

*From Proof of Family*

# ROOTS

*to Proof of Personhood*

A Southern Italian village has verified human identity for four centuries through oral tradition, family nicknames, and the memory of its elders. We are putting it on-chain. And letting it grow.

<b>Initiative</b>	KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative
<b>Network</b>	Kusama — on-chain via Asset Hub
<b>Token</b>	ROOTS — non-transferable, no monetary value
<b>Duration</b>	3 months — 5 phases
<b>Budget</b>	<b>62,239 DOT gross</b> — crypto capital gains tax 33% included
<b>Team</b>	Mike (The White Rabbit) · Alexandru
<b>Milestones</b>	M1 11,194 DOT · M2 26,119 DOT · M3 24,926 DOT

1 / CONTACT DETAILS

Contact Details

NAME	The White Rabbit (Mike)
ALIAS	@thewhiterabbitM on X — Polkadot and Kusama community member since 2021
BASE	Italy and Romania
CONTACT	Via the designated application form. On-chain identity verifiable on Kusama Asset Hub.
APPLICATION	Individual application — sole applicant and project director. See Section 8 for full team profile.

The project is directed by Mike (The White Rabbit) and involves a local field coordinator in Southern Italy, a confirmed panel of village elders, a professional documentary filmmaker, and on-chain technical support provided by Alexandru. The applicant assumes full curatorial and financial accountability to the Initiative.

## 2 / PROJECT DESCRIPTION

## Project Description

### The oldest anti-Sybil system in human history

As artificial intelligence erodes the boundary between human and machine, the question of who is a real person becomes urgent. Current Proof of Personhood solutions are technically sophisticated but culturally thin: they verify existence without verifying belonging.

In small Southern Italian villages, every family carries a *'u nomme 'e casa*, a house name passed down orally for centuries. Invisible to official registries, incomprehensible to outsiders, impossible for any AI to fabricate. These names are hyper-local, semantically rich, socially validated, and they grow organically as family branches form.

*"You cannot fake belonging to a place if you do not know who the people are and what they are called."*

### The Experiment

Over three months, ROOTS documents this oral tradition through ethnographic fieldwork, encodes it on-chain using Kusama's Identity Pallet and native assets system, and runs a gated OpenGov referendum accessible only to attested community members. The result is a living on-chain proof-of-personhood system maintained by the community itself, with no administrator, no central authority, and no expiry date.

### On-Chain Architecture

**ROOTS Token.** A non-transferable identity token minted via Kusama Asset Hub native assets pallet, with transfer permissions set to None at protocol level. A *roots\_parent\_token\_id* field creates a directed acyclic graph linking each family to its ancestral token.

**Kusama Identity Pallet.** Each attested participant registers *house\_name*, *village\_quarter*, *attestation\_hash* (SHA-256 of physical certificate), and *lineage\_parent*. No custom smart contract required.

**OpenGov Referendum.** A real community decision gated exclusively to attested identities. Vote weight modulated by ROOTS Reputation:  $\text{weight} = 1 + \log_2(\text{reputation} / 50)$ . Results presented to the local municipality.

### The ROOTS NFT

Every attested family receives a generative NFT — a unique visual artwork rendered from the family's position in the lineage graph. Trunk width reflects lineage depth; branch count equals living child tokens; color shifts from terracotta to amber with reputation. These NFTs have zero monetary value and cannot be traded or sold.

## 3 / MOTIVATION LETTER

## Motivation Letter

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### Why this project, why this Initiative

I have been an active and publicly known member of the Polkadot and Kusama ecosystem since 2021, as a governance participant, a bounty curator, a community organizer, and a DV Guardian appointed by the Web3 Foundation. I have a precise understanding of what this infrastructure can do. ROOTS is the project where that understanding meets something I care about equally: the real world, the people who live in it, and the question of what decentralized technology is actually for.

The KSM Art and Social Experiments Initiative is the only funding context capable of hosting this project — not because it funds blockchain projects, but because it funds experiments that are genuinely trying to understand something and are willing to document failure as honestly as success.

My governance work — as curator of the Games Bounty V1 and the Meetup Bounty, as contributor to Marketing Bounty V2 accounting and reporting, and as DV Guardian in Cohort 5 of the Web3 Foundation DV Program — has given me direct experience of the tension between decentralized ideals and the human realities of trust, accountability, and community.

A Southern Italian village has been solving the Sybil problem for four hundred years without a single line of code. ROOTS is my attempt to build a bridge between that knowledge and the infrastructure we have spent the last decade constructing.

*"The oldest anti-Sybil mechanism in human history is a village that knows its own names. We are putting it on-chain and letting it grow."*

## 4 / SUPPORTING MATERIALS

## Supporting Materials

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**Lineage Graph.** Directed acyclic graph visualization with family branches, etymology annotations, and village quarter attribution.

**Prototype NFT Renders.** Three generative artwork prototypes: root family (depth 0), mid-lineage (depth 3), new branch (depth 6).

**Field Notes.** Excerpts from preliminary oral collection sessions demonstrating the richness of the oral tradition.

**Ceremony Concept Design.** Visual mock-up and event design for the attestation ceremony, including certificate design and elder panel protocol.

**Interactive Presentation.** Web-based interactive presentation with animated lineage graph and on-chain architecture overview.

5 / PREVIOUS WORK

Previous Work

◆	Curator, Games Bounty V1
◆	Curator, Meetup Bounty
◆	Accounting and Reporting, Marketing Bounty V2
◆	DV Guardian, Web3 Foundation DV Program Cohort 5
◆	Community Events Organizer, Romania and Italy
◆	OpenGov Proposal: Politecnico di Milano Partnership

6 / BUDGET OVERVIEW

Budget Overview

Total request: 62,239 DOT gross — Net operational: 41,700 DOT

The total budget of 62,239 DOT covers all five project phases over three months. The net operational budget is 41,700 DOT. Italian crypto capital gains tax (33%) of 20,539 DOT is an explicit line item included in each milestone payment. All expenses will be documented with invoices and receipts.

PHASE	DESCRIPTION	DUR.	NET DOT	TAX (33%)	GROSS DOT
Phase 1	Oral Ethnography and Book of Names	4 weeks	7,500	3,694	11,194
Phase 2	The Attestation Ceremony	2 weeks	10,000	4,925	14,925
Phase 3	On-Chain Identity Registration	2 weeks	7,500	3,694	11,194
Phase 4	The Social Experiment	4 weeks	9,200	4,531	13,731
Phase 5	Report and Replication Framework	2 weeks	4,200	2,069	6,269
Buffer	Contingency	—	3,300	1,626	4,926
TOTAL	3 months · 5 phases	3 months	41,700	20,539	62,239

Payment Milestones

Funding is disbursed in three milestone-based installments. Each payment explicitly includes both the operational cost and the corresponding tax for the phases it covers.

	TRIGGER	DELIVERABLES	NET DOT	TAX (33%)	GROSS DOT
M1	Project start	Signed agreement. Asset Hub address registered and on-chain identity verified. Field coordinator engaged. Phase 1 oral collection underway.	7,500	3,694	11,194
M2	Phase 3 complete	100+ ROOTS tokens live on Kusama Asset Hub. Book of Names printed and deposited. Attestation ceremony held and documented. OpenGov referendum launched.	17,500	8,619	26,119
M3	Final delivery	OpenGov referendum concluded and result submitted to municipality. Documentary film delivered. 30-page bilingual report published on Mirror.xyz. Facilitator handbook published. Financial statement submitted.	16,700	8,226	24,926
TOTAL			41,700	20,539	62,239

*Note on budget scope. The 62,239 DOT request reflects five distinct phases combining ethnographic fieldwork, public event production, on-chain implementation, a governance experiment, and a publishable research output, all within three months. Italian crypto capital gains tax (33%) is included as a transparent line item. Surplus from underruns will fund Phase 6: replication in a second Southern Italian village.*

# Project Timeline

## Work Plan: 3 Months

WEEKS	PHASE	KEY ACTIVITIES	DELIVERABLE
1–4	Phase 1	Oral collection sessions · lineage graph drafting · Book of Names layout and print	Book of Names (100 copies) · lineage graph · video footage
5–6	Phase 2	Ceremony production · elder panel preparation · attestation event · documentary filming	Attestation certificates · documentary rough cut
7–8	Phase 3	Wallet setup · identity registration · token minting · IPFS pipeline · onboarding sessions	100+ ROOTS tokens live on Kusama Asset Hub
9–12	Phase 4	Deliberation sessions · OpenGov referendum · data collection · film post-production	OpenGov result · final documentary · data report
12–14	Phase 5	Research report · Mirror.xyz publication · replication handbook	30-page report · Mirror.xyz post · facilitator handbook



## 8 / TEAM &amp; CV

## Team & CV

### Mike — The White Rabbit

*Project Director · Community & Governance Lead*

Mike has been an active and publicly known member of the Polkadot and Kusama ecosystem since 2021, operating across governance, curation, community organizing, institutional partnership, and creative practice. He is the sole applicant and assumes full curatorial and financial accountability to the Initiative.

◆	Curator, Games Bounty V1
◆	Curator, Meetup Bounty
◆	Accounting and Reporting, Marketing Bounty V2
◆	DV Guardian, Web3 Foundation DV Program Cohort 5
◆	OpenGov Proposal: Politecnico di Milano Partnership
◆	Community Events Organizer, Romania and Italy
◆	Independent entrepreneur

### Alexandru

*Full-Stack Product Engineer · On-Chain Technical Lead*

Alexandru is a full-stack product engineer focused on shipping real, user-facing systems on Polkadot. He brings end-to-end delivery capability across smart contracts, blockchain integrations, indexers, frontend, and cloud infrastructure — with a track record of making Web3 technology usable by non-technical users in production environments.

#### Selected Web3 Work

<b>FlappyWUD</b>	Browser-based Web3 arcade game with wallet login (SubWallet / NovaWallet / Talisman), on-chain leaderboards, event system, and real-time airdrop mechanics where \$WUD holdings and NFTs drive score multipliers and power-ups.
<b>WUD Universe</b>	Unique Network-based gamified identity layer featuring soulbound cabin NFTs, nested and attachable items, mystery-box reward pools, and a full marketplace built to replace the default Unique marketplace with significantly improved UX.
<b>MorningWUD</b>	On-chain game loop written in Solidity with configurable economics (entry fees, house cut / treasury), anti-spam cooldowns, a two-step pending/finalize flow, and multi-room support — backed by a full Next.js dApp wired directly to the contract ABI via wagmi-style integration.

#### Background Beyond Web3

Outside Web3, Alexandru has built and led production software and engineering teams in financial services (banking) and other real-world environments, working across backend systems, integrations, and cloud infrastructure with a focus on reliability, clean engineering, and shipping under constraints. His involvement in ROOTS covers the full on-chain technical stack: Asset Hub integration, IPFS pipeline, token minting, identity pallet configuration, and the

generative NFT rendering layer.

*You cannot transfer your roots.*

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**ROOTS — From Proof of Family to Proof of Personhood**

Application to the KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative — 2026

Budget: **62,239 DOT gross** · Net operational: 41,700 DOT · Crypto capital gains tax 33% included · 3 months · 5 phases

*By submitting this application, the applicant confirms full acceptance of the KSM Art & Social Experiments Initiative Basis & Terms, including conditions on intellectual property, image rights, payment structure, and final reporting obligations.*