

Blockchain and Digital Currencies Workshop

- 27 April 2015

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EC, avenue de Beaulieu 25, 1160 Auderghem. Room 0/S1

When anyone talks about Digital Currencies inevitably the question arises whether one should get involved in this new phenomena. Should I Invest in it? Can I pay taxes? How governments will regulate transactions with Cryptocurrencies? What's the role of Banks? Could blockchain become the underlying infrastructure of the future Capital Markets Union?

In order to answer these questions, and more to come, Startup Europe decided to organise a Workshop. Alex Puig, founder of Digital Currency Summit will be leading the event where some of the brightest entrepreneurs in the Bitcoin Space (Coinffeine, Ethereum, Circle) side by side with senior experts in the financial area.

Workshop

11:00 - 11:30 Introduction to cryptocurrencies: The BlockChain

A blockchain is a public ledger of all Bitcoin transactions that have ever been executed. It is constantly growing as 'completed' blocks are added to it with a new set of recordings. But it's way

more than that, this technology open up several possibilities, including micropayments, crowdfunding, distributed exchanges, smart property, property registry, ticketing, secure voting systems...

Alex Puig, Digital Currency Summit

11:30 - 12:00 A market analysis of cryptocurrencies

After more than six years from the invention of the first cryptocurrency, the ecosystem has kept evolving at great pace. This disruptive innovation provides the potential to give citizens direct control over their financial activities by removing costly -and sometimes obscure- intermediation layers fostering financial inclusion. However, disintermediated financial systems introduce new forms of frauds and cyber-crime. It is therefore important to understand the socio-economic and monetary aspects of the cryptocurrency ecosystem.

Paolo Tasca, Research Economist at Deutsche Bundesbank

12:00 - 13:00: Lunch break

13:00 - 14:00 Legislative and legal Framework of Digital Currencies

There are no international laws regulating Bitcoin. Each country regards Bitcoin differently and regulations are constantly evolving. This talk focuses on the stance of European authorities and whether cryptocurrency exchanges are liable for value-added tax on the fees that they charge for their services.

14:00 - 14:30 How banks in Europe are joining with cryptocurrencies.

Bitcoin exists because we need something like cash in internet. Banks have understood this problem and they want to explore this ecosystem by creating new services. In Spain, for example, most banks are interested in cryptocurrencies and some of them are already working on prototypes.

Alberto Gómez Toribio will talk about the experience about getting banks involved with Bitcoin, the common problems on this new scenario and how to solve them.

Albero Gómez Toribio, Coinffeine

14:30 - 15:00 Using existing infrastructures to bring Bitcoin to the masses.

Despite the large increase in terms of knowledge, media attention, invested volume and technological development in the Bitcoin ecosystem, there are still major obstacles to Bitcoin's adoption in terms of security and ease of use.

Daniel Diez García will discuss the barriers to the adoption of Bitcoin, and how his company Bit2Me has succeeded in making Spain the country with the most points where cash-out Bitcoins, using the existing ATM infrastructure.

Daniel Diez García, Bit2Me

15:00 - 15:30 The Internet of Things: Smart devices powered by the Blockchain

There are several important implications for the Internet of Things and the development of Smart Systems. For one, blockchain technology could provide a way to track the unique history of individual devices, by recording a ledger of data exchanges between it and other devices, web services, and human users. Blockchains could also enable smart devices to become independent agents, autonomously conducting a variety of transactions. Imagine a vending machine that can not only monitor and report its own stock, but can solicit bids from distributors and pay for the delivery of new items automatically -- based, of course, on the purchase history of its customers.

Stephan Tual, Ethereum

15:30 - 16:00 Investment Opportunities in the Bitcoin Space

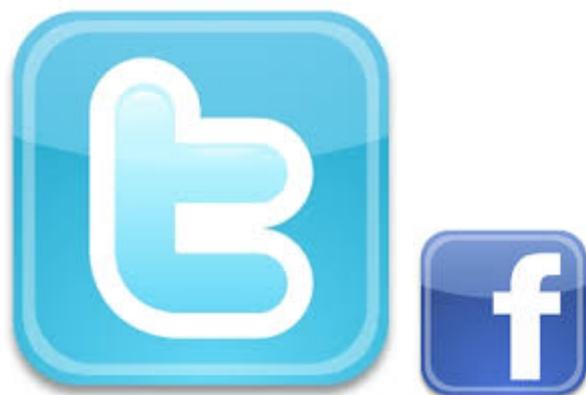
To date, a total of 400m€ has now been invested in bitcoin startups since 2012, with 77% of that total (310m€) coming in 2014 alone. VCs such as Marc Andreessen have compared bitcoin's overall potential, as well as its current stage of development, to the Internet circa 1993. The number of countries that received VC investment grew from 8 to 18 in 2014, with half of the new countries receiving VC investment in 2014 located in Europe.

Garret Cassidy, Circle

16:00 - 17:00 Future of Cryptocurrencies and Blockchain Technology in the context of the Capital Markets Union Panel

A debate panel, leaded and moderated by the European Commission. The panelists will be the speakers in the workshop and experts from the European Commission.

This workshop took place in 2015.



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