

STATEMENT BY THE COMPETITION INICIATOR

The Bitcoin Phenomenon – technology, open source, decentralisation, mathematics, cryptography, scarcity, openness, resilience, voluntary participation, verification instead of reliance on trust, and, above all, individual financial sovereignty and freedom – in other words, Satoshi's Gift to Humanity.

The aim of the competition is to obtain an original work of art that reflects the Bitcoin phenomenon, its origins, conceptual foundations, and contribution to society. The objective is not to create a mere symbol, logo, or literal illustration of Bitcoin, nor to depict its enigmatic creator, but to find a powerful and timeless artistic expression of the ideas that Bitcoin and its creator introduced – free and open money, decentralisation, independence from central authority, predetermined rules, and the ability to verify rather than having to trust.

Bitcoin represents a system that has no owner, headquarters, or governing authority, and whose rules apply equally to everyone. It is based on mathematics, cryptography, and publicly verifiable rules rather than decisions by a state, bank, or corporation. None of these institutions can unilaterally control it, arbitrarily change its fundamental rules, or decide who may use it. In this sense, Bitcoin can be understood as a neutral technology and at the same time as an extraordinary gift that Satoshi Nakamoto gave to the world without retaining ownership or control: an open system of non-state money intended to expand the scope for individual financial sovereignty and freedom. Its core principles are openness, voluntary participation, resilience, transparency of the rules, and limited supply. More broadly, Bitcoin raises questions about individual freedom, the relationship between trust and verification, the role of institutions, and the possibility of building systems that can operate without a central administrator. A proposal may embody these values directly, symbolically, metaphorically, or through the very process by which the artwork is created, operates, or is shared.

Inspiration may also come from the figure or myth of Satoshi Nakamoto – the anonymous creator who built a system capable of functioning without its author and then deliberately stepped away from it. Thus, Satoshi need not be treated as a specific person to be depicted, but as a symbol of an idea that transcends the individual. Likewise, the artwork may engage with the open-source principle on which Bitcoin was built: the idea that a valuable idea can be open, shared, further developed, and accessible to anyone in the world. The artist's task is not simply to depict or explain Bitcoin or Satoshi, but to find a way of translating their essence and ethos into an artistic language capable of speaking even to someone who has never encountered Bitcoin before.

Open source as part of Satoshi's legacy – Bitcoin was not presented to the world as a closed product that its author retained under his control. Satoshi Nakamoto released the first Bitcoin software as open-source code under a free licence, allowing anyone to study, verify, modify, and further develop it. In doing so, he created not only a technology but also a mode of collaboration: no one needs to place blind trust in the author because both the rules and the code can be publicly inspected. Satoshi gradually withdrew into the background, yet Bitcoin continued to evolve through people around the world collaborating on its development without a central owner or governing authority.

This principle remains alive in Bitcoin today. Bitcoin Core, the most widely used software implementation of the Bitcoin protocol, continues to be developed publicly as open-source software. Proposals for changes and Bitcoin standards – known as BIPs, Bitcoin Improvement Proposals – are likewise developed openly, discussed in public, and must be published under a free licence. Open source is therefore not merely a technical detail. It is part of Bitcoin culture: the ability to verify, share, build on the work of others, and create something that no single person owns and that anyone can continue to develop.

The artwork is intended to reflect the same principle. The winning proposal should not become a closed artefact whose future remains dependent solely on a single artist or commissioning body. It should be an open reflection on Bitcoin that can, on the basis of published documentation, be recreated, reinterpreted, and shared in other locations around the world by any production or fabrication team. The open-source licence is therefore not an additional administrative requirement, but part of the project's very concept – an attempt to carry Satoshi's principle of openness from the digital realm into the world of art.

The requirement that the winning work be made available under an open licence is rooted in the same principles and practices on which Bitcoin has stood from the outset: enabling the work to be freely studied, shared, used, modified, and further developed. It is therefore not merely a technical or legal condition of the competition, but a deliberate continuation of the culture of openness that has allowed Bitcoin to develop without dependence on a single author or central authority. A similar approach can be found in Bitcoin's visual culture: for example, the widely used Bitcoin logo was released into the public domain by its creator. Artists entering the competition may therefore use it, modify it, or transform it freely, just as they may choose not to use it at all. What matters is not any particular symbol, but the principle of openness: that others should be able to build freely on the resulting artwork in the future, just as they can build on open-source code and other elements of the Bitcoin ecosystem.