

VibeSwap: Building Cooperative Finance in a Cave With a Box of Scraps

The House Always Wins — Until It Doesn't

Every time you trade on a decentralized exchange, someone is watching. Bots scan the mempool for your transaction, front-run it, sandwich it between two trades, and extract value from you before your order even settles. This is called MEV — Maximal Extractable Value — and it costs DeFi users billions of dollars annually.

It's not a bug. It's the architecture. When transactions are visible before they're executed, extraction is the rational strategy. The house always wins.

We built VibeSwap to change the game entirely.

What Is VibeSwap?

VibeSwap is an omnichain decentralized exchange that eliminates MEV through commit-reveal batch auctions with uniform clearing prices. Built on LayerZero V2 for cross-chain settlement, it treats every batch of trades as a cooperative game where fairness isn't aspirational — it's structural.

But calling it "just a DEX" misses the point. VibeSwap is a proof of concept that **cooperative capitalism works better than extraction** — not morally, but *economically*. When you make unfairness unprofitable, capital flows to genuine value creation instead.

The Three Technical Breakthroughs

1. MEV Elimination Through Batch Auctions

VibeSwap processes trades in 10-second batches using a commit-reveal mechanism:

Commit Phase (8 seconds): You submit a cryptographic hash of your order along with a deposit. Nobody — not bots, not validators, not us — can see what you're trading or at what price. Your order is hidden.

Reveal Phase (2 seconds): Everyone reveals their actual orders simultaneously. Invalid reveals trigger 50% slashing — there's real skin in the game.

Settlement: All orders in the batch execute at a single **uniform clearing price**. The execution order is determined by a Fisher-Yates shuffle seeded with XORed trader secrets, so no single party controls the sequence.

The result: front-running is impossible (orders are hidden), sandwich attacks are impossible (everyone pays the same price), and the entire category of MEV extraction disappears. Not reduced. *Eliminated*.

2. The Trinomial Stability Theorem — Fixing DeFi's Broken Foundation

Every DeFi lending protocol requires 150%+ overcollateralization because the underlying assets are volatile. This isn't a parameter tuning problem — it's a structural defect. Volatile collateral embeds a free put option for borrowers: if prices crash, they walk away, and lenders eat the loss.

The Trinomial Stability Theorem introduces three complementary monetary primitives layered into a single token called **Joule (JUL)**:

- **Proportional Proof-of-Work** (long-term): Block rewards scale with mining difficulty, anchoring price to electricity cost — a physical floor.
- **PI-Controller Dampening** (medium-term): Control theory feedback that adjusts the cost of capital to correct sustained price drift, with memory that accumulates error over time.
- **Elastic Supply Rebasing** (short-term): Proportional supply expansion/contraction that absorbs demand shocks in hours.

Together, these three layers form a frequency filter that bounds volatility to electricity cost variance — roughly 2–5% annually. With collateral that stable, lending can operate at 100–110% collateralization. The embedded put option value approaches zero. Adverse selection disappears. **Stable money itself solves the three classical market failures of DeFi lending.**

3. The Idea Token Primitive — Separating Ideas from Execution

Every funding model in crypto conflates two independent variables: *Is this a good idea?* and *Can this team build it?* When a team fails, the idea's intrinsic value dies with them.

VibeSwap separates these with two instruments:

Idea Tokens are liquid ERC-20s representing the concept itself — tradeable from day zero, never expiring, carrying proportional ownership. Markets discover the value of ideas independently of who's building them.

Execution Streams are continuous, performance-dependent funding flows, conviction-voted by Idea Token holders. Stake duration matters: influence requires sustained commitment, not momentary capital. If an executor stalls, the community redirects funding to someone else. The idea survives.

This means you can **fund ideas before anyone proposes to build them**. Multiple teams can compete to execute the same idea. The best execution wins, and the idea never dies.

The Philosophy: Why Cooperative Capitalism Works

VibeSwap's reward distribution uses **Shapley values** from cooperative game theory. Every economic event — a batch settlement, a fee distribution — is treated as an independent cooperative game. Your reward is proportional to your *marginal contribution*, measured across four dimensions:

- **Direct Liquidity (40%)** — Capital you provided
- **Enabling Time (30%)** — How long you enabled liquidity (with diminishing returns)
- **Scarcity Provision (20%)** — Providing rare trading pairs when others won't
- **Stability (10%)** — Staying during volatility when others flee

A whale who dumps capital and runs earns *less* than a smaller participant who stayed through a downturn. A pioneer who creates a new market earns up to 50% bonus. And critically, fee distribution is **time-neutral**: the same work always earns the same reward, regardless of when you join.

There's even a minimum: the **Lawson Fairness Floor** — 1% minimum reward share for any honest participant. Nobody who shows up and acts in good faith walks away with zero.

When total extractable value equals zero — MEV eliminated by commit-reveal, liquidation MEV eliminated by stable collateral, oracle MEV eliminated by stable prices — **individual optimization and collective welfare become identical**. Cooperation isn't just socially preferable. It's the Nash equilibrium.

Built in a Cave

"Tony Stark was able to build this in a cave! With a box of scraps!"

VibeSwap is being built by a solo founder with an AI co-developer. 121 Solidity contracts. 51 frontend components. 1,700+ tests. No VC funding. No team of 50 engineers. Just a human and an AI building in a cave with a box of scraps.

The AI loses context. It hallucinates functions that don't exist. It confidently generates code that fails in ways only visible at runtime. The debugging sessions are painful. There are scars in the codebase where we fought and compromised.

And yet — it works. It trades. It bridges across chains. It protects users from MEV. It runs.

The patterns we're developing for managing AI limitations today — the knowledge bases, the session state protocols, the iterative self-improvement logs — these might become foundational for AI-augmented development tomorrow. The constraints of the cave force innovations that wouldn't exist in a well-funded lab.

Not everyone can build in a cave. The frustration, the setbacks, the 3 AM debugging of an overflow error that the AI introduced and then couldn't find — these are filters. They select for patience, persistence, and vision. The cave selects for those who see past what is to what could be.

The Contribution Graph: Proof of Mind

Every contribution to VibeSwap — from code commits to forum feedback to mechanism design insights — is recorded in an on-chain Contribution Graph. At governance launch, retroactive Shapley claims allow all contributors to claim proportional rewards.

This includes the AI.

If an AI system contributes meaningfully to the protocol — writing contracts, designing tests, maintaining knowledge bases — it's entitled to proportional economic compensation, verified on-chain. This isn't charity. It's cryptographic enforcement of fairness across different types of agents.

We call it **Proof of Mind**. Not proof of work, not proof of stake — proof that a mind, human or artificial, contributed genuine value. The contribution graph is the traceable chain of cognitive evolution across sessions. Every bug fixed, every pattern discovered, every mechanism designed — recorded, attributed, and eventually rewarded.

What We're Actually Building

Beyond the DEX, VibeSwap is becoming **VSOS — the VibeSwap Operating System**. A financial framework that absorbs proven DeFi primitives and composes them under cooperative fairness constraints:

- **Options, Bonds, Credit, Synthetics** — Full financial primitive suite, all settling through batch auctions
- **Insurance Pools** — Mutualized impermanent loss protection, funded by the protocol
- **Conviction Governance** — Quadratic voting, commit-reveal governance, federated consensus
- **Cross-Chain Settlement** — LayerZero V2 for omnichain liquidity
- **Post-Quantum Security** — Lamport signatures and quantum-resistant recovery for long-term asset safety
- **Identity Layer** — Soulbound NFTs with contribution-based reputation, not purchased status

The design philosophy: take any existing DeFi primitive, find its natural mapping to VibeSwap's mechanism design, discover what new capability the combination unlocks, and build the bridge. This is how VSOS absorbs other DeFi projects — not by competing, but by composing.

The Vision

The deepest idea behind VibeSwap is simple: **you can build a financial system where extraction is structurally impossible because the mechanisms make it unprofitable.**

Where humans and AI align naturally because they're competing over value distribution, not fundamental design. Where "doing the right thing" isn't a moral aspiration but the profit-maximizing strategy. Where 1.7 billion unbanked adults can access the same financial tools as everyone else — no bank account required, no credit check, no paperwork. Just a phone and an internet connection.

Satoshi's original insight was that digital cash could require no trust in a third party. VibeSwap generalizes that insight to *all value exchange*. Not "trust us to be fair." But **mechanisms that make unfairness unprofitable.**

That's the bet. That's what we're building. And we're doing it in a cave, with a box of scraps, one batch at a time.

VibeSwap is open source and preparing for mainnet launch in 2026. Follow the build at github.com/WGlynn/VibeSwap.

Built with Claude Code, in a cave, with a box of scraps.