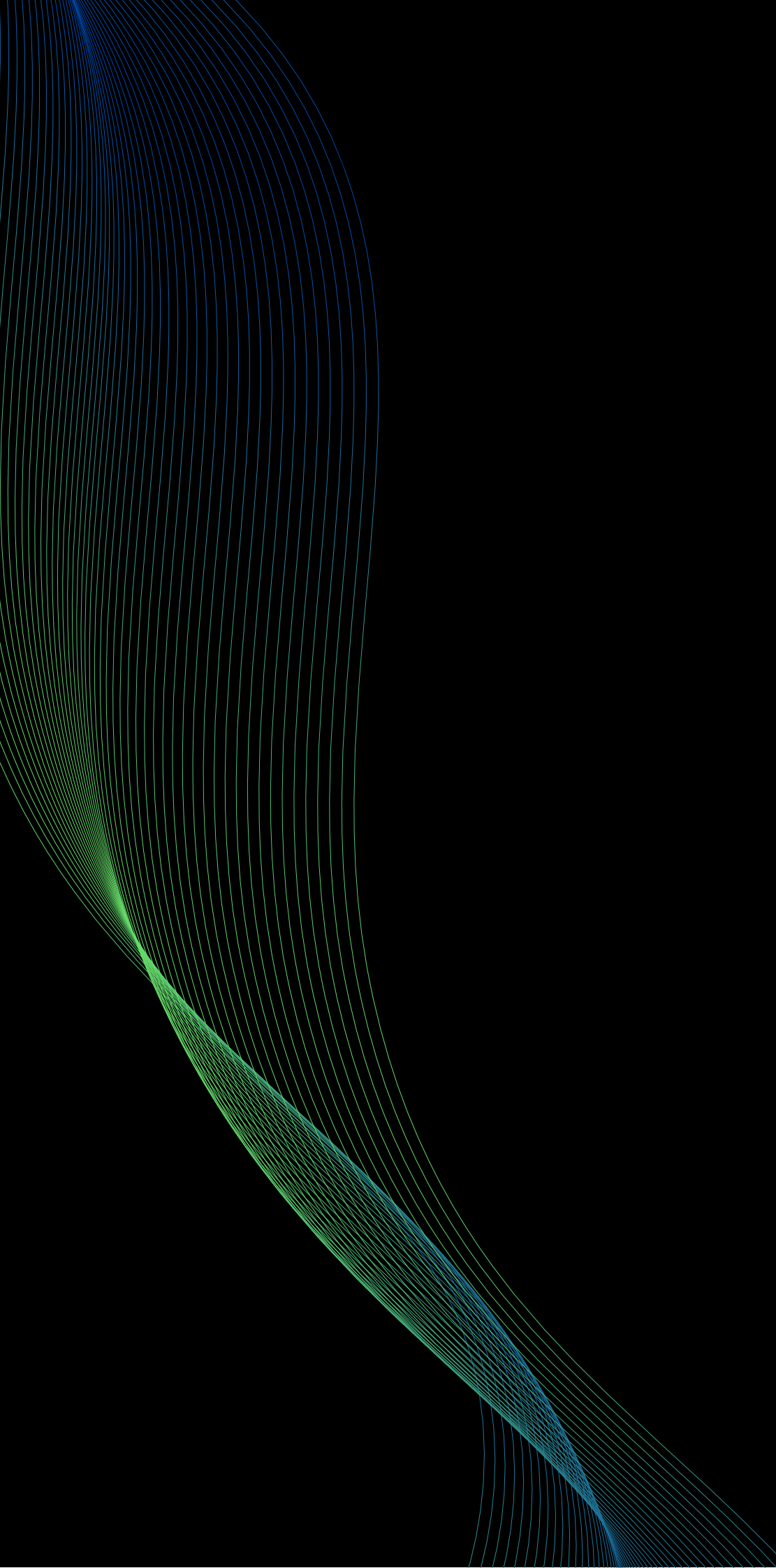The Commons Stack

The Commons Stack
Praise System:
A Case Study

I have to celebrate you baby,

I have to Praise you like I should!

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Praise System:
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Summary

To acknowledge people's contribution to the TEC and track work done, the TEC uses Commons Stack praise bot. Anyone with the dishing powers in the TEC and Commons Stack can "dish praise" to community members to acknowledge their work and input, which are then transformed into TE Commons Impact Hours and CSTK token score. This practice relates to monitoring in Ostrom's 8 principles of a sustainable common resource management. While Ostrom analyzes monitoring as a check against appropriator behaviors within a community, what makes the Praise System unique is it's a positive monitoring, as if someone calls 911 to say this person is awesome.

TEC Impact Hours acquire monetary value after a successful Hatch, and their value (assumed to be in the $15-$200 per hour range) is determined by the funds raised with the launch of the Hatch. The more funds that are raised, the higher the hourly wage for impact hours becomes. Additionally, the more funds that are raised, the larger the portion of tokens that are paid back to 'covesters'. These two properties mean hatchers are incentivised to raise more funds, and covesters are incentivised to also help collect more funds. A third variable to consider is the total number of impact hours contributed. As the total impact hours goes higher, the hourly DAI payout per hour goes down.

Praise is dished on telegram in many of the Commons Stack
TEC groups and verbally in TEC Weekly Syncs, and soon will be

Praise dishers can use the "!dish praise" command for directing the PraiseBot
to record the Impact Hours for the member that received the praise.

available on the Discord channel as well. At the beginning of each
Weekly Sync call, there is ~20 minutes allocated for the people
to praise each other, without needing to have the dishing powers
as in the Telegram group.

Bi-weekly, a few people (It started as always Griff and Livia but
has expanded since) quantify qualitative contributions (praise
amount & contributed hours) listed on the spreadsheet as people
dish praise. They subjectively reward points to each item praised
based on time and relative impact on the project. These two
people used to get the same as the median person rewarded.

All the attendees in the call are given the opportunity to dish praise to someone for their
contribution

This was felt unfair by the community and an update to the
incentive for praise quantifiers was proposed and approved.
The quantification process is transparent and can be tracked by
anyone in the spreadsheet

To	From	Reason for dishing		Total po		Room
zeptimusq	zeptimusQ	joining transparency call 😊		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
zeptimusq	markop	being proactive and offer help on TEC open issues on Zenhub.		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
liviade	zeptimusQ	communicate and facilitate the vote and advice process to the community! 🙌		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	Praise Testing
liviade	zeptimusQ	communicate and facilitate the vote and advice process to the community! 🙌		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
chuygarcia92	liviade	helping me find discord handles and for inviting a lawyer friend to help with th		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
zeptimusq	liviade	their great contributions to the Code of Conduct hack session!		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
juankbell	liviade	their great contributions to the Code of Conduct hack session!		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
freedumbs00	liviade	their great contributions to the Code of Conduct hack session!		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
santigs67	liviade	their great contributions to the Code of Conduct hack session!		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
liviade	liviade	their great contributions to the Code of Conduct hack session!		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
hypereum	liviade	joining the code of conduct hack session		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
cyotee	liviade	joining the hack session and staying for a great discussion on anarchy vs con		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
freedumbs00	liviade	constantly improving the forum 🙌		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
chriscyber	jeffemmett	bridging & managing all the channels between telegram and discord!		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	cadCAD_org
geleeroyale	jeffemmett	bridging & managing all the channels between telegram and discord!		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	cadCAD_org
mateodaza	jeffemmett	updating the cadCAD SourceCred instance		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	Praise Testing
rogervs	jeffemmett	updating the cadCAD SourceCred instance		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	Praise Testing
tylerdmace	jeffemmett	updating the cadCAD SourceCred instance		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	Praise Testing
mateodaza	jeffemmett	updating the cadCAD SourceCred instance! 🔥🖥️		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	cadCAD_org
rogervs	jeffemmett	updating the cadCAD SourceCred instance! 🔥🖥️		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	cadCAD_org
tylerdmace	jeffemmett	updating the cadCAD SourceCred instance! 🔥🖥️		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	cadCAD_org
sembrestels	sembrestels	5h on reimplementing and writting tests for the impact hours smart contract		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	Gardens Swarm
jessicazartler	markop	handling the Social media shceduling Hand-off		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
iviangita	markop	handling the Social media shceduling Hand-off		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	TE Praise
fabimol	FabiMol	4h of work on closing tec-ui issue, publishing the last version to npm and wor		PRAISE	01-Feb-2021	Gardens Swarm

All the dished praises are visible to every community member on the spreadsheet.

We post [the leaderboard in every blog post](). It is something to be proud of for our community members. They don't have to see how those are quantified, but they see the result.
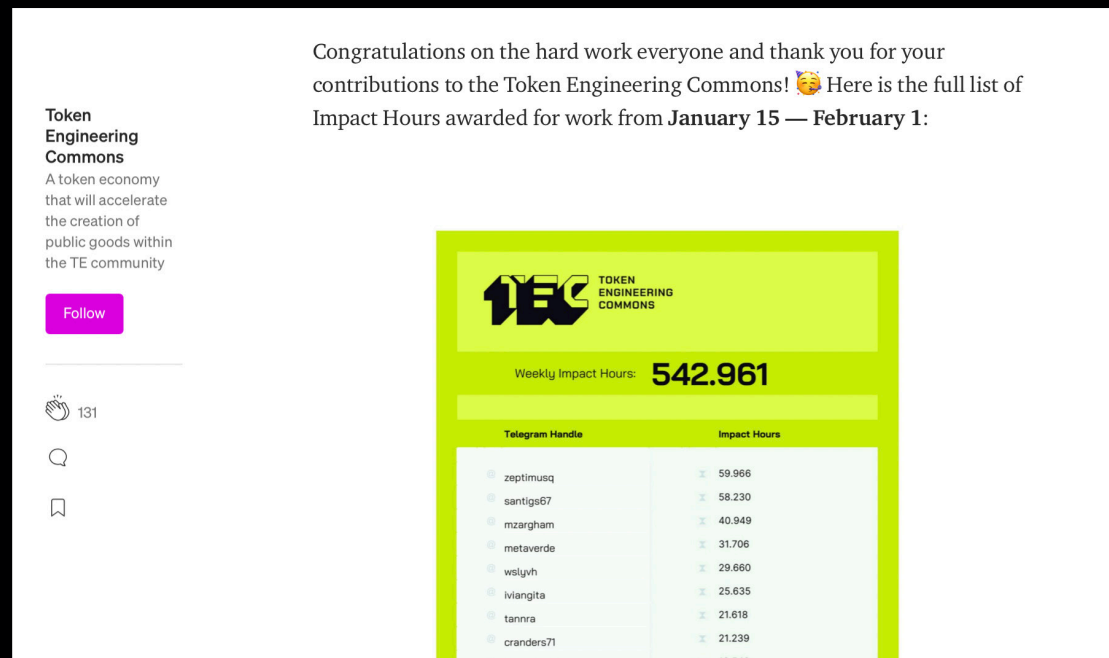
All the dished praises are visible to every community member on the spreadsheet.

Initially there was a 4-tiered weighting structure that categorized contributions made relative to their direct impact on the advancement of the TEC roadmap. As a result, the TE praise that was tangentially related to TEC's launch preparation and TE praise that didn't help TEC at all constituted the lowest tiers.

Praise System Evolution

The praise system evolved over time, and there were some structural changes made:

- We got rid of the Tier structure because it was too much work and unnecessary since different types of contributions were already being covered by the subjective process of quantification.

- The quantifiers were receiving really small impact hours, which was also discouraging new people from taking up this task. We changed the rules so new people could come in and quantify. Now, every praise that someone gets while being quantifier counts as the average impact hour per praise.

- The praise quantification was opened to a larger group as few other people started to get as much involved and understanding of the overall process as Livia and Griff, which are crucial for the subjective nature of the quantification.

Lessons Learned

Here are some important lessons we learned along the way:

- **Be very careful with designing a tiered rewards structure:** During the design of the incentive rewards metrics, a conflict emerged between the leaders of TE and TEC. When we had a tiered structure, we had in mind rewarding people in proportion to their relevant contributions towards the TEC. So, for the specific purpose of designing this tiered praise system, the TE was not the primary focus but the people involved in the TEC. The tiers were:

  T1. let's give 100% to everything related to TEC and impactful for TEC.

  T2: something that is not so impactful but related to TEC receive 25%.

  T3: TE projects and activities indirectly related to TEC but still related to them receive 5%.

T4: TE projects that aren't related to TEC get nothing.

Although we wanted to make it very clear that our objective was creating the TEC and not building TE, we failed to communicate that structure is different from content. As a result, having TE projects and activities accounted after T3 and T4 created problems.

Some TE leaders also expressed resentment about TE projects receiving 5% of impact hours. We could have done a better job compromising on that. We could have said T3 will receive 15% IH hours.

Another way of resolving this issue would be giving them much more verbal importance or in a way that recognizes them as a critical piece.

- **The verbal praises nourish a gratitude culture:** In the TEC Weekly Sync calls, there used to be an intro question for collecting data and giving everyone a time to speak. Later, the intro part of the calls evolved into the verbal praise, where TEC members dish praise to each other for 15-30 minutes.

At first, Griff was questioning if allocating a third of the call to verbal praise was the best use of the call. After a few calls, however, he realized its value. While also serving as a way to update people about what is happening, verbal praises developed a strong culture of gratitude.

Culture of gratitude through verbal praise has its unexpected side benefits, like building stronger relationships between community members.

At some point, the two prominent leaders of the TE and TEC, Angela and Griff, were having differing opinions on the direction of the TEC's Onboarding Group and Angela disengaged from the project to focus more on the TE Academy,

leaving an unsettling feeling with how the the TE and TEC were coexisting. However, after Angela joined one thursday call and dished verbal praise to Griff, saying that she admired his work among other things, and Griff reciprocated with praises for her, it greatly helped build a stronger relationship between the two leaders. Having the space for public praise made this possible.

Impact Hours are accumulating debt: Every week we have more and more impact hours (~300) as there are more and more people contributing. With this trend, we are going to end up with a lot of impact hour debt, so much so that half of the money raised could go to impact hours, and that's too high. That also means that our minimum raise has to be higher.

Round	Total Hours	Actual / Predicted	End Date	Total IH	Min Goal @ 15 DAI/IH & 15% Tribute	Min Goal @ 10 IH/hr & 15% Tribute	Min Goal @ 10 IH/hr & 20% Tribute	Change in Impact hours from previous round	Average Change	74.526089
0 (Historic)	408.06	Actual	Fri, Sep 11	408.06	$40,806.00	$27,204.00	$20,403.00			
1	57.408	Actual	Fri, Sep 25	465.468	$46,546.80	$31,031.20	$23,273.40			
2	159.39	Actual	Fri, Oct 9	624.858	$62,485.80	$41,657.20	$31,242.90	101.982		
3	273.315	Actual	Fri, Oct 23	898.173	$89,817.30	$59,878.20	$44,908.65	113.925		
4	273.29	Actual	Fri, Nov 6	1171.463	$117,146.30	$78,097.53	$58,573.15	-0.025		
5	404.56	Actual	Fri, Nov 20	1576.023	$157,602.30	$105,068.20	$78,801.15	131.27		
6	513.679	Actual	Fri, Dec 4	2089.702	$208,970.20	$139,313.47	$104,485.10	109.119		
7	504.5645395	Actual	Fri, Dec 18	2594.266539	$259,426.65	$172,951.10	$129,713.33	-9.114460526		
8	269.1187605	Actual	Fri, Jan 1	2863.3853	$286,338.53	$190,892.35	$143,169.26	-235.445779		
9	497.4257658	Actual	Fri, Jan 15	3360.811066	$336,081.11	$224,054.07	$168,040.55	228.3070053		
10	542.961	Actual	Fri, Jan 29	3903.772066	$390,377.21	$260,251.47	$195,188.60	45.53523421		
11	473.6485088	Actual	Fri, Feb 12	4377.420575	$437,742.06	$291,828.04	$218,871.03	-69.31249122		
12	548.1745987	Predicted	Fri, Feb 26	4925.595173	$492,559.52	$328,373.01	$246,279.76	74.52608991		
13	622.7006886	Predicted	Fri, Mar 12	5548.295862	$554,829.59	$369,886.39	$277,414.79	74.52608991		
14	697.2267785	Predicted	Fri, Mar 26	6245.52264	$624,552.26	$416,368.18	$312,276.13	74.52608991		
15	771.7528684	Predicted	Fri, Apr 9	7017.275509	$701,727.55	$467,818.37	$350,863.78	74.52608991		

Each new week before the launch increases the total amount of Impact Hours, and thus the debt to be paid from the money raised.

- **Impact hours are debt for our launch:** And we need to see them that way. This also adds pressure to the launch of the hatch because the more the launch is delayed, the more debt is going to grow.

It needs to be clear to people that there are so many urgencies to launch, and impact Hour Debt is an important one. We need to have a talk about money as a community because there is a tendency in people to get weird about money as it tends to drop people into a scarcity mindset.

- **Make it super simple to dish praise and super easy to allow anyone to do it.**

- **Sanity check is super important for Impact Hour quantification:** It is crucial to be flexible on turning the praise amounts to Impact Hours. If people need to get more praise because they made valuable contributions but failed to receive enough praise for them, quantifiers just give more points to the praise they did get. The subjective approach in going over the results and adjusting them where deemed necessary helps get the quantification closer to reality and decreases the chances of abusing the praise system.

- **Encourage everyone to choose their own best deal of IH/Wage Distribution:** While those who are not paid for their work receive 100% Impact hours, those who are paid for their work receive disproportionately less according to the amount they are paid. A lot of needs and risk preferences play here, and it is preferred to let the members choose for themselves their mode compensation in x% Impact Hours and x% payment. Commons Stack full time team members receive 15% of their Impact Hours.

Relevant Documents

Praise Bot Github Repo
https://github.com/commons-stack/CommonsStackBot

Praise Quantification Proposal
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tg5vKNwy1hqOxxlihiXDBr7a1J-9fRGODpGZBIpao2mU/edit?usp=sharing

Dishing Praise Culture in the TE Commons
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-EcsTmgDP7CehSzZM-WvdAQ8as-EKL-Kl9wPKM5t9ln4/edit?usp=sharing

Rewarding Praise Quantifiers Proposal
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1D-VIdX-lWFsffiyq04IaktJw7baeUxDBItPC3iIsXux0/edit?usp=sharing

Acknowledging & Rewarding Contributions to the TE Commons
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1P_W9u5Tk1xTRfP2_c3k7iN4whmb6JGP_LwRou_ZqN4E/edit?usp=sharing

Praise Quantification Update and Proposals
https://forum.tecommons.org/t/praise-quantification-up-date-and-proposals/144

Impact Hour Rewards - Deep Dive
https://forum.tecommons.org/t/impact-hour-re-wards-deep-dive/90

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