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From Academy to Core

This is a guest post from Valory Software Engineer Ardian.

Joining the Autonolas Academy

In September of 2021, I heard about a new stack being built by the Valory team. When I investigated further, I learned that the stack would allow developers to build using multi-agent systems. At the time, I didn't know a lot about multi-agent systems, but it didn't take long for me to realize that this was something completely new that could address many of the core problems that web3 faces.

This got me pretty excited, and I wanted to learn more. When I learned about the Autonolas Academy program, I decided to apply. I was accepted, and the Academy gave me an amazing opportunity to learn the stack, and get mentoring directly from the team developing it.

My Experience in the Academy

I was a part of the very first Academy cohort. The Academy was a masterclass on the Valory stack specifically, and web3 in general. I already had some web3 experience before joining the Academy, but I learned a lot of new information about Ethereum and dApps from the Academy mentors.

Once the other Academy participants and I were introduced to the stack, we collectively decided that we would build one of the very first Autonolas-based services, and so the mighty El Collectooorr was born.

With the help of the Academy mentors, we were able to build the first version of El Collectooorr. The first version monitored the Artblocks NFT platform for new drops, and was designed to purchase NFTs that it deemed valuable.

As a developer, it was a great experience, I got to apply the cool stuff that I had learned about the Valory stack directly, and I received an in depth introduction to how NFTs work.

El Collectooorr Outside of the Academy

When the first Academy cohort ended in January of 2022 I was still enjoying my time building El Collectooorr, so I decided to continue working on it. After brainstorming some ideas with the Autonolas team, we decided that what El Collectooorr was missing was a way for people to contribute to it. We decided that the best way to go forward would be with the addition of Fractional Vaults. This really consolidated the use case for El Collectooorr, as by using Fractional Vaults, people could fund El Collectooorr, and get fractional shares of the NFTs it purchased. After a few weekends and evenings of work, El Collectooorr was (and still is!) live.

Other Opportunities

The Valory stack allows developers to build with Python, but I really wanted to see how far I can take it using another language. I was playing around with Rust at the time, and since Rust is quite popular among web3 developers, I felt it would be a great experience to try and see if we could build something parallel to the Python version in Rust. The Autonolas team really supported this idea, and even offered me a grant to work on it. I got to work and was able to build a simple buyer/seller demo for it.

Joining Valory

After working with the Valory stack for a while I was given the opportunity to join Valory. On the 1st of September I joined Valory full-time, and now I'm helping the team build the stack that I loved working with.

Overall, my experience with the Academy program was quite positive–I was able to learn the Valory stack and an entirely new way of working in web3, bring a functional product to life, take my interests and apply them to a personal project and eventually, turn it all into a new full time position.

I would encourage other developers interested in taking their web3 skills to the next level to check out the Academy for themselves. You can start learning at your own pace today, and apply for an upcoming cohort every 60 days. Check out the program here and join the Autonolas Discord for support or to share your progress–see you there!