

# KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative

Last Update: 15 July 2026

## Basis & Terms

1. Subject of the program
2. Program Context and Terms
3. Selection committee and selection criteria
4. Technical and curatorial support
5. Conditions for participation
6. Use of artificial intelligence in the application process
7. Submission materials
8. Intellectual property
9. Personal data protection
10. Image rights
11. Payment
12. Legal notices
13. Acceptance of terms and conditions

### 1. Subject of the program

The **KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative** invites artists, researchers, writers, curators, collectives, and other cultural practitioners — particularly but not exclusively those aligned with the cypherpunk movement — to develop artistic, cultural, or social experiment practices exploring the relationship between technology, society, and human coordination. Particular attention will be given to decentralized systems, digital sovereignty, and networked cultures.

The Initiative is a cultural funding initiative operating within the Kusama blockchain network. It supports experimental projects that may take place on-chain, off-chain, or in hybrid contexts, and that result in artistic works, research outputs, publications, performances, social experiments, or other cultural artifacts.

The Initiative aims to support projects that promote experimentation, critical inquiry and artistic freedom. It values work that engages with questions of individual agency, digital autonomy, privacy, and the current distribution of power in technological systems. The Initiative aims to promote exploration, constructive dissent, and research-driven practice, including political and socially engaged experimentation. It prioritizes intellectual honesty, originality, and contextual awareness over speculative or market-driven narratives.

The Initiative operates as a rolling funding program. Project duration, scope, and funding structure are agreed upon individually, based on the proposal and the conditions defined by the committee.

Funding originates from the Web 3.0 Technologies Foundation ("Web3 Foundation" or "the Foundation") and is administered independently by the Initiative's curators through [Multi-Asset Bounty #1 in the Kusama Chain](#). Grants are paid on-chain in DOT, the native token of the Polkadot ecosystem, on the Kusama Asset Hub chain. The payment structure, schedule, and number of installments are defined individually for each approved project.

Funded participants are expected to engage in public or semi-public forms of knowledge sharing, such as documentation, presentations, discussions, or other dissemination formats appropriate to the project and the Kusama network ecosystem. On-chain submission such as NFTs will be deployed on the Kusama blockchain.

## 2. Program Context and Terms

Kusama is a decentralized blockchain network that supports experimentation, rapid iteration, and unconventional approaches to governance, technology, and culture. While primarily a technical environment, it also provides a context for broader artistic, social, and philosophical exploration.

The **KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative** is established as a cultural and research-oriented funding program within this context. It aims to foster dialogue between artistic practice, social inquiry, and decentralized technologies, and to support projects that contribute to cultural discourse around these themes.

This program offers financial support, curatorial guidance, and contextual integration within the Kusama network ecosystem.

In the initial phase of the **KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative**, funding will primarily support artistic projects, research initiatives, and social experiments within a typical funding range of up to **10,000 USD**.

Projects with a larger scope or higher budget requirements may also be submitted for consideration and may be subject to additional review conditions.

Where relevant and feasible, the program may facilitate:

- introductions to ecosystem participants or partner initiatives,
- visibility through Kusama network-affiliated communication channels,
- and access to technical or advisory support on a best-effort basis.

## 3. Selection committee and selection criteria

Projects are evaluated by a curatorial committee composed of individuals with experience in art, research, culture, and decentralized technologies. Its ruling will be final.

Proposals are assessed based on the following criteria:

- Innovation and originality of the proposed project
- Conceptual clarity and seriousness of intent
- Relevance of the project to the program's scope and context
- Feasibility within the proposed timeline and budget
- Demonstrated capacity of the applicant(s) to realize the project and the coherence of the project within the career of the candidate to date
- Potential to contribute to a broader cultural, social, or philosophical contemporary discourse
- The contribution, interaction and enrichment to the Kusama network of the proposed practice

The committee may:

- request clarifications or revisions
- select projects conditionally
- or decide not to award funding if proposals do not meet the required standards.

Applications must be grounded in areas where the applicant already demonstrates knowledge, practice, or prior research; the initiative does not fund preliminary exploratory phases intended primarily to determine the substantive content or direction of the proposed work after funding is awarded.

#### 4. Technical and curatorial support

Depending on the nature of the project, the Initiative may provide:

- curatorial feedback and project guidance,
- contextual support related to the Kusama network and Web3 environments,
- introductions to relevant ecosystem participants,
- limited technical or advisory support, subject to availability.

Applicants are expected to be capable of working autonomously and managing the technical, artistic, and organizational aspects of their projects. The Initiative does not guarantee full technical implementation support.

Any specific technical dependencies or support needs must be clearly outlined in the proposal.

#### 5. Conditions for participation

By submitting an application, applicants agree to the following conditions:

- Funded participants commit to carrying out the approved project within the agreed scope and timeframe
- In the event that a funded project must be withdrawn or significantly delayed, sufficient advance notice must be provided.
- Unjustified failure to carry out the agreed work may result in cancellation of funding.

- After completion of the project, participants must submit a final report or documentation describing the outcomes and process. The final report or documentation format is flexible and should be appropriate to the nature of the project.
- Funded projects may be included in communication, documentation, or programming activities related to the Initiative.
- Credit attribution will be specified individually, depending on the format and media of the project output, and must be implemented accordingly in all public presentations, publications, or disseminated materials.
- Participants must respect applicable laws, ethical standards, and community norms, and are solely responsible for obtaining any consents, permits, licenses, or ethics approvals their project may require and for the legality of their activities in the relevant jurisdictions.

Applications are open to natural or legal persons professionally engaged in artistic, cultural, or research activities, regardless of gender or nationality. Applicants who have not reached the age of majority in their jurisdiction of residence must be represented by a parent or legal guardian. Applications are not accepted from, and funds will not be paid to, any person or entity described in Legal Notice v) below — including persons located, resident, or ordinarily resident in the jurisdictions listed there, persons named on any applicable sanctions list, and entities owned or controlled by such persons. English language proficiency is required.

## 6. Use of artificial intelligence in the application process

We acknowledge the role of artificial intelligence as a tool that may support artistic, research, and administrative processes, including accessibility and inclusion.

Applicants are nevertheless expected to ensure that their submissions reflect their own voice, intent, and authorship. Applications that rely primarily on automated content generation, rather than using AI as a supporting tool, may lack the specificity and clarity required for evaluation.

This note is not intended to discourage the use of AI, but to emphasize the importance of authenticity and intentionality in the application process. Projects that critically examine or creatively engage with AI technologies are fully within the scope of the Initiative.

## 7. Submission materials

Applications must be submitted through the designated online application form. The application must include one single PDF document containing the following materials, in the order listed below:

1. **Contact details**

Name, country of residence and preferred contact.

For group applications, one representative must be designated.

2. **Project description**

Description of the proposed project and the motivation for carrying it out within the framework of the **KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative**.

*(500–1,000 words)*

3. **Motivation letter**

A cover letter with motivation or declaration of interest in the topics or themes of the initiative ( *max 400 words* )

4. **Supporting materials**

Images, sketches, references, or other materials illustrating the project.

5. **Previous work**

Presentation of at least three relevant previously realized works, projects or published texts.

6. **Budget overview**

Approximate budget outlining anticipated costs and required resources.

7. **Project timeline**

Estimated work plan and delivery schedule.

8. **CV and short biography**

*(can be replaced by a reference to updated online portfolio)*

The application dossier must:

- be submitted as one PDF file,
- not exceed 15 pages,
- be written in English.

Incomplete or incorrectly formatted applications may not be considered.

Applicants must upload their application using this [form](#). Applications received by other means will not be considered.

## 8. Intellectual property

Applicants warrant that all submitted materials are original and do not infringe the intellectual property rights of third parties; recipients further warrant the same for the deliverables of funded projects. Applicants retain full ownership of their proposals.

Applicants remain the owners of all intellectual property rights in their work. By accepting funding, beneficiaries grant the Initiative a non-exclusive right to use submitted documentation and resulting materials solely for purposes of documentation, communication, and dissemination of the program.

This does not affect the moral rights of the authors.

The **KSM Arts and Social Experiments Initiative** requests recipients to release funded outputs under recognized open licenses where the nature of the work allows: for software, MIT, Apache 2.0, or GPL-3.0; for artworks, texts, and documentation, Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 or CC BY-SA 4.0.

## 9. Personal data protection

Personal data provided by applicants is processed by the Initiative's curators solely for the purposes of managing the application process, administering funding, and communicating about the program. The legal basis for this processing is the taking of steps at the applicant's request prior to and in performance of a funding agreement, and the Initiative's legitimate interest in administering the program.

Applications and related data are handled using third-party services, currently Notion (application form and submissions) and Google (email and document handling). These providers may process data outside the EU/EEA and provide safeguards for international transfers (such as standard contractual clauses or Data Privacy Framework certification). This website uses self-hosted, cookieless Umami analytics, which collects aggregate visit statistics only.

Data may be shared with third parties where legally required or necessary for program administration, and is retained only for as long as necessary to fulfill these purposes and to comply with legal obligations.

Applicants may exercise their rights of access, rectification, erasure, restriction of processing, objection, and data portability, and may lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority. Requests can be addressed to [info@art.ksm.vision](mailto:info@art.ksm.vision).

## 10. Image rights

By accepting funding, beneficiaries authorize the Initiative to record and use images, video, or other documentation of their project and participation for non-commercial communication and dissemination purposes related to the program.

## 11. Payment

Funds will be paid exclusively in DOT tokens on [Kusama Asset Hub](#). Approved projects must provide a valid address on that chain, together with a verified on-chain identity (registered on the [Kusama People chain](#)). Payment amounts are agreed in US dollars and converted to DOT at the prevailing DOT/USD rate on the CoinGecko index at the time each payment is sent; recipients are notified when the conversion is made. The KSM Initiative will grant an additional 2% to cover slippage.

Recipients are solely responsible for the management of received funds - including wallet security, any off-ramp (fiat conversion) process, and associated service fees - and for

any tax obligations arising from the grant in their jurisdiction. Risk in the funds passes to the recipient upon on-chain transfer; the transaction hash serves as the receipt, and the Initiative accepts no responsibility for funds lost after transfer. Recipients will be provided with basic suggestions on how to obtain a verified address and manage crypto payments.

## 12. Legal notices

i) The **KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative** ("the Initiative") is funded by the Web3 Foundation, which launched the Kusama Network in 2019. The Initiative is in no way affiliated with, endorsed by, or connected to the artist Yayoi Kusama or the Yayoi Kusama Foundation.

ii) The Web3 Foundation does not direct, manage, or control the operations of the Kusama Vision program, of which the KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative forms part ("the Program"), or the use of any funds the Foundation may provide to the Program through Bounties. All decisions regarding the management and expenditure of Program funds remain decentralized and curator-led. Accordingly, to the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, and except in cases of fraud, willful misconduct, or gross negligence, the Foundation accepts no responsibility or liability for the use or misuse of any Program funds, for the outcomes of the Program, or for any acts, omissions, or decisions made in connection with the Program, and will not be liable for any damages, losses, or claims arising out of or in connection with participation in the Program.

iii) Successful applicants will be paid exclusively in DOT tokens, in an amount equivalent to the US dollar valuation agreed with the Initiative's curators.

iv) The curators of the KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative are the sole determiners of whether an application is deemed successful. To the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, and except in cases of fraud, willful misconduct, or gross negligence, the curators accept no liability for grievances or disputes raised by applicants and will not be liable for any damages, losses, or claims arising out of or in connection with participation in the Program.

v) The Initiative will not knowingly make any payment to, or for the benefit of, any individual or entity that is (a) listed on any sanctions list of the United Nations, the European Union, the United States, the United Kingdom, or Switzerland; (b) owned or controlled by any such listed person; or (c) located, resident, or ordinarily resident in Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, the Crimea and Sevastopol region, or any areas within the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson oblasts that are not under the control of the Government of Ukraine. As a matter of program policy, the Initiative additionally does not accept applications from, or make payments to, persons located or resident in Russia or Belarus. Recipients may be required to provide a written certification of the foregoing before any payment, and recipient wallet addresses may be screened against applicable sanctions lists. The Initiative may suspend or terminate any payment, without liability, where it reasonably believes the payment would breach or risk breaching applicable sanctions.

vi) Funding recipients act independently. The Initiative does not direct, manage, or control funded projects, and funding does not constitute endorsement of a project's content or

methods. Recipients are solely responsible for the conception, execution, and legality of their activities in the relevant jurisdictions, including obtaining any consents, permits, licenses, or ethics approvals their project may require.

vii) Recipients will indemnify and hold harmless the Initiative, its curators, and the Web3 Foundation against any third-party claims — including claims of intellectual-property infringement — arising from the funded work or the recipient's activities.

viii) In the event of material breach of these Basis & Terms or material misrepresentation in an application, the Initiative may withhold further installments and require repayment of funds already disbursed. Funding under the Initiative creates no employment, agency, or partnership relationship between recipients and the Initiative, its curators, the Web3 Foundation, the DOTDAO or the Polkadot Ecosystem.

ix) The Initiative may suspend, amend, or terminate the program at any time, including where the underlying bounty or funding source is discontinued. Amended terms will be published on this page with an updated revision date and apply to applications submitted after publication.

### 13. Acceptance of terms and conditions

Submission of an application implies full acceptance of the version of these Basis & Terms published at the time of submission. Last updated: 15 July 2026

# FAQ

Last Update: 15 July 2026

## Eligibility & Basics

### 1) What type of projects do you fund?

The KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative funds projects aligned with the conceptual framework, core principles and values of the cypherpunk philosophy: namely, privacy as a political right, cryptography as a liberation tool, and distrust of centralized authority or digital sovereignty, among others. Its operational principles such as decentralization, open source culture as an ethical imperative, and permissionlessness are also relevant themes of the Initiative's mandate.

The funding scope of the Initiative is broad: we fund different formats from digital to analog art, performances, publications, software art, film or other media, academic research, plus experiments and initiatives meaningfully advancing the broad cultural discourse aligned with the Initiative's mandate.

The Initiative respects and celebrates the artistic freedom of the applicant. However, the selection committee highly values a coherent approach and will look favourably on a format whose output is closely aligned conceptually with the initial artistic and critical intent.

### 2) What type of projects do you NOT fund?

We do not fund proposals perceived by the committee as casual gigs, labor or isolated projects. The initiative should not be considered a potential source of regular or extraordinary income. Think of it as a cultural grants program.

We do not fund "brand activations", Kusama/Polkadot marketing initiatives, merchandise, developer meetups or workshops. Any event proposed in the application should be coherent with the concept and the intent.

We do not fund informal research. All funded research must be tied to an official academic framework (Master and Ph.D level and beyond).

We do not fund the preparatory process for the project. Your existing research and grounding of the proposal is an important evaluation aspect.

### 3) What is considered a Social Experiment?

Under the funding framework of the Initiative, a Social Experiment is a designed intervention or system that supports or reacts to human coordination or behaviour, using decentralized technology (or its principles) to articulate a reflection on power, privacy and/or collective agency.

#### 4) Do I need to be in the Kusama/Polkadot ecosystem to apply?

The Initiative is open to applicants independent of their context of origin, including outside the Web3 sphere. The Initiative welcomes applicants and proposals which engage directly with the main themes of the Initiative.

#### 5) To what extent does my project need to be on-chain?

The Initiative may support off-chain, on-chain or hybrid projects. On-chain interactions, deployments or engagement are not mandatory, but applications that feature these may be favorably considered when relevant to the concept of the project presented. On the other hand, forcing on-chain components, just for the sake of it or to justify the application to the KSM Initiative, might negatively impact the evaluation of the application.

In the same vein, a pure technological implementation and deployment may be weakened without a clear artistic or critical intent. Software developments are welcome, but always inside the broader context of the Kusama Vision program, and the KSM Initiative mandate.

The technology should serve a specific concept, idea or use case, as opposed to the other way round.

#### 6) Who can apply?

The Initiative is open to everyone, except persons located, resident, or ordinarily resident in a jurisdiction excluded under our sanctions policy (see the Legal Notices in the Basis & Terms), persons named on any applicable United Nations, European Union, United States, United Kingdom, or Swiss sanctions list, and entities owned or controlled by such persons. Applicants who have not reached the age of majority in their jurisdiction of residence must be represented by a parent or legal guardian.

#### 7) I am a newcomer to the arts scene. What are the chances that my project will be selected?

The Initiative is looking for applicants with genuine interest in the topics covered by our mandate, no matter their previous experience. However, the absence of a previous body of work, a recognisable artistic or cultural context, or traceable contributions makes it difficult for the selection committee to assess the applicant's commitment and capacity to deliver. If you are applying for the first time with no relevant previous experience, please scope the application accordingly and ensure it is excellent in every point.

## Funding

### 8) How much funding can I apply for?

The Initiative doesn't have a maximum funding cap, but for the first half of 2026 we are primarily looking to support projects seeking funding of up to US\$10,000. Your project budget will be scrutinised by the selection committee, and it is expected you will apply for a fair amount relative to your project scope.

In general, where the budgetary requirements extend beyond \$10,000, the scrutiny exercised by the committee, and the precision expected within the budget, will rise in accordance.

### 9) Do you always offer the same amount that is applied for?

The selection committee will evaluate the project and its budget requirements, and may choose to enter into negotiations with the applicant regarding scope, budget requirements or funding topics. The committee is not obliged to grant all the requested amount, and may seek a reduction in project scope or the requested budget to continue the evaluation process.

### 10) Do you consider match funding?

The Initiative strongly encourages applicants to seek alternative funding sources, particularly for projects with high budget requirements. Confirmed funding from other third parties (like another institution or foundation, a local arts grant or other bursaries) is welcomed by the selection committee.

If the project fits into the selection criteria of the committee, the Initiative can grant funding up to a level that any other party has already offered. The Initiative may also issue a conditional approval until other income sources are confirmed. This is general guidance only: all projects applying for funds are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## Application Process

### 11) What makes a strong proposal? Can you supply any advice that may boost my application?

Be precise, concise and provide a strong statement of your concept, alongside a powerful argument underlining your interest in the topic you want to explore or articulate. These are the key points. If the concept is not clear in your mind, a lack of clarity will negatively impact the proposal.

Conduct appropriate research. Take time to check whether others have worked on your topic from the same or different angles. If someone else has approached the topic from

your angle, think about how you can provide added value. Go deep into the work of others; they might give you different points of view or enrich your actual proposal. Reference them in the proposal.

Regarding the use of AI, models tend to be extremely generic. They tend to use a lot of aphorisms or catchy phrases or structures. Usually they are empty or contradictory in meaning, and they don't provide the required depth to support a convincing viewpoint. It is good to use AI to assist you in writing and editing, but don't prompt the model to write the application for you. The committee has worked enough with AI models to suspect when a text has been heavily influenced by large language models. We are looking for unique voices, and models tend to converge towards "vanilla" ideations that lack human imagination or integrity.

When the committee reads a proposal, and we read a lot of them, it can infer the effort and time the applicant has invested into research, conceptualization and definition of the project. Take your time to write your proposal.

#### 12) Do I need to disclose my teams or contributors?

The selection committee would like to evaluate all the aspects of the proposal including all the skills, background, previous experience, and context of anyone contributing to the project. Clear and proper disclosure of such people strengthens the application. We are not looking for full resumés of everyone supporting your application, but some detail about their relevant skills would be welcomed. As with all aspects regarding applications, the more complete and precise the proposal the better.

#### 13) How long is the evaluation process?

Applicants should expect a response within approximately three to six weeks from the time of submission.

#### 14) My proposal was rejected. Why didn't I receive feedback? When can I resubmit?

The Initiative works as a rolling release funding mode and the call for projects is not limited to a certain period of time. Providing feedback to applicants can generate loops where the project is modified until it "fits" the criteria of a minimum set of curators to be funded. In an open grant program like ours, this can be perceived by other applicants as a competitive advantage, fueling gossip and conspiracy theories (real or perceived) about nepotism or favoritism. Ultimately, this may interfere with the authorship or creative genius of the application itself — which should primarily be an organically creative and artistic endeavor.

Under the same logic, the Initiative prefers strong and solid applications whereby the applicant would provide a robust defence of their project. The application document is what,

primarily, is evaluated: it is where the applicant should exercise maximum precision to support a powerful, carefully considered proposal.

The projects are thoroughly considered. Those who are rejected tend to fail in multiple key aspects, rather than through minor application issues. The committee also discusses individual parts of the proposals and may offer partial funding or suggest an adjustment of the scope of the project. We do not recommend resubmitting a proposal that was rejected.

The Initiative is designed to be fair and impartial, regardless of the number of applicants or their background — whether within the Polkadot ecosystem or beyond.

## Payments and administrative

### 15) How will I be paid? Can I be paid in fiat currency or stablecoins?

All payments are made in DOT tokens on Kusama Asset Hub. Make sure the wallet address you provide can receive tokens issued this way, as you are responsible for managing the funds you receive, including any off-ramp (fiat conversion) process and associated fees, and for any tax obligations in your jurisdiction (see Section 11 of the Basis & Terms). The Initiative will provide basic suggestions for receiving and managing funds, and the transaction hash serves as your receipt.

### 16) How do I know I am getting a “fair” amount of DOT tokens?

The conversion is made at the prevailing DOT/USD price on the CoinGecko index at the moment the payment is released, in order to mitigate price volatility as much as reasonably possible, and you will be notified immediately. In addition, the KSM Initiative will grant an additional 2% to cover slippage. For example, if we are due to release a payment of \$10,000, the conversion into DOT is made only at the moment we release the funds. When managing your funds, we recommend at least basic experience in the blockchain or digital assets space. The Initiative does not require identity verification (KYC) from recipients; however, recipient wallet addresses may be screened against applicable sanctions lists before payment.