📜 Scroll Governance ✕ ● DEEP WORK
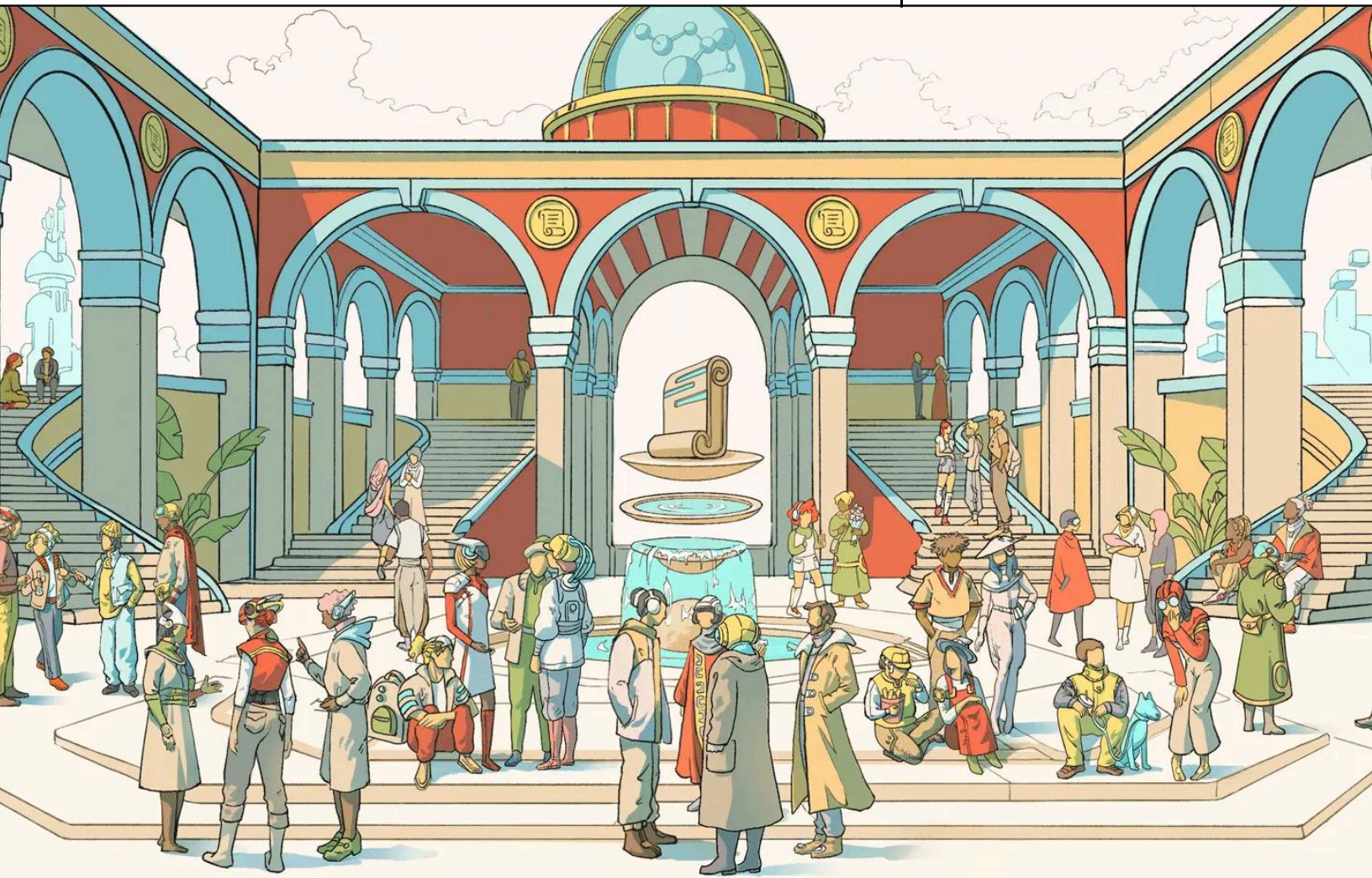
Co-Creation Cycle Handbook

By Sarah Smith and Eugene Leventhal | February 2025

Introduction

This handbook outlines the first Co-Creation Cycle (CCC#1) of Scroll DAO, detailing its objectives, execution, outcomes, and lessons learned. It serves two primary purposes:
- To ensure transparency around the first CCC process for Scroll DAO—both to inform the DAO and to support future iterations.
- To provide a replicable model for other DAOs seeking to start their DAO journey with participatory co-design.

This handbook is the result of a collaboration between the Scroll Governance team and Deep Work.

Motivations

The ultimate intention behind the Co-Creation Cycle was to start the DAO in a way that was rooted in participatory co-design. We think one of the biggest things missing from a lot of DAOs is taking the time to maximally align the stakeholders and co-create the initial priorities for the DAO. We thought that the result of doing so would be an aligned community that had clear proposals they were excited to work on. This was an attempt at trying something different.

As outlined below, we initially thought the output was going to be finished proposals. We learned that's not realistic the way we're doing it, but the CCC did serve as a great mechanism to generate proposal ideas to be worked on in the months following it. Despite the adjustment, we saw this CCC as a valuable first step in developing a system that moves co-created proposals from ideation to completion with strong execution.

This has resulted in us thinking about 6 month seasons that we want to trial. A one month Co-Creation Cycle will be followed by 5 months of focused activities to ensure that the ideas emerging from the CCC are acted upon. As such, the CCC's will be a core part of the deliberative processes to come in Scroll Governance.

We were pleasantly surprised by the welcome reception and participation throughout CCC1. It has helped inform and inspire many ideas and we look forward to this foundational year for governance at Scroll.

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Co-Creation Cycle 1: Goals and Focus Areas

The inaugural Co-Creation Cycle was launched on October 28, 2024, to engage the community in shaping Scroll DAO's future. It created opportunities for members to hear from long-standing contributors, align on a shared vision for the coming months, and co-design proposals for initial steps toward further decentralization.

The CCC's iterative framework is designed to establish feedback loops that test and refine proposals while improving the co-creation process. The goal is to encourage ongoing learning and adaptation as Scroll DAO evolves. By focusing on accessibility, inclusivity, and collaboration, it's intended to capture the diverse perspectives of the community while also achieving tangible outcomes.

Facilitated in partnership with Deep Work, a design consultancy, the cycle combined workshops, discussions, and collaborative proposal design to drive a community-led direction in three key areas:

- **Ecosystem Growth**: Driving innovation and scalability across protocols and projects.
- **Global Community**: Empowering local communities while fostering cohesion across regions.
- **Governance Iterations**: Testing and refining approaches to decision-making and coordination.

A fourth area of focus "**Further Explorations**: Creating space for the community to propose new priorities or address underexplored areas within the DAO's vision," was also open for discussion during this initial cycle. While it was not a primary focus, it is expected to play a more prominent role in future cycles.

The primary aim for the first CCC was to deliver at least five fully-formed proposals that were ready for a community vote to address the key areas listed above while aligning with Scroll's broader vision.

The next CCC will mark the beginning of a structured season:
- **Month 1:** Focused on generating and refining new ideas.
- **Months 2-6:** Dedicated to implementing the selected ideas.

The Scroll governance team plans to complete **two full seasons in 2025**:
- **CCC#1:** December 2024 – May 2025
- **CCC#2:** June 2025 – November 2025

Learn more about the CCC's goals here and about the initial plan for the CCC here.
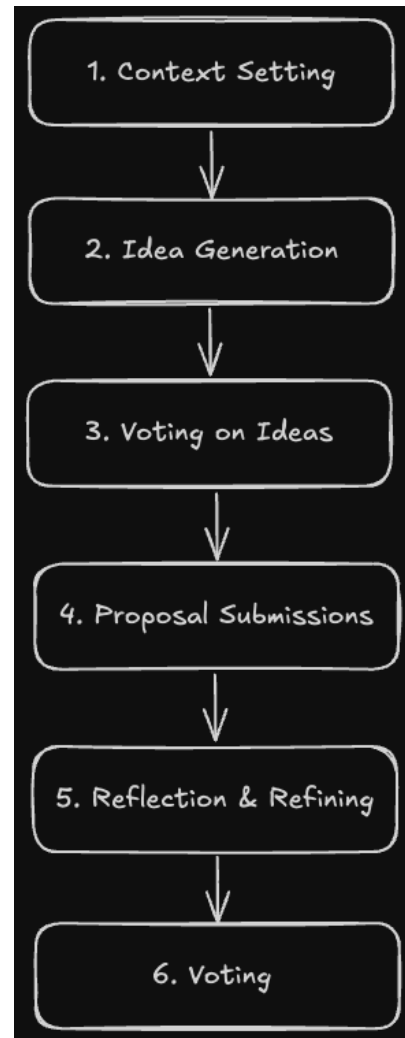
Execution

The first CCC unfolded through a structured seven-week process, with each phase building on the last. It included a combination of:

- **Workshops**: Interactive sessions to generate and refine ideas collaboratively.
- **Community calls**: Live discussions to align proposal efforts and share progress.
- **Asynchronous communication**:
    - Workshops and community calls were [recorded](). These recordings, along with key insights, were shared in forum posts for continued discussion.
    - Additional tools like Miro, Telegram, and Pol.is voting enabled participation from those unable to attend live sessions.

Calls were repeated and spaced out into three sessions that accommodated different time zones to increase inclusivity.

The rough overview of the planned schedule is on the right, with a week being added between Idea Generation and Voting on Ideas due to Devcon.

1. Context Setting

2. Idea Generation

3. Voting on Ideas

4. Proposal Submissions

5. Reflection & Refining

6. Voting

Week 1: Kickoff and Context-Setting

The process began with a kickoff call and a context-setting session, where Scroll's history, goals, and challenges were outlined. These sessions provided participants with the background needed to contribute meaningfully and aligned expectations for the first Co-Creation Cycle's objectives.

Point(s) of Improvement

- **Aligning on existing strategies:** In retrospect, we should have spent more time outlining the existing strategies at Scroll to help the delegates and DAO members be aware of all relevant activities.

*The full summary of the **Kickoff Call** can be found [here]() and the **Context Setting Session** [here]().*

Week 2: Idea Generation

In the second week, three 90-minute workshops were held to generate ideas for potential proposal avenues in each of the three focus areas: Ecosystem Growth, Global Community, and Governance Iterations. To promote balanced engagement, the focus areas were rotated across sessions, ensuring each was given the chance to appear first, middle, and last in the sequence.

- **During the sessions:**
    - At the beginning of the call a [DeForm](#) was provided with the hopes of generating ideas ahead of time, allowing for anonymous contributions, and increasing transparency.
    - A [Miro board](#) was used, with a designated frame for each area. Instructions were listed on the side, with focus questions to keep the explorations targeted.
    - 20 minutes was designated for idea generation within each focus area.
    - 10 minutes was designated for voting on the ideas to identify potential proposal formations.
- **After the sessions:** [contributions were also accepted asynchronously](#) through the Miro board, allowing for broad participation regardless of scheduling conflicts.

Insights

- **Emergent needs:** Each call was vastly different in terms of engagement levels and preferences. Some groups preferred open discussion, while others preferred silent writing time. A critical element of the process was adjusting to meet the needs of the current participants.
- **Asynchronous contribution:** Contributions to the board were minimal after the call. However, discussion continued in the Telegram group.

Point(s) of Improvement

- **Experimenting with more/less structure:** Maintaining a balance between providing some initial direction versus constraining the field of potential actions is always a challenge when doing more open-ended co-design. It would be interesting to see the different outcomes that will emerge from more or less structured versions.
- **DeForm:** Though good in theory, it took too much time and relatively few people filled it out. This may have been improved if the form was shared ahead of the call.

The full summary of these sessions can be found [here](#).

Week 3: Review and DevCon Insights

To accommodate DevCon, we took a one-week break. Upon returning, we organized three hour-long calls to revisit and refine ideas from earlier brainstorming sessions. These calls also aimed to generate new ideas and share key takeaways from DevCon regarding the mission and focus of the Scroll DAO Foundation.

Insights

- **Engagement levels**: The week after DevCon was very low in engagement.
- **Redundancies:** Taking the break resulted in a review-heavy week, delaying progress on proposal development.

Point(s) of Improvement

- **Optimizing timelines:** It may have been better to condense the overall timelines to avoid overlapping with Devcon. This particular portion overlapped with the conference. We hoped that extending it would make it easier to contribute, but we just lost steam and no one contributed during that time.

Week 4: Prioritization

The ideas generated during the workshops were fed into Pol.is to allow for sentiment generation. Participants could express agreement, disagreement, or abstain on individual ideas. By the end of this phase, the community had identified the most promising concepts to develop into detailed proposals.

This aided further discussion that enabled the prioritization of ideas and more targeted and granular idea generation during 3 additional 90-minute sessions. For these sessions, each workshop focused on a different area:

- **Workshop 1:** Ecosystem Growth
- **Workshop 2:** Governance Iterations
- **Workshop 3:** Global Community

Based on these discussions, 11 potential proposals were started. To aid their development, a [proposal template](#) was created and shared on the forum and key ideas from the initial brainstorming sessions were also organized into individual proposal documents within a dedicated proposal library.

Insights

- **Concept Overlap:** There was significant overlap between the focus areas which made it necessary to allow a smooth transition between them - allowing for ideas from other areas to arise without allowing it to derail the present focus.
- **Focus Questions:** Through the process it became clear that the focus questions needed to be expanded to include what the aim was *not* to help narrow the focus (eg. for Global Community the aim was primarily idea generation for how to best support a global community, "rather than" exploring specific regions to prioritize).

Point(s) of Improvement

- **Sentiment identification:** We had some technical issues with Pol.is, namely being able to use twitter verification. That would have made it easier to know who to follow up with about which points. Especially given the clustering of similar and different thinkers, it would have been possible to suggest specific committees based on the results.
- **Framework refinement:** As we do more proposal co-creation, the Foundation will need to develop a more structured framework to guide the process. Such as:
  - **Proposal roles:** It would be better to outline at least a few types of roles relating to each proposal and to have people commit to those. For example, seeking 2-3 proposal drafting leads would have helped with accountability in making sure next steps were happening.
  - **Proposal pre-sketching:** Conversely, the Foundation governance team could have played a more active role sketching out some of the first proposals to get feedback from delegates.

The full summary of these sessions can be found [here](#).

Week 5: Proposal Co-Design and Emergent Alignment

The original intention for Week 5 was to hold 3 co-design workshops to push proposals over the finish line, readying them for a vote. However, emergent needs required a new direction.

At the start of the week, a 90-minute session was held to review and refine the 11 proposals initiated in Week 4. Although other proposals were discussed, the session naturally gravitated toward advancing the approach to strategic deliberation.

It became clear that participants needed a solid understanding of deliberative processes to assess whether they supported the proposed direction. To help with this, an educational session was organized to walk participants through the fundamentals of deliberative processes, including how they function, their advantages, and their limitations.

To wrap things up, an additional call was held to review the educational session and provide space for any objections to be raised and discussed. While there were valuable concerns raised, these were adequately addressed and there was strong support for exploring deliberative processes to help define and refine Scroll DAO's strategy, with a particular emphasis on planning for an initial deliberative process experiment to be conducted in January. However, due to scheduling challenges and a general interest in working on proposals, the governance team decided to hold off on further strategic deliberation. Instead, the focus shifted towards creating focused workstreams to ensure that each of the proposals that emerged from CCC#1 was advanced.

Point(s) of Improvement

- **Refine the framing of CCCs:** One thing that became clear through the process was that it might be more effective to look at a CCC as a time of idea generation and/or validation.
  - **Sourcing community priorities:** Instead of the outputs being ready proposals, the goal is to source the things that are most top of mind in the community.
  - **Governance seasons:** CCC's can be part of governance seasons, where there is a one month CCC followed by 5 months of actioning the various ideas that emerge.
- **More targeted sessions:** Seeing how the proposal co-design process is going beyond the first CCC, it is better to get focused calls on specific ideas rather than open ended ones at this stage.

A summary of the Deliberative Processes Call can be found here.

Week 6: Strategizing for the New Direction

Prioritizing strategic deliberation had a ripple effect on the other proposals since Scroll DAO's strategy is key to decision-making across its three focus areas: Ecosystem Growth, Global Community, and Governance Iterations.

To address this, a call was held to discuss how focusing on strategic deliberation might affect the other proposals. During the discussion, participants emphasized the importance of building a strong connection between the DAO's initiatives and the Labs objectives to ensure smooth and effective collaboration.

In response to these concerns, plans were put in place to organize a strategic alignment call with the Labs team.

Point(s) of Improvement

- **Increased context setting:** It is important to start a CCC with as much context setting on strategy and mission/vision as possible. This helped with alignment and clarity of goals.

- **Foundation's role in execution:** This approach also ends up having the Foundation play a much more direct role and requires a lot of follow up and attention to both get useful outputs during the CCC and to make sure these things actually happen.

Week 7: Strategic Alignment

To enable effective strategic deliberation, the final week centered on getting updates from the Labs Foundation (specifically the Growth and DevRel teams) regarding their strategic objectives. It was emphasized that, rather than being tied to these objectives, the DAO can explore opportunities to create complementary programs or act as a testing ground for new activations, regions, or verticals.

To end these calls, time was allotted to discuss other proposals of interest and to set expectations regarding next steps.

Point(s) of Improvement

- **Closing recap and transition:** Once the CCC structure is shortened and oriented towards idea generation and development (not developing full proposals), then the last call of the CCC should be part recap and part celebration. With the wrapping of a CCC, the governance season transitions from a place of idea generation to execution. This can become part of developing a clear culture and set of rituals with the DAO.
- **Openness to reorientation:** We went into this week thinking that we would need more strategic alignment before working on proposals. However, in the weeks that have gone by since, it seems as though enough was gleaned and so the energy shifted towards more accountability and operational activity.

The summary of these sessions can be found here.

Post-Cycle Processes

Retrospective Workshop

We conducted a one-hour retrospective session, following a standard format:

- **The Good:** Identified what went well to build on strengths.
- **The Bad:** Discussed challenges or areas for improvement.
- **Potential Solutions:** Brainstormed actionable ideas to address the identified issues.

The session was facilitated by Deep Work and used a Miro board where the facilitator captured ideas. The insights from this session were used to inform the Points of Improvement sections above.

Planning for CCC2

As alluded to above, the governance team at Scroll Foundation is considering having 2 seasons a year, where each season consists of a 4 week Co-Creation Cycle to deliberate and generate new ideas, followed by 5 months of finalizing and actualizing the ideas that pass through the governance process.

CCC2 is tentatively scheduled for June 2025, though concrete plans have not been finalized. The Foundation governance team is exploring the possibility of structured deliberative exercises with third parties.

The general focus of CCC2 will be a mix of looking back and planning ahead, shooting to generate ideas that will serve as the backbone of activities for the DAO from July 2025 through June 2026.

Handbook Creation

The handbook was created by bringing together all documentation created throughout the Co-Creation Cycle. The third-party facilitator started with a draft that covered the cycle's purpose and original aims, the session formats and outcomes, and the feedback from the retrospective. The Foundation then reviewed and refined it, adding a section on the process they used for structuring the cycle and outlining the plan for the next.

Summary of Outcomes

Proposals

As explained above, there was an initial interest in pursuing more deliberation focused on the strategy of the DAO. However, as the community reconvened in January, it became apparent that there was more

interest in increasing the structure and focus on getting proposals ready to vote as opposed to more strategic refinement.

As a result, some of the outcomes emerging included:

- The user research proposal has been published and was set to a vote during the January voting cycle.
- Approximately three additional proposals (local nodes, delegate training, and an initial grant program) continued development in January.
    - Multiple groups formed around the relevant proposal, including treasury management; local nodes in Brazil, in Kenya, and in Malaysia; delegate training; and a first grant program.
- The remaining proposals will be advanced until the next CCC, tentatively scheduled for June 2025.

Timeline and Structure

The initial deadline for proposals was Sunday, December 1, 2024, with the week of December 2nd dedicated to reflection and refining. Voting was intended to take place during the week of December 8th, with results and next steps outlined. From the week of December 15th onward, the focus was intended to shift to regular bi-weekly meetings and to determine the governance calendar through January 2025, ideally extending through Q1.

However, the timeline shifted to address emergent needs. A week was skipped to accommodate DevCon, and the growing interest in strategic deliberation led to adjustments in the initially planned call structure. This resulted in the final timeline concluding without a vote and the creation of the governance calendar for 2025 being pushed to after the holidays. Though this was unexpected, we are thrilled to see such strong interest in taking a deliberative approach, fostering deeper collaboration and ensuring that the final outcomes are aligned with the community's long-term vision.

Assessment of Outcomes

The Co-Creation Cycle was originally designed to deliver at least five fully developed proposals for a community vote by the end of the process, with success measured against the following criteria (as outlined [here](#)):

- **Proposal Excitement**: At least one proposal in each focus area generated enthusiasm among the DAO at large, delegates, and the Foundation team, demonstrated through social ratification or treasury allocation.
- **Proposal Fit**: Addressing key considerations within each of the key focus areas
    - Growth: Ideally proposing strategies for a grant program, "program of programs," or tooling and data infrastructure.

- ○ Community: Ideally ideas for community programs or a "community of communities" strategy.
    - ○ GovIt: Ideally the production of key governance questions to address or experiments to improve processes.
- **Participation**: Number of attendees at relevant calls to assess involvement.
- **Engagement:** Level of engagement, primarily through the calls and forum activity but also across other participation channels.

While these metrics are still relevant, it became evident through the process that adjustments were needed to accommodate for the opportunity the cycle presented. Through this lens, we considered the measures above:

1. **Strategic Deliberation:** Though influencing the trajectory of other proposals, this emergent direction generated _significant excitement_ and demonstrated _excellent proposal fit,_ aligning closely with the DAO's long-term goals. This will be integrated into CCC#2.
2. **User Research Proposal:** Sent to a vote in January, it too has generated _significant excitement_ and exhibits _excellent proposal fit_.
3. **Participation and Engagement Levels:** _Participation in calls and engagement in Telegram channels were consistently strong throughout the cycle_. However, _forum engagement varied_: while discussions about call recaps were limited (despite being frequently reviewed), the forum saw high activity around the first proposal and conversations about delegate percentages. This highlights a disparity in engagement depending on the topic and platform.
4. **Feedback:** The feedback survey received _overwhelmingly positive responses,_ reflecting general satisfaction with the process.

With this in mind, we consider the initial Co-Creation Cycle a success while recognizing key opportunities for refinement to enhance future iterations.

Key Takeaways for Improving Future Cycles

Based on the insights outlined above, we identified several key takeaways. While these findings are specific to Scroll DAO's ecosystem, they may offer valuable considerations for other ecosystems as well.

Early Strategic Alignment

- **Context:** Being the first cycle, there were a lot of unknowns, which contributed to some challenges in moving proposals forward. The delay in introducing Labs' strategic goals extended the period of uncertainty. Having an earlier alignment session with Labs during the context-setting phase could have helped us clarify objectives.
- **Takeaway:** In future cycles, the Foundation will have more clarity and will provide context around strategy during the initial context-setting phase.

Recognizing Realistic Goals

- **Context:** Given all of the unknowns, it was not straightforward to accurately predict realistic desired outcomes. Initially, we thought it would be feasible to generate multiple proposals - to go from an initial idea to refining it to voting on it within 6 weeks. At the same time, this existed in tension with the desire to have proposals be co-designed by multiple parties (as opposed to having a single group draft a proposal and likely execute the work).
- **Takeaway:** It is much more feasible to focus on generating ideas, figuring out who wants to work on refining it, and getting an initial sketch of requirements for the ideas. That process, combined with some clear role definitions, can help ideas get co-designed into proposals quicker.

Early Proposal Formation

- **Context:** One general challenge for DAOs is how to get initial proposals that are aligned with the existing activities across stakeholders. In the first iteration of the CCC, the thought was to generate multiple proposals. Especially if keeping to principles of co-design, there is an open question on who stewards the co-design process.
- **Takeaways:**
    - It seems likely that for DAOs adhering to progressive decentralization, the Foundation needs to play an active role in not just facilitating interactions but also actively partaking in the proposal development.
    - This should be taken over by relevant committees or working groups in the future, potentially including a deliberation committee that helps with strategy definition and refinement as well as project managing (if not running) the deliberative exercise themselves.

Scheduling Considerations

- **Context:** DevCon and the holidays created breaks that lost momentum and required a time to recap the outcomes from the idea generation phase. Additionally, poorly timed sessions (e.g., night calls) saw minimal engagement, as they were neither late enough for Asian time zones nor early enough for others in the ecosystem.
- **Takeaways:**
    - Consider factors that might impact delegate engagement.
    - Avoid scheduling cycles to overlap with conferences or holidays, or plan for the conference to coincide with a natural break or pause in the cycle.
    - Find someone in a timezone who can more effectively accommodate the needs of later time zones, and until then night calls should be minimized.

Balancing Depth and Efficiency

- **Context:** The cycle structure should be optimized for efficiency and engagement. A longer cycle with more clarity or a shorter cycle with less fatigue might work better for participants.

- **Takeaways:**
  - Examine if there are too many calls per week, with consideration that at least two calls across different time zones are needed.
  - Explore shorter cycles (e.g., 4 weeks) for the standard CCC process to strike the right balance between thoroughness and efficiency, reserving longer cycles for rare, in-depth discussions when required.
  - Experiment with structuring the idea generation around one focus area per session, rather than cycling through all categories in 1 workshop to see if it has a positive or negative impact on fatigue and depth.

Flexible Third-Party Collaboration

- **Context:** While the original plan anticipated more facilitated sessions, the need to address emergent priorities led to fewer facilitated sessions but a higher volume of reports. This shift was unexpected, but it stayed within budget and ensured the service provided matched the value of what was paid. It also gave us insights into the reporting needs for future cycles.
- **Takeaways:**
  - Maintain flexibility to adapt collaboration scope based on emergent needs.
  - Provide a report to recap each week's sessions and outcomes.
  - Build flexibility into the budget to accommodate changes in scope, ensuring all parties' expectations are met regardless of adjustments.

Timing of Survey Tools

- **Context:** Sharing forms like DeForm late and with complex structures may have limited participation. Lessening the number of questions and providing adequate time for responses could boost engagement. Additionally, in the feedback survey, the inclusion of questions targeting unexpected outcomes from the cycle can provide valuable information (eg. high/low engagement in unexpected areas).
- **Takeaway:**
  - Share survey tools well in advance, ensuring they are concise and easy to complete, to maximize participation.
  - Adjust feedback surveys to ask about any unexpected behavior (eg. asking if people attended more than one of the same call, if they saw a benefit to it, and why)

Framing of Focus-Question

- **Context:** Throughout the process, it became evident that the focus questions needed to be expanded to clarify what was not within scope. This helped narrow the focus.
- **Takeaway:** When there may be confusion, develop focus questions that clearly define exclusions in addition to objectives (eg. *the aim is to generate ideas about x, "rather than" y*).

Expectations for Engagement

- **Context:** There seem to have been mis-aligned expectations for what delegates would want to talk about on forum in comparison to other platforms like telegram. Engagement was high in the forum for the first proposal and discussions around delegate matters, but low on the posts about the outcomes of the CCC calls. However, discussions about the calls continued in the delegate telegram group.
- **Takeaways:**
    - Adjust engagement expectations for each platform accordingly to create more accurate success metrics.
    - Keep tabs on technologies that can meaningfully integrate communications between different platforms.

Conclusion

The first Co-Creation Cycle of Scroll DAO was an important step toward building a more collaborative and transparent governance process. While the cycle took some unexpected turns, it successfully brought the community together, advanced meaningful proposals, and aligned with Scroll DAO's vision for decentralization.

This handbook is the first in a series aimed at helping the DAO refine and improve the Co-Creation process over time. By learning from these early experiences, Scroll DAO will continue its focus on inclusivity, adaptability, and innovation, paving the way for a more engaged and connected community.