As we work together to build sustainable, quantifiably successful grant programs, our team at ThankArbitrum thought it would be helpful to host Planning Grants Workshops to provide insights on best practices in order to help the Arbitrum DAO distribute grant funding for scalable, impactful growth.

Our invite-only participants have demonstrated great interest in managing their own grant programs, in areas of their expertise, through our application process and our goal is to not only empower their mission, but to also help facilitate the intricacies within the grant funding process.

For our introductory Planning Grants Workshop, we covered various topics to kick off our thought process behind planning grant programs:

Planning Grant Workshop Overview section was to go over the high-level goals and details that come with it

- Rewarding participants for further refining their grant program proposals, claimable at end of ThankARB Season 10

- Attending our Workshops to assure alignment with ThankARB & Arbitrum DAO

- Not guaranteed for future funding - ThankARB is selecting 10 to 15 programs to fund

We went over our Timeline to give grant program managers an idea of how long we expect these programs to run.

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Aligning with Arbitrum DAO Strategic Goals to make sure our objectives help their objectives

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We also focused on Refining Their Allocation Mechanism to get them closer to a thoughtful, well articulated plan of execution

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- In this section, we focused on refining the specificity of allocation mechanism and/or methodology by asking grant program managers to provide us with additional details on these mechanisms/methodology and getting more granular on the logistics behind it.

- Our goal was to get grant program managers closer to the finish line for their allocation mechanisms.

We highlighted the importance in creating a Marketing Plan by asking intentional questions to better understand how their audience will be reached.

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For our second Planning Grants Workshop, we got more specific as we collectively made progress in refining the initial proposals and continued to answer important questions that our grant program managers had that would help set them up for success.

We started with a more detailed ThankArbitrum Timeline

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After reviewing the Timeline, we then moved to providing examples of strong, identifiable metrics, milestones, and outcomes. We firmly believe in quantifiable, measurable targets that help define the impact of each program after completion

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Another key piece that we highlighted was the need for a detailed execution plan that included the following:

- List of milestones that must be reached for the program to succeed

- Dates that it should be achieved by

- Specific milestone deliverables

- Target metrics/Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Although we're asking for a lot of detail within a relatively short time frame, we expect our grant program managers to do their absolute best to stay accountable to their targets - their successes guide us on the programs that we continue to scale with additional funding at future dates. By taking the time to articulate their goals and achieving them on a regular basis, it shows us their capabilities as high-impact grant program managers.

Of course, setting a detailed budget is crucial so we took a deep dive into what that looks like and highlighted our breakdown recommendations:

- Intended grant distribution
- Amount distributed to grant recipients

- We firmly believe that this should be the majority of their budget

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- Development costs (one-time costs used to build the program, e.g. coding, process development, etc)

- Applicants requesting non-trivial developments may need to consider applying for separate funding through a different program.

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- Administrative expenses

- Most applicants see this as a percentage (%) cost, but we recommend viewing this as an hourly breakdown that factor in skill & knowledge requirements. This is important to avoid eating into unnecessary budget allocations.

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- Program budget MUST be denominated in $ARB, not $USD. Our grants are funded in $ARB so we emphasize the need to plan accordingly

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For our last topic, we focused on scalability. It's important for our grant program managers to demonstrate scalability with their program. If they received 10x the funding, would they be able to achieve 10x the results or more? We ask our grant program managers to think about the scalability of their programs and consider the potential impact they could make for the Arbitrum DAO as the ecosystem continues to grow.

We are looking to make drastic improvements within the DAO ecosystem, and in order to do so we intend to focus on winners by scaling their programs as much as they can.

All in all, we're extremely grateful for the participation in these meetings as it helps us not only understand the thoughts behind these amazing grant program ideas but to also reflect on potential hurdles and avenues of improvement. The Arbitrum DAO has an endless pool of exceptional talent and we have full intention to harness that talent for the betterment of Arbitrum.

We can't wait to review the refined proposals, select our grantees, and roll out these grant programs to help fund & scale our Arbitrum ecosystem.

Onward & upward.