

# Local Funding Programs GG24

Proposed: Governance Processes & Trust Graph Pilot Plan

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## 1. Introduction

The **Local Funding Programs Round in GG24** is being designed to support a small cohort of local hubs to design and operate their own funding programs, demonstrating how Ethereum can take root in real communities. This round can also serve as a **pilot for the Trust Graph governance primitive**, testing how peer-to-peer attestations can validate both the experts guiding the process and the communities applying to participate.

By combining structured program evaluation with trust-based validation and conviction voting, the round aims to deliver both high-quality local funding programs and a proof-of-concept for more fluid, reputation-aware governance. The outcome will not only fund impactful community programs but also generate a **playbook and case study** to inform future rounds and the evolution of Gitcoin DDA governance.

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## 2. Timeline & Key Milestones

- **Now:** [Register Interest Form](#) live, communities preparing.
  - **12 Sept:** GG24 Gitcoin Domain vote finalizes budget.
  - **Mid-Sept:** Forum post with round design, aims, eligibility, application process, values.
  - **Late Sept – Oct:** Application intake via Karma GAP + Expert group evaluation, AI/DeepGov support, feedback to applicants.
  - **Mid-Oct (GG24) - onwards:** Gardens conviction voting round begins. Funding released to local programs when conditions met.
  - **By GG25 (March 2026):** At least 3–4 showcase Local Funding Programs fully operational and documented as case studies.
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## 3. Planned Application & Evaluation Flow

The Local Funding Programs round aims to follow a multi-stage process that balances rigor, accessibility, and experimentation. The goal is to ensure that local hubs with genuine potential are surfaced, supported, and validated through a combination of expert review, trust-based validation, and conviction voting.

### Stage 1: Expression of Interest

- Communities submit the **Register Interest Form**, signaling intent to apply.
- Form collects essential information (community, initial program idea, references).
- This stage helps applicants begin preparing while giving operators visibility into the pipeline and potential to give early feedback.

## Stage 2: Formal Application Submission

- Eligible communities submit a formal proposal via **Karma GAP** (on the Regen Coordination community page) with details of:
  - Program Scope & Theory of Change
  - Local Fundraising Secured (minimum \$5k co-funding)
  - Impact Measurement & Evaluation Plan
  - Team Experience & Delivery Capability
  - Community References (for Trust Graph validation)
- Applications are publicly visible to encourage transparency and early feedback.

## Stage 3: Eligibility & Trust Graph Validation

- Before entering expert review, applicants must pass **basic eligibility checks**:
  - Meeting round requirements (local co-funding, scope, etc.).
  - Achieving a sufficient **chain of trust** through **community validation** (see Section 4).
- Only communities with a valid trust pathway are moved forward into review.

## Stage 4: Expert Review & Feedback Loop

- A **lead review group of 2–3 experts** will be responsible for reviewing and providing feedback on **all applications** to ensure consistency, fairness, and timely responses.
- The wider group of **10–15 validated experts** (see Section 4: Trust Graph) will have the **option** to participate in reviews, add commentary, and strengthen the evaluation process, but participation is not required.
- An **evaluation rubric** may be developed to assist the process
- **AI-assisted evaluation** (via DeepGov or manual structured scoring, as piloted in GG23) supplements expert reviews to ensure consistency and breadth.
- **Compensation**: All expert contributions to the review and feedback process will be eligible for compensation from the **round operations budget**, with lead reviewers receiving a larger share in recognition of their sustained responsibility.

## Stage 5: Gardens Conviction Voting Round

- All validated applications enter a **Gardens conviction voting pool** once GG24 begins (mid-October).
- Experts and aligned participants signal support over time, with conviction building gradually.
- Proposals should only reach conviction and unlock funds once experts verify that:
  - The **local/seed fundraising target** is secured.
  - The **program is ready to operate**.

- This ensures conviction is only achieved when programs are fully prepared, aligning readiness with funding release. Therefore, some programs may unlock funds during GG24, others may take weeks or months.
- The process continues until all available matching funds are allocated.

## Stage 6: Showcase & Documentation

- Aim: have at least **3–4 strong programs** reach conviction, unlock funds and fully run their programs before GG25 (March 2026), serving as showcase examples.
  - Completed programs are documented as **case studies**, forming proof points for both Ethereum Localism and the Trust Graph governance model.
  - Insights feed into the **Attestation Playbook** and broader Gitcoin / Regen Coordination / Ethereum Localism / Open Civic toolkits.
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## 4. Proposed Trust Graph Pilot Design

The section above outlined the overall planned flow for the Local Funding Programs round. This section goes deeper into how we might experiment with incorporating **Trust Graph** within that process, specifically as a way to validate both the **expert group** guiding the round and the **communities** applying to participate.

What follows is not a final design, but rather a **proposed pathway** for piloting Trust Graph during GG24. The details will need to be discussed, validated, and refined together with the [Trust Graph initiative working group](#) and the wider set of round stakeholders.

### 4.1 Expert Validation

**Initial Aim:** Seed a Trust Graph that establishes a legitimate, diverse group of ~10–15 evaluators with recognized expertise and alignment to govern the Local Funding Program round capital allocation.

Initial Expert Attestation Schema (draft)

Defined collaboratively by the **Trust Graph working group** and round stakeholders:

- **Web3 Funding Program Expertise** (1–5)
- **Alignment & experience with Ethereum Localism** (1–5)
- **Regional Insight & Network** (1–5 overall; optional sub-scores for Europe, North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia)
- **Evidence/Notes URI** (link to bio, portfolio, grants round, talks, etc.)
- **Attester Confidence** (1–5)

This schema aims to ensure both relevant expertise and geographic coverage is surfaced, while leaving flexibility for the network to evolve scoring and thresholds in later rounds.

## Seeding the Trust Graph

To bootstrap the trust graph, we aim for a **progressive protocolization** approach — beginning with a small set of trusted individuals (root attesters) who seed the network, and then expanding outward through peer attestations.

- **Initial root attesters:**
  - **Monty** — Ethereum Localism Sensemaking lead, Regen Coordination steward.
  - **Benjamin** — Open Civics Sensemaking lead, Allo Capital connection.
  - **Luuk** — CeloPG steward, funder/governance alignment.
- Together they balance expertise across Ethereum Localism, Open Civics, and Web3 funders, making them a natural starting point for seeding the Trust Graph.

## Process (proposed pathway)

1. **Schema defined** — Working group finalizes the expert schema and publishes it on-chain.
2. **Root attesters self-attest** — Monty, Benjamin, and Luuk each make self-attestations using the schema.
3. **Root attesters vouch others** — Each root attester attests to **3–5 additional experts**.
4. **New experts self-attest** — All vouched experts also complete self-attestations.
5. **Final cohort formed** — The resulting trust graph yields ~10–15 experts, formally recognized as the evaluator group for GG24 Local Funding Programs.

## Acceptance & Guardrails (suggested)

- **Minimum condition:**  $\geq 1$  root attestation + self-attestation per expert.
- **Score signal (optional):** Average  $\geq 3.5/5$  on *Expertise* and *Alignment* recommended for inclusion.
- **Diversity check:** Cohort must span  $\geq 4$  continents and mix of funders, operators, and researchers.
- **Conflict-of-interest disclosure:** Required; experts recuse from reviews where relevant.
- **Term & refresh:** Cohort locked for GG24; Can then be expanded from in build up to GG25 TBD

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## 4.2 Chain-of-Trust Validation

**Initial Aim:** Ensure only credible and trusted local communities advance into the Gardens conviction voting round, by establishing a **chain of trust** that links applicants to the expert group.

## Relational Trust Attestation Schema (draft)

Defined collaboratively by the **Trust Graph working group** and round stakeholders.  
Potential schema could be:

- **Nature of Relationship** (select one)
  - Worked with directly
  - Collaborated occasionally
  - Met in person / event
  - Familiar with their work
  - Indirect reference only
- **Trust & Credibility Endorsement** (Yes / No / Unsure)
  - *“I believe this person to be credible, trustworthy, and capable of impactful work.”*
  - Could also include a confidence score here to deeper context?
- **Context of Knowledge**
  - Free-text or dropdown (e.g. Web3 project, NGO partner, funder, academic, local leader)
- **Evidence/Notes URI**
  - Optional link to work, publication, partnership, or other proof

### Seeding Community Validation

This process is not only about applicant eligibility for GG24 — it is also the first step toward building a **generalized web-of-trust** across the ecosystem. Over time, the more people who participate in making attestations, the stronger and more useful this network will become. For GG24, however, the priority is to **keep the scope focused** and treat this as an MVP experiment. The aim is to validate only those chains of trust necessary to support Local Funding Program applicants, refine the process, and capture learnings that can be iterated on and expanded in future rounds. Validation can be achieved through:

- **Direct vouching** — An expert directly attests to the credibility of a community leader or applicant.
- **Indirect vouching** — If no expert has a direct relationship, the applicant provides **1–3 high-reputation references** (e.g. ecosystem collaborators, NGO partners, funders, recognized local leaders). Experts attest to these references, who in turn vouch for the applicant.
- **Eligibility threshold met** — Applicants with at least one valid chain-of-trust (direct or indirect) are eligible to enter the Gardens conviction voting round.

This ensures less-connected but credible communities can still participate, while weak or unverifiable claims are filtered out — all within a manageable MVP scope for GG24.

### Acceptance & Guardrails (suggested)

- **Minimum condition:** Each applicant must have at least one valid **chain of trust** linking them to the expert group (direct or indirect via references).
- **Endorsement requirement:** At least one **“Yes” endorsement** on the Trust & Credibility question; applications with only *Unsure/No* responses are not eligible.

- **Threshold signal:** Two or more positive attestations (from different individuals) recommended for higher confidence.
- **Diversity check:** Encourage references and endorsements from both **local stakeholders** (e.g. NGOs, community leaders) and **ecosystem actors** (e.g. Web3 collaborators, funders).
- **Transparency:** A lightweight public registry of accepted applicants and their chain-of-trust status (without sensitive personal data).
- **Term & refresh:** Validation is valid for GG24; chains may need renewal or expansion for GG25.

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### 4.3 Differential Voting Weights (Optional Exploration)

**Aim:** Explore whether differential voting weights — based on attested expertise and alignment — meaningfully improve outcomes compared to a simple 1-person-1-vote model.

#### Rationale

- In GG24, the **expert cohort will be small (~10–15 people)**, making consensus relatively easy to achieve.
- Weighted voting may therefore not be strictly necessary, but piloting or shadow-testing it could surface valuable insights for future rounds where the evaluator group is larger or more diverse.
- This experiment aligns with the broader goal of **progressive protocolization** — starting simple, then layering in more complexity if and when it adds value.

#### Pathways for Exploration

- **Option A: Integration into Gardens**
    - Fund Gardens to implement weighted conviction voting, where each expert's voting power is derived from their attested scores (e.g. Funding Program Expertise, Ethereum Localism Alignment, Regional Insight).
    - This would provide a live test of weighted voting in practice, but requires additional development and coordination.
  - **Option B: Shadow Analysis**
    - Keep the **standard 1-person-1-vote** mechanism in Gardens for GG24.
    - Run a **post-hoc simulation** to compare outcomes against a hypothetical weighted model, using the attestation data collected in 4.1.
    - Lower lift, but still generates useful insights on whether weighting changes results.
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## Conclusion

The Local Funding Programs round in GG24 represents an opportunity to **both fund impactful local initiatives and prototype new governance infrastructure**. By piloting the Trust Graph in this context, we can test whether attestation-based validation and chain-of-trust mechanisms create more legitimate, effective, and scalable funding outcomes than traditional top-down, token-based, or quadratic approaches.

If successful, this pilot will not only leave behind a set of funded community programs and practical governance learnings, but also plant the seeds for a **reusable governance primitive** that can evolve through progressive protocolization. This will position Gitcoin — and the Ethereum Localism ecosystem more broadly — at the frontier of **decentralized, trust-based network governance**.