- [Subsquid](#)
- [Interlay](#)
- [RMRK](#)
- [MouseBelt](#)

- [Crust Network](#)
- [Figment](#)
- [Moonbeam](#)
- [Manta Network](#)
- [KILT Protocol](#)

PUBLIC CALL: *If any Polkadot/Kusama ecosystem team would like to be involved as a mentor, judge, giving a workshop or provide a prize for their challenges/bounties, please reach out to justin.ng@angelhack.com. We are doing our best to reach out to everyone, but sometimes things can fall through the cracks. If so, please don't hesitate to get in touch.*

i. Success metrics

There are two critical success metrics we will keep in mind at all times: number of registrations and number of quality submissions. As mentioned throughout the document, the aspiration for the *Polkadot Hackathon: North America Edition* is to be larger and more successful than the previous one. In numbers this means:

1. **2000-5000 registrations:** Hitting numbers at this scale will mean that our outreach efforts were highly successful and a good indicator the hackathon will be a success. Although large numbers are great, it is by no means the only indicator. There needs to be a high audience fit for these registrants to potentially convert to builders. The combination of quantity and fit is the driving force to find the correct marketing and outreach channels.
2. **30-100 quality submissions:** The most important metric is the number of submissions. It is highly dependent on all key success factors (tech, marketing, prizes, operations) and the ultimate gauge of success.

6. Additional Information

The AngelHack team will be processing the administration of prizes to the above mentioned winners stated in (5a) post hackathon. Winners will be announced during the closing ceremony on July 18 2022, and the winners will be contacted for all required information within 10 working days post closing ceremony. Prize administration will then take place in the following 2 - 3 weeks to the winning team's leaders. A prize administrative fee of 10% against total prize pool is included in the requested allocation to combat the administrative fees that will be incurred during the fund transfer process.