(cleaned) Participant 41 and TE Study

Lisa Wocken 1:29
wonderful. Wonderful. Great. Yes, so very, very exciting. Also, when we do provide the full dataset we'll be scrubbing for to protect some anonymity and we will be scrubbing any specific names or cases that you may have brought up. So just know that will, you know, allow you to have this be a safe space, psychologically to share what you want to share about the field. Okay, with that being said, we'll jump right into the first couple of questions here. The first one that we really want to do is here a little bit recording in progress. Thank you Natalia. The first question we'll start with is really just hearing a little bit more about your personal journey into the field of token engineering.

Participant 41 2:19
Okay, I was in early stage venture development and startups in web two. Most of my professional life actually I have a background as a designer, and then went into business model verification because the most exciting part to me in developing businesses was always once an idea hits reality, and the human element just human don't behave as expected. And now, I was back then I was in renewable energies and renewable energies, decentralization of energy production with solar panels, etc. This is a topic where ofcourse a lot of intrinsic motivation is involved and there back then I first time saw got in touch with Blockchain people introducing me to the idea of tokens as rewards for value adds. And then of course, my thinking started okay, this is a totally new opportunity to reward value ads in in the internet or beyond marketing and just building platforms. And it could be so much more sophisticated. It can be so much more decentralized tied to whatever flavors we need across the globe, and at the same time, allow for this coordination we need for the big changes and this was my starting point in embarking on crypto. And then I met some people who were early in tokens 2016/17 like $name$, and yeah, he I just started with him to run events on that and then detected that there is actually an we have an idea on what is needed to develop these token systems. Nevertheless, we are very, very early stage and additional there is no university where anyone could learn it. And this then brought me to establishing the $name$ run first courses this was super successful. And that's what I'm doing today. Still

Nathalia Scherer 4:45
Wonderful.

Lisa Wocken 4:46
Great. Thank you. How would you currently define token engineering?

Participant 41 4:53
Token engineering is the design verification and optimization of token based economic systems? That's my that's my elevator pitch. I have to talk a lot about these topics. And it covers Yeah, I would say most of what's what's token engineering entails.

Lisa Wocken 5:14

Wonderful. Would you say there's anything the field of token engineering is solving for that other fields are not addressing?

Participant 41 5:24
Yeah. It combines the technology, the human elements part and the economic part and the data part of these new economic systems and this is something that neither of these individual disciplines can offer. And this combination or trying to maintain this holistic perspective in the design, verification optimization really matters to us and that's what makes token engineering special compared to tokenomics. For example, that focus is driven by the more the finance sector and investment sector or token valuation token distribution, vesting schemes, whatever, how to make it attractive for investors, or, in contrast, crypto economics, which is then more focusing on the individual crypto, economic primitives and the development and research on it. But since this all depends on context, token engineers try to embed the primitives and take different perspectives yes to the VC perspective, but not only and I think there's a final one that makes token engineering special is the responsibility so with our naming ourselves, engineers, we build on the tradition of engineering societies. And that's what I Yeah, keep on talking about is that we have a responsibility in building public infrastructure, and engineering societies have been aware of this responsibility back in the early days of mechanical engineers, building nuclear power plants, aircrafts, rocket ships, and we are equally designing infrastructure that should be accessible and fair and robust for anyone. And that's why we have such responsibility. And that's why we call ourselves engineers.

Lisa Wocken 7:42
Given that you're in this space, particularly not just token engineering, but educating on it. I'm curious if there's anything that you see being like misunderstood or misrepresented about the field that you just wish you could, like, promote more clearly and broadly.

Participant 41 8:03
Absolutely. I mean, if I could dominate the world and shape it, according to what I wish to see, we would have much more clarity on that one, particularly on the responsibility part. However, I'm, personally I'm pragmatic and, of course it would be cool but that's not the reality so many people in parallel are working on it. And I count on what will turn out to be able to tackle the challenges and really solve the challenges and here I see a lot of potential due to our engineering approach to provide much more sustainable designs and also tooling around it. Then, maybe others who put emphasis on Yeah, I don't know. Token engineering is mostly about the right marketing story, the right marketing narrative for my token launch, okay, but sooner or later this project we'll come back and ask for we missed out some demand drivers because after our launch, the the activity died. So that's why I feel so confident about this entire discipline.

Lisa Wocken 9:24
Wonderful, thank you. We're gonna shift gears more toward the day to day I'm curious if you could share more about what a typical week look looks like or process for you as you conduct

your work. What are the tools you use the processes or models that you think of and refer to regularly paint a picture for us?

Participant 41 9:45
Yeah. So as I I wouldn't even say that I'm a practical token engineer because I'm trying to build education for practical token engineers, which is a difference. And that's why my work is mostly related on observing the ecosystem. So what are the main achievements of the various other token engineers token engineering researchers projects when it comes to their token system, new tools, new simulations available, worth talking about and then I see how we can integrate it in our educational program and make it valuable for our students and graduates. So that's

Nathalia Scherer 10:33
my work.

Participant 41 10:36
So it will involve a lot of partnership, conversations programming. See what could be next for us. In terms of courses but also in terms of how we can prove this. The entire field that not necessarily always depends on education only.

Lisa Wocken 11:03
Can you say more about even the tools or platforms that you use in order to administer the education?

Participant 41 11:12
Um, um, just from top of my head because there are plenty. Okay. calendar days, that's gonna be $google calendar$ then $discord$ to sync and communicate with people then also email. Then our communications channel so this is $discord$, $Twitter$, $YouTube$, our newsletter then calls like $zoom$ calls for ya communicate like in this conversation, then all sorts of documentation like $notion$. And recently also tools like $Google colab$ to test out the AI attributes, applications for token engineering to try it out myself and then again, communicate with others on the potential and down to the CMS for our web page. And

Nathalia Scherer 12:17
yeah, I guess that's it. Yeah.

Lisa Wocken 12:21
Wonderful. That's very helpful. And then I know you also mentioned you are observing and collecting insights from token engineers. Are there any things we should be aware of that you see regarding processes platforms? Or tools that you see being broadly adopted across the field?

Participant 41 12:38
I think an observation I am really important one is not that there's one tool that seems to be the tool for everyone. It's rather that the problem is that there are so many tools, or I mean, variants

and flavors of tools. So certainly the big tools are $machinations$ from the games industry. Then $Cad cad$ and $rad cad$ for let's say more advanced token engineering stuff, and also, to some extent smart contracts that are integrated in simulations. But the this these are not many, the problem is that many token engineers are looking for making our frameworks they develop themselves because it's they are selling your business so they are developed their own tools to support their business. But these tools, obviously if it's for a consulting purpose, it's closed source. Its proprietary. Tools. And we see all kinds of calculators, spreadsheet tools, in the ecosystem with no way to verify the quality of these tools, no way for others to build on it. Or very, to a very limited extent. And this is the actual trouble that it's so high the work currently in the token engineering sector is so isolated, and even though it was always considered something open I mean, we promote this $name$ is promoting the reality shifted in a direction where it's more close than ever before? Because I think the reason is that the market supports it. So there you can sell consulting services, and to enter the business model behind it is Consulting and this encouraged to build close tools and knowledge sources and not open ones and that's a big problem in our space. Wonderful, thank

Lisa Wocken 15:03
you. Which areas of knowledge do you consider essential for the token engineering field?

Participant 41 15:14
I mean, I could give you a whole list of I mean, I guess, probably some people mentioned the token engineering flour and this multidisciplinary approach with computer science and economics and data science and psychology, etc. And this is certainly valid I think, there is something that is not mentioned in this flower that seems to be really important. That is the project management skills. today and I feel this is because we are in this early stage. I compare it always with because I observed this with web developers 20 years ago, so Oh, more than 20 years, probably 25 years. So in the 90s people built a website and they were looking for a web programmer, website programmer. And quickly, the tasks to be covered by a website programmer became super diverse. So it's building a website, the front end, so what the user sees, then the back end, maybe a database then in the early days, it wasn't an own server later, it was on on Cloud programming, of course the website itself, the functionality, so then suddenly, SEO came up. So how to be found via $Google$ how to and then marketing on top. And today, we have a wide range of disciplines or domains that are contributing to the success of a website or a digital product. And we are like 20 years ago, 25 years ago for programmer website, please design a token system, and people are not aware of what this entails. And this makes it very hard for any token engineer to conduct a successful project and to land at a successful outcome and to even be able to talk and share about their work because it's all under NDA is and and sometimes you lead nowhere in your project, and it's super frustrating. And this is a challenge so bring a project from an initial request, we need your help to a successful outcome is super challenging. And this is actually also something that came as a surprise to us because we thought that it's about the domain expertise. Instead, what's critical to junior token engineers and to all pretty much all token engineers in this space. You have to have additional skills to steer a project and to manage expectations from projects and to step by step. Help them to integrate

token engineering in their roadmap. And here again, we are like 25 years ago for websites and digital products.

Lisa Wocken   18:32
I love that example. It makes it very clear potential path forward for the field and in the next few years. There's some hope. Wonderful, wonderful, thank you. We're gonna shift to challenges and needs for the field. What challenges especially as you think about your specific niche within the field of educating, what challenges have you faced in your work,

Participant 41   19:01
providing a career or many career opportunities for token engineers, so for graduates who learned what token engineering is in theory, and somehow really talented, great skill people, but then so hard to find? An engagement a because as an individual, they are missing these project management skills. And for joining a team it's so hard to find one because they are still very sparse. And yeah, sometimes also work in areas that are not super interesting. So everyone sees how much work is to be done generally in the crypto field but it's then still so hard for graduates to then take the next step to become a professional token engineer.

Lisa Wocken   19:56
And what challenges do you see for the field at large?

Participant 41   20:02
Okay, number one, the credibility of crypto overall and just beyond crypto. Number two, the complexity of building token economies. It's much more complex than building web to product. And not lack of money, not lack of creativity, not lack of innovation. I think these are the two main ones enter and then the resulting like the adoption of token systems and the potential tokens have just a very limited adoption beyond defy and financial applications. The potential would be so huge but because of the complexity of it, and because of Yeah, other driving factors, including regulation, but also a lot of okay. No time no understanding no bandwidth to develop more sophisticated thing, a fallback to AI with tokens we can we can develop loan or staking mechanism all taken copy pasted from the financial sector, which is sometimes I feel not not even 10% of what could be done. When it comes to incentives design.

Lisa Wocken   21:51
Say more about that. If what's the other 90%

Participant 41   21:55
or the other 90% is global coordination. So the potential that via tokens and incentives we can combine two very important aspects needed. Generally in economies it's a acknowledge and build on local on a local environment and on a local economy and you we have it today and national economies and even sub economies have certain areas within nation state that have some particular aspects needs, traditions potential when it comes to economies and combine this being able to adapt to local to a local potential and and nurture this potential instead of just exploiting it, and at the same time, allow for global coordination. And if we look at climate

change or natural resources, this would be so necessary and tokens can be a tool to enter uncharted territory that we just can't cover with the currencies and how currencies are managed today. This potential would be and is still super huge. Wonderful, thank

Lisa Wocken 23:30
you. What do you believe are the most pressing needs for the space?

Participant 41 23:38
Yeah, I think I've mentioned it so it's allow for innovation to based on open approaches. So open research open implementations open simulations. And an easier way for juniors to add their particular skills without taking the responsibility for a whole token engineering project. And this has been done for smart contract development. It is the I guess, the big the power of the crypto space is and was that it's a continuous scouting for talent scouting for ideas and then trends or transform these ideas into something relevant either via allowing new builder teams to roll out and make their idea reality or to integrate it into something existing and get them on board to contribute to it. And this is an ongoing, really on a day to day thing that takes place in crypto. And I think to make progress on the token side, we need an equivalent and super easy way to contribute to token engineering, systems designs and primitives. And we don't have that and that's this is a main challenge from my perspective. Wonderful, thank you.

Lisa Wocken 25:25
This next segment, we're going to ask for your point of view and perspective. On a couple of different more niche topics within the space. And so I'm curious first, if you can describe the role you see ethics playing in token engineering.

Participant 41 25:41
I think generally a really huge role and I think we can't overrate and practical it's a different game, but this is also not special for token engineering, right. You always have to fight for the good and the bad is just developing, growing. Like like [Ross] and I think yeah, in theory in this space, or from my perspective, it's also discussed a lot in at our students. So for them it's a it's a big thing. But I think in practical

Nathalia Scherer 26:19
not super important.

Lisa Wocken 26:23
The next topic is around your thoughts on how we increase diversity and inclusivity within the token engineering field.

Participant 41 26:35
I must say I have rarely seen Okay, I have to be careful when it comes to where you come from your background what you've learned or I've done in the past, I think okay, I can talk about the$ name$ community and maybe $name$, but that's my, you'll be able to put this in context. Okay, from what I experience on a daily basis. I think when it comes to where you come from, what's

your background? It's super diverse and accessible. And I have hardly ever seen any space like that. When it comes to female or non binary people the share is super minimal. And that's definitely not that satisfying. And and of course, anyone entering crypto must be willing to adopt the language and accept that it's own universe with own rules and and own style of communication own terms own language. And yeah, rather embrace then change it it's, to me it's it's not ideal because it makes it even harder to communicate with the rest of the world. But this is something that definitely makes it hard for newcomers when I present.

Lisa Wocken 28:32
Shifting gears again. We're gonna look at finances next. And I'm curious if you could share in your perspective, what are the incentives and rewards to being a practicing token engineer

Nathalia Scherer 28:45
to be

Participant 41 28:49
but I missed the final part, maybe the connections

Lisa Wocken 28:52
to to basically practice token engineering within the field. What are the incentives and rewards that you see out there? being used?

Participant 41 29:03
being used or work best?

Lisa Wocken 29:08
It's been interpreted pretty liberally when we've asked this. So how do you see people getting paid token wage salary? And so what are the reasons do you think people would enter into the field especially given that you see a lot of people that probably articulate why they attended your courses? I see what do you what do you notice?

Participant 41 29:28
Yeah. Okay. So I guess again, speaking rather about the students and graduates and not that much about the professionals. And still I consider students do practice token engineering, I would say this is the this is number one, see something new that that somehow is interesting, very intrinsic motivation. Be acknowledging that whatever tech you might want to build what really makes a difference and what what then allows for the breakthroughs is the economic question. So will it be ever relevant in economic terms and new now can can work on on the economic success of this technology? And this is something that matters to many, because it feels like it can be even more relevant and important than just building the tech and the third

Nathalia Scherer 30:34
is

Participant 41 30:35
me many come with the question of okay, I don't see a way forward with the existing economic system. Can I can I spend my time and wouldn't? Yeah, it just to me makes sense to work on an alternative because I don't believe that I should. I'm wasting my time basically and in the current economic system, and and ultimately also, and this is something that drives diversity, I feel because obviously, token engineering is not about technology only and it's not only about coding only, it deals a lot with the human part with social sciences. With coordination with communication with understanding incentives. So people's motivations, and this is of course, false. We have a lot of non techies in our community and this is of course, matters. It's like the there there is a place for them. And one of the main places to land is token engineering or to apply your skills, if it's non coding. And so this is interest on intrinsic motivation and also rewards I think this is what attracts people when it comes to monetary rewards. And just I mean, not at the very forefront, and I don't have first hand experience on price negotiations when it comes to token engineering services. It's just that I sometimes when I just when we're touching on such a topic with projects I'm in touch with I'm super surprised about the difference, how they expect to compensate a token engineer, that varieties from we are this is more or less what our I don't know, what our intern gets, because it cannot be too complicated. Up to Okay. 200K salary is equal to a CTO position and that's the full range and I really get everything. And I sometimes I'm surprised that they, they that obviously also this is so maybe this is also a challenge to the whole field. People don't have any good indicators on rates, budgets, how to justify a budget or what justifies a budget, so the life the projects. Okay, we now need this step in the token engineering process, and this roughly needs this amount of time and this amount of work.

Lisa Wocken 33:40
Where would you given your experiences and your hopes for the field? Where would you see that kind of ideal salary range for a professional token engineer being?

Participant 41 33:52
Definitely in this, okay. Now, since it's early stage, I think consulting work is usually 50% More expensive than an internal and so we can add this consulting additional fee on top but I think it's totally in the range of coders. So if a good let's say Junior coder gets 60k and a good experience coder gets 100k Plus, totally the range of token engineering compensation that I see. And also the relevance of it. It's probably even more relevant for a project. But yeah, it's

Lisa Wocken 34:39
wonderful. Thank you. Yeah, we've asked about the salary range to each of our participants. So since you're participating, you'll obviously get our findings report before others and yeah, that'll be included in there. Okay, so shifting gears, we're going to look toward the future. I'm curious what wish you might have for the future of the field, as well as where you see it headed in the next three years.

Participant 41 35:05

My wish is that we come closer to leveraging the full potential of token systems. And then token engineering can prove that it can add value. I think this is your I'm pretty confident I guess, rather what I would wish to see is much more opportunities for token engineers to prove and show and make it visible. So that many more projects better understand and also better understand how to integrate token engineering work in their projects. And I think this is rather a matter of time and suddenly we can contribute to that as the$ name$ and as $name.$ Yeah, it's, to me it's also a matter of time, because I, this is maybe the final thought on that. I have the feeling that at least a portion in the web of investors in the web three space are not pushing a project to Ward's launch a token as soon as possible anymore, because they saw that there are also toxic effects of a token launch, that might ruin the whole investment. And that's why at least a portion there certainly in the NFT space, it might look totally different and also in the gaming industry. But for the Deep Web three projects, I would say that they got more careful with token launches, and and better explore what it means and how to drive the demand and this is a very positive development. Also, the regulatory push towards better risk management is actually positive for the token engineering space because it will professionalize what's done to hedge risks for the users and token holders.

Nathalia Scherer 37:08
Wonderful.

Lisa Wocken 37:10
You mentioned AI earlier AI as AI continues to advance how do you see it having an impact on the field of token engineering as well as the role of the token engineer.

Participant 41 37:23
This was suddenly changed a lot. And I think there's a big potential and also risk. The big potential is that AI and neural artificial neural networks are processing information differently from a human brain still, even though we try to replicate how human brains learn the way that they are able to digest information, digital information is still very different and we can see this in just simple prompts of language model that is actually not made to analyze systems rather to interact with human language. It it's so much faster to go through code and find similarities, patterns, etc. So it it's incredible. And it's I call it it's almost can be a third eye for human beings to understand systems, digital systems, because we are still implementing total systems, our digital systems represented by code and what an AI can do in exploring the code, the system the the aspects of a systems that we might not even be able to digest is enormous and this way it can help us to understand and handle the complexity of these digital systems. And that's a big potential. Because today, it's not that people wouldn't build these systems because they feel oh man, they are so complex. I shouldn't do it. This is not the case actually. They build it with a couple of lines of codes and then hope for the best fingers crossed and that's that's actually the human reaction on that. And so it could help us build better systems. Although more sustainable systems and better understand what we do actually in building these systems, this is the positive potential, the negative one is a How can we understand if the response we get from AI is reliable, and is pointing us in the right direction? If we can't even understand how it gets to an answer or conclusion like that, so how can we verify and second this speed of this whole

development as in many other technological sectors as well, without understanding negative side effects, of course this is [pool]

matter of concern, I think what could happen is that there are swiftly AI tools in place to support the token engineering process in our case, and make things even worse that because then people don't even try to think it through. They rely on the response of an AI assistant. And this way, depend even more on an external source of knowledge or even decision making. They don't understand at all and that's a big risk, which is a risk I guess we share with many other disciplines.

Nathalia Scherer 40:55
Wonderful,

Lisa Wocken 40:56
thank you. Lastly, we just have a one question left around whose work do you admire in the space and is there anyone you feel like we should make sure we interview as part of this study?

Participant 41 41:09
I hope I covered every everyone in adding them to learn this. So of course I admire the early thought leaders $name$ $name$ I admire $name$ because it he rolled out a whole department very early. That is still I think nobody even roughly understood how valuable this example would be to copy. Many researchers like $name$ game theory I don't know if $namee$, I'm not sure because He's usually not fond us taking part in interviews. That's by you might be not on your interviews list. And many others in the community who contributed to the field like in the early days $name$ the $ name$ people like

Nathalia Scherer 42:31
$name.$

Participant 41 42:36
Up until today, the people who are created our course. $name$ name$. $name$

Nathalia Scherer 42:49
And now

Participant 41 42:52
work on Yeah, practical token engineering.

I just wonder I don't know. I think you are connected to

I guess many practical token engineers I would think of $tokenomics Dao$. $Mat T$ who now? Got a job at $status.$

Just thinking what else $Danilo$ is obviously already involved.

Yeah, so this is what grew up just on top of my head.

Lisa Wocken 43:35
Within the $name$ been, you know, referenced as a place to go for education on this. What are the places that you admire that are helping educate people on this field of token engineering? What other places

Participant 41 43:51
within or beyond

Lisa Wocken 43:54
either or if you want to listen,

Participant 41 43:56
okay, so first, the study groups because it was a total surprise to us. That people who just came to study token engineering with no direct connection to the academy, or not being guided at all just spin up places that others join and enjoy conversations about token engineering as a field. And this was mind blowing and it's still mind blowing. We are just onboarding a new cohort of study group hosts.

Nathalia Scherer 44:32
And

Participant 41 44:34
beyond I mean, the $bar camp$ I hope will become such a place it will be the first event that is made by the communities or in a $ bar camp$ fashion where we define the agenda of the day by our submissions and yet community contributors running sessions that they want to host because they want to share the results of a survey or want to share a new primitive or research work they have been investing in in the past and this is a great place and should be a great place to meet other token engineers. And of course, yes, certainly, even though it's not really a place but I'm going over the huge amount of value and knowledge created every single week and try to share at least some of it on our newsletter but I'm just it's mind blowing. How much is created week by week by week. And I guess there aren't that many early stage disciplines where everyone could

Nathalia Scherer 45:56
I not just

Participant 41 45:59
 have this this rich and diverse variety of knowledge. I guess sometimes the problem is then rather to find the really relevant stuff among the just the signal information from you know, when I read through all the noise get out and yeah, but I think this is also something that makes or the power of, of this discipline, even though it's early stage, so much knowledge created, and rather

a problem of finding the right thing that helps me to make the next step or to build on it or to actually get your hands not only on superficial knowledge and talking about something really to have access to actual models and simulations as I said, because then this is behind closed curtains.

Lisa Wocken 47:08
Wonderful. Well, this has been a sincere joy. Do you have any other thoughts given that our guiding primary inquiry is what is token engineering? Do you have any additional thoughts given this interview even that you'd like to share at this time?

Participant 41 47:27
I think we covered a lot, I believe not at this point. Other than that, I would be keen to see the results and I would be keen to share the results with everyone in the community.

Lisa Wocken 47:43
Yes, absolutely. We will be looking forward to that as well. Not just the sharing, but also the support in sharing out more broadly and distributed. So wonderful. And Natalia, did you have any questions as we wrap up here, final thoughts, comments?

Nathalia Scherer 48:00
Just one question, which is that you've been exposed to a lot of projects working with $open engineering$. From that range, can you mention or think of two that you would would consider polar opposites?

Participant 41 48:18
polar opposites and how they address token engineering?

Nathalia Scherer 48:22
Yeah, yeah.

Participant 41 48:24
Oh, yes, I think I can. So $blur nft marketplace$ the just the marketplace that had this recent AirDrop, where I

Lisa Wocken 48:36
feel they

Participant 41 48:40
take the maximum benefit from narratives being fast without spending any thought on a holistic, comprehensive token system and use it very much in the style of okay, if something drives attention, let's do it. And maybe the opposite, I feel could be $name$ where they had many iterations on for the good and the bad. many iterations on topia incentives and tried again and okay, it doesn't work. Let's try it differently. And polar also because of sometimes you see that

the this narrative building and just ignoring anything else, just go with the hype pays out as opposed to solid engineering work that not always pays. And that's maybe a polar opposite.

Nathalia Scherer 49:46
Wonderful

Lisa Wocken 49:47
Great. Well, thank you so much. We're gonna spend the next couple of weeks wrapping up interviews, going into analysis and then sharing the report out so you will be definitely hearing from us at that point. And if you have any questions or additional facts in the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out but just want to thank you for sending along that information about $BarCamp$ and also just this idea of being willing to participate and give us your time today. We're really, really grateful.

Participant 41 50:15
Yeah. 100% I'd like to thank you for conducting this research. And yeah, I think it's it will be very valuable for everyone in the community.

Lisa Wocken 50:25
Yeah. Wonderful. All right. Thank you so much. Again,

Nathalia Scherer 50:33
bye bye. Thank you.