

# Collaboration 2.0: The Future of Work is on the Blockchain

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*Bounties Network is using Ethereum to redefine the P2P economy.*



Mobile and Internet technologies have made it easy for people across the world to successfully work on and get paid for projects, regardless of their time zone, currency, and location. For many, freelance work is an appealing alternative to the restrictive, office-bound, 9 to 5 model, and the macro trend toward flexible and geographically autonomous work is only accelerating. “The future of work” is definitely upon us.

But this increasingly flexible employment model makes the need for better systems all the more urgent. Our current 1.0 systems haven’t innovated in years: they are characterized by high fees and stagnant features, and they perpetuate larger market misconceptions about

the nature of freelance work. It's time we create an ecosystem that connects people who need high quality work with the global talent base that is waiting to fulfill.

## **The Status Quo: Existing Platforms and their Shortcomings**

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There's no shortage of freelance and project marketplaces. We have witnessed a boom in the last few years, ever since people started craving a seat at the gig economy feast. Fiverr, Upwork, Elance, and Freelancer are some of the most popular sites operating at a global level. The work on these platforms is varied and plentiful, and theoretically, freelancers who consistently turn around high-quality work can earn good reputations and charge competitive rates.

Fiverr, currently one of the world's biggest online marketplaces for digital services, owes a hefty chunk of its popularity to its initial value prop—"get any job done for a fiver." Even though the price point has evolved, Fiverr's early tagline captures a larger cultural perception of freelancing as a low wage/ low quality segment reserved for international or "fresh out of school" workers. This misconception complicates the client-freelancer dynamic and makes it difficult for talented freelancers to find reliable, well-paying, and fulfilling work.

Scams are another recurring problem for freelancers. Without payment protection or an effectively regulated platform, it's hard to individually assess and separate real clients/freelancers from scammers. A sense of security comes with a hefty price tag. On current freelance platforms, commissions vary from 5 percent to a whopping 20 percent. Market competition also forces freelancers to offer ridiculously low rates for their work. By the time platforms siphon off their commissions, the money in hand is way under the value of the work delivered and the time dedicated to the project. Furthermore, even though these platforms charge high commissions, they often fail to provide assurances that freelancers will eventually get paid. Unsettled disputes almost always leave freelancers with nothing to show for their work.



Clients can lose out too. Some scam freelancers will ask for upfront payments and never deliver the work. Others will delay projects and demand additional payments outside agreed fees to release the work. Clients end up out of pocket and still longing for deliverables. Because of the rudimentary reputation systems on these platforms, users can't identify potential problem users before engaging them. The ratings or reputations users build on one site also never transfer to other sites. Serial scammers can go undetected across multiple platforms, and hard-working users who build strong reputations have to start from scratch whenever they join a new marketplace.

## The Blockchain Way

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The basics: A blockchain is a distributed ledger that is visible to every participant in the network. A blockchain is like a spreadsheet that anyone can access. Every participant has a copy, and it can only be edited if more than half of the participants agree it's a legitimate change. This is a simplification, but it shows that blockchain is not so far-removed from everyday technologies that most people already know and engage.

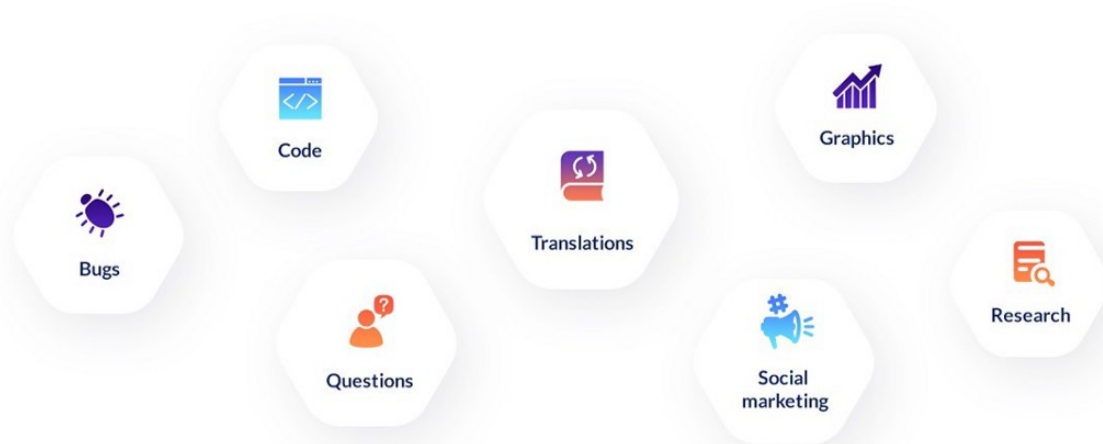
Use cases for the blockchain are now plentiful: information about an individual's identity, bank transaction records, and copyright licenses can all be stored on the blockchain. The blockchain is engineered to be open to anyone who has a computer.

As far as finding new projects and work for freelancers, blockchain enables freelancers to directly and safely connect with people who require products and services. This can be anything from design to copywriting to initiatives for charity to building a bespoke motorbike. A blockchain solution removes barriers and reduces costs in the following ways:

- For freelancers and their clients, agreements become part of a permanent record, which means they're tamper-proof and nearly impossible to breach.
- Freelancers can store all identity and portfolio data on the blockchain. All work can be clearly traced back to its owner, and copyright disputes or fake reviews are no longer a bottleneck issue. Settling disputes is made simple with searchable secure records and arbitration.
- Tasks can be posted once and then easily distributed across numerous platforms. This immediately solves the segregation of information between different sites.
- Money transfers are big business. The fees on transactions currently average around according to the World Bank Group. Dropping rates by just 5% could result in \$16 billion of extra income. Cryptocurrency payments could even remove fees altogether.

With all this in mind, the immediate benefits of using a blockchain solution to create and work on tasks and projects are clear: **no scams, no fees, no fraud**, and dramatically improved user protection and security.

A practical example, The Bounties Network, uses Ethereum-based smart contracts to protect the interests of both clients and creators. Any disputes that arise are settled through Delphi. A claim is easily submitted by a *challenger* who provides necessary evidence to support their claim. A selection of arbiters then assesses and decides on the claim. Depending on the severity and the outcome of each claim, tokens are used to settle the case.



## The Global Freelance Economy

The freelance economy is on the rise, but still with a few challenges. The value of flexibility, improved work-life balance, and the immediate access to global talent have been the fire fueling its rise. Excessive fees and high levels of fraud shouldn't hinder its ascent.

Blockchain is the solution we need to prepare global economies for the future. Not only does it solve current bottleneck challenges, but it offers high levels of security, zero commission rates, and huge investment opportunities, making it a great leap beyond current solutions.

Furthermore, the growing acceptance and confidence in cryptocurrencies have empowered many freelancers to accept payments in tokens for their work. No matter who you are, you can choose great projects to work on, complete tasks in your field or for charitable organizations, and get compensated for your work within seconds. The applications and possibilities of blockchain technology are vast, and anyone can start exploring what the future looks like for their industry and area of expertise.

The Bounties Network allows members to earn ETH by completing a wide variety of tasks without worrying about physical or geographical limitations. The network is the easiest way to start testing and playing with real world blockchain applications, and earning your first (of many) tokens in the process.

In fact, we're asking the world "if you could create a bounty for anything in the world, what would it be". See what some pretty awesome people, including Joseph Lubin, had to say and get involved here:

What would you bounty?

The nature of work is changing. Blockchain is poised to become the ideal structure for ensuring that this change is a successful and sustainable one.

Join our , and stay tuned for updates!

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