SHIFT GRANTS

Call for Proposals

Funding Round 001 – March 2025

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

Shift Grants are designed to support scientific and technological breakthrough projects that align with d/acc philosophy: decentralized, democratic, differential, defensive acceleration.
This initiative is co-directed by Edge City and Nodes, with anchor funding from:

- Vitalik Buterin
- Trent McConaghy
- ASI Alliance (Ocean Protocol Foundation)
- Yoni Ben-Shimon

VISION

Through thoughtful guidelines, a robust advisory board, acting as a community catalyst, and a genuine commitment to d/acc principles, we aim to:

- Build a rigorous yet inclusive grant platform that fuels d/acc technology and science.
- Form a d/acc coalition by uniting diverse aligned stakeholders (funders, advisors, organizations) who share a commitment to open, high-impact solutions.
  Lay the groundwork for a sustainable ecosystem: the long term view is to build an MVP for a 'Science & Tech Department' at Edge City, a program created within a pop-up city, aware of its potential as a new form of infrastructure for human coordination and as a convener of well-intentioned, thoughtful humans with good ideas that may lack access to funding.

APPROACH

Shift grants aim to bridge funding gaps for d/acc…
The current paradigm prioritizes short-term returns, leaving defensive and decentralized innovations underfunded. We want to address this.
We aim to direct philanthropic funding through small and development grants in six domains—Biosecurity, Cyber Defense, Info Resilience, Infrastructure, NeuroTech, Social Tech/Governance—prioritizing clear milestones and real-world application.

…using rigorous, adaptive criteria
Special attention will be given to d/acc alignment, security, and ethics in selection criteria.

…assessed through a community-driven and expert-informed process
Milestones, voting outcomes, funding allocations will be transparent

…to deliver milestone-based, iterative funding
Grants are released in tranches tied to measurable deliverables.
Each round refines evaluation methods, governance, and best practices for subsequent funding rounds incorporating learnings feedback.

…and lay the groundwork for a sustainable trajectory.
We are adopting a revolving fund model whereby a perpetual d/acc funding engine is fueled via

revenue-sharing or equity pledges from successful grantees.
Over time, shift Grants seeks to become a durable hub for defensive and flourishing-oriented innovation, providing leadership to the technological landscape.

2. Funding Structure and Grant Types

Shift grants offers two tiers of funding:

Micro Grants ($5,000–$15,000)
For exploratory ideas, early-stage experiments, and prototype development.
Applicants should clearly articulate their concept, d/acc alignment, and preliminary plan. Deliverables can be simple but must be concrete.

Development Grants ($20,000–$40,000)
For teams with the capacity to execute and deliver measurable milestones.
Applicants must provide a roadmap, define technical and execution risks, and commit to iterative reporting and engagement.

Follow-on funding may be considered for outstanding projects.

3. Scope

Shift supports projects within six tracks:

- **Biosecurity & Pandemic Defense** (e.g. open-source vaccines, pathogen detection, air filtration)
- **Cyber Defense & Cryptography** (e.g. zero-knowledge proofs, decentralized identity, AI verification)
- **Information Resilience** (e.g. decentralized fact-checking, high-signal discourse tools)
- **Infrastructure & Physical Defense** (e.g. resilient supply chains, encrypted comms, energy decentralization)
- **NeuroTech & Augmented Cognition** (e.g. Secure and open-source BCI, human-AI collaboration)
- **Social Technology & Governance** (e.g. deep funding, info finance, public goods funding, decentralized governance)

Projects may range from speculative to applied.
Special consideration will be given to proposals suited for real-world testing in environments like Edge City.

5. Selection Guidelines

Alignment with d/acc Principles

- Proposals must clearly engage with at least three of the four "d"s

- If one d is absent, applicants must explain why this is consistent with the spirit of d/acc

- If a proposal conflicts with a pillar (e.g., private biosecurity R&D), justification must be compelling

Openness and Ethics

- Open-source dissemination is the default

- Security-sensitive work must include mitigation strategies and a justification for any elements of the project that are not open-sourced.

- Ethical implications should be considered explicitly

Transformative Potential

- Proposals should go beyond incremental improvements

- Strong preference for ideas that could shift paradigms or form the basis of new fields

Feasibility and Execution

- Clear plans and realistic milestones are required

- Development proposals must show technical depth and real-world applicability

Confidence in the Team

- Track record is less important than clarity of vision and fit

5. Application Requirements

Applications must be submitted in English and include:

1. **Applicant Information**

   - Project Title

   - Primary Contact Name

   - Email Address

   - Affiliated Organization(s) (if any)

   ○ Names, Roles, and Short Bios of Team Members (if any)

2. **Project Abstract (200–300 words)**
 A clear summary of your project, including what you intend to do, the core idea and the expected impact.

3. **Alignment with d/acc**
Explain how your proposal supports decentralized, democratic, differential, and defensive acceleration. Which of the "4ds" does your project embody and how?
If a "d" is not relevant, explain why this aligns with d/acc's broader goals.
If your project introduces tension with a "d" (e.g., confidentiality in bio), justify it clearly.

4. **Why Is It Important?**
Why is this project scientifically, technologically, or socially significant?

5. **Why Hasn't It Been Done Yet?**
What barriers—technical, social, financial, or conceptual—have held this back?

6. **Why You (or Your Team)?**
What makes you (and/or your team) uniquely suited to this work?

7. **Timeline and Key Milestones**
Provide a high-level plan.

8. **Budget and Support Required**
Total requested funding
High-level breakdown (for development grants)

9. **Optional: Visual, Demo and/or document**
You may submit one of the following (optional but encouraged):
A link to a short demo video
A diagram, schematic, or prototype screenshot
A link to relevant prior work, code, or artifact
Scientific paper

11. **Development Grant Only: Roadmap (1 page max)**
 If applying for a Development Grant, include a concise roadmap with:
Phased deliverables and dates
Milestone-based structure

6. Timeline

Shift Grants are organized into funding rounds.

Genesis Round – Edge Esmeralda

Timeline:

- Call opens: **March 2025**

- Application deadline: **April 20, 2025**

- Shortlisting: **April 21–28, 2025**

- Final review: **April 29–May 3, 2025**

- Grant award announcements during the d/acc week at Edge Esmeralda: **June 2 – June 6, 2025** (California)

Future rounds will build on feedback and iteration.

7. Decision-Making Process

The Shift decision-making process is a hybrid of expert review and community input, and may evolve over time.

For this round of funding, the process is:

- The totality of the applications are triaged and shortlisted by the SHIFT core team and advisors

- The funds are distributed by the advisory board

- Evaluation methods may differ in future rounds based on community feedback and performance

8. Advisory Board

Shift advisors include funders and domain experts, who serve in one of two roles:

- **Strategic Stewards:** Experts who provide high-level guidance

- **Active Reviewers:** Experts who review applications

Confirmed Members Include:

- Vitalik Buterin (Ethereum Foundation)

- Trent McConaghy (Ocean / ASI Alliance)

- Allison Duettmann (Foresight Institute)

- Timour Kosters (Edge City)

- Janine Leger (Edge City)

- Lou de K and Aleksandra Smilek (Nodes)

9. Post-Award Commitments

Grantees are expected to:

- Support Shift in publications or communications about this round

- Provide regular progress updates for development grants milestone

- Default to open publishing unless exceptions are approved

10. Revolving Fund Structure

Shift aims to evolve into a sustainable, revolving fund model.

If a grantee develops a revenue-generating product, they will be invited to return value via:

- Revenue-sharing

- Equity pledges

- Reinvestment into the grant pool

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will accompany the grant submission outlining expectations for long-term reciprocity.

11. Defining Success

Success for Shift means:

- Several grantees develop technologies that materially advance at least one d/acc pillar

- A subset of projects scale into major ventures or communities of practice

- The grant pool is replenished by contributions from successful recipients

- A credible portfolio of d/acc-aligned work draws in new funders and accelerates the global movement for decentralized, defense-first innovation

12. How to Apply

Submit your application via the Shift Grants submission form:
https://form.typeform.com/to/v5LTuLOx

For questions or clarifications, contact:
shiftgrants@nodestech.xyz