

Hedgie Fund NFT collection aims to support autism awareness

With the growing trend of NFTs (non-fungible tokens) to promote artists' work, Matt Landon conceptualised the idea of The Hedgie Fund in support of autism awareness.



Image supplied: The Hedgie Fund will aim to support autism awareness

The Hedgie Fund is a trait-based randomly generated NFT collection of “Hedgies” that uses the sets, props and characters already created for *Sam the Hedgehog*, an animated short film about autism acceptance. It is being produced by Maan Creative in Johannesburg.

Maan has algorithmically designed 8,128 Sam 'Hedgies' for NFT amateurs and aficionados to mint for 0.05 ETH each. All proceeds raised through sales on The Hedgie Fund will be used to complete the film and give donations to Autism-related charities and causes with an aim to help drive global autism acceptance.

“NFTs are digital representations of ownership of various items, with one of the most popular use-cases being to represent art. Purchasers buy, sell and trade for a number of reasons, but rarely do NFTs fund real projects with real purpose. By purchasing a Sam ‘Hedgie’, collectors can become part of something meaningful that has intent and that raises awareness and funds for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD),” explains Landon.

Around 1 in 68 people are affected by ASD. *Sam the Hedgehog* was conceptualised in 2014 to raise awareness of autism acceptance. But, due to the extremely high cost of animation, the film is only partially complete. To finish the project and have it shown at film festivals around the world its creators spotted an opportunity upon seeing how popular NFT trading has recently become.

"We realised that we could use the existing assets from the film, a mixture of hand-drawn characters and practical, hand-crafted sets, and engage those who are interested in NFTs and wish to support autism acceptance. Not only will the owners who mint our NFTs own a beautiful image, but they will also be linked to a real project and cause," says Michael Clark, co-director at Maan Creative.

Aiming to have impact

By purchasing a Sam Crypto 'Hedgie' for 0.05 ETH, owners will help fund the *Sam the Hedgehog* short film and gain early access to view the film while it is submitted to independent film festivals - before it is released to the public as a free resource. They can also choose to have their name, pseudonym, .eth name, Twitter handle or Ethereum public address acknowledged or thanked in the end credits of the film, and even stand a chance to land a cameo role in the film.

The NFTs will be available to mint from 2 April – World Autism Awareness Day.

"While only 8,128 NFTs will be available to mint, we could have had up to 1.9 million different variations. This, as we have created a host of different traits such as Sam's ears, the props, glasses, etc, and each will be mixed and matched after assigning various rarity values to each trait," says Landon.



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"While we are not the first to consider how to use NFTs beyond just owning a piece of artwork, we do believe we will be the first to finish an actual animated short film funded by NFT minting. Of course, we considered alternative forms of crowdsourcing, and even traditional finance, but that only gets one so far."

"Using the popularity of NFTs just felt right, as we are creating unique pieces of art for collectors to own and trade while also becoming part of a far larger effort to raise awareness for Autism acceptance and do good," says Landon.

"The film project has such a rich world with so many thoughtful details and the NFT project provides another avenue for us

to showcase this world that will probably get lost in the film. For example, the way Sam arranges his building blocks meticulously by colour – a subtle clue to his autistic nature,” says Clark.

To get involved visit the Hedgie Fund [website](#) or follow The Hedgie Fund on [Twitter](#).

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