

BLOCKCHAIN:UNCHAINED New Tools for Democracy

MAK – Press and PR
presse@MAK.at

Press Release
Vienna, 19.11.2024

With the exhibition *BLOCKCHAIN:UNCHAINED. New Tools for Democracy*, the MAK will turn the MAK Gallery space into an experimental setting. Visitors will be able to discover and experiment with new technologies as tools for democratic participation in an interactive and playful way. The show developed by the interdisciplinary design collective Gemeinde-Bau (Katja-Anna Krug, Max Kure, Leo Mühlfeld, Anton Posch) intuitively and exemplarily demonstrates how blockchain technology and DAOs (decentralized autonomous organizations) can be applied for future vision in many different areas, like in a private flat share, for the future use of the MAK Garden, or as a tool for democratic discourse.

Participation is gaining importance for museums that aspire to operate as cultural institutions in a diverse, inclusive, multi-perspective, self-critical, and democratic way. The tools needed for this are increasingly being appropriated by digital technologies.

In 2023, the MAK won the idea competition “Culture & Technology: Fokus Museum” organized by the Vienna Business Agency and is therefore now one of the first museums in Austria to explore the potential of DAOs—decentralized autonomous organizations based on blockchain—in the context of a funding project. In collaboration with the technical partner Caliber, the foundations of a MAK DAO as an experimental outreach project were created. Based on the MAK Community built via the MAK DAO Discord channel, the online platform <https://makdao.world> is intended to take participation in the museum and exchange between visitors, communities, and stakeholders to a new level.

With *BLOCKCHAIN:UNCHAINED: New Tools for Democracy*, the museum is launching a practical setup on site and aims to develop new ideas together with the visitors regarding digitally based democratic participation in museums—especially the MAK. Special focus is placed on teaching digital

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competences to children and teens and on integrating diverse visitor groups into the development of the museum's program.

For a bit less than a year, the experimental "playground" will offer a mix of information on design solutions for democracy and the opportunities and risks of blockchain and DAO technology, as well as several interactive setups:

In an exaggerated living room situation, visitors can creatively experiment with the question how Smart Contracts—digital, self-executing contracts based on the blockchain—can assist in negotiating new models of sharing an apartment. In a playful way, visitors can try out how self-defined rules could affect the appropriation, use, and production of space—that is, how they could affect cooperative housing.

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In a further interactive setup, visitors have the opportunity to vote on the event program of the KUNSTRASEN [ARTificial Turf], the publically accessible MAK Garden. When voting on a blockchain, participants usually have voting power proportional to the tokens they own. In *BLOCKCHAIN:UNCHAINED*, the MAK Community is given democratic right to have a say which proposed projects will take place in the new season.

The third setup in the exhibition, an analogue room, reminds visitors of the quality of personal exchange. Here, the modular building blocks *Commence à construire* (2000) by designer Ettore Sottsass, which are part of the MAK Collection, do not only provide seating, but can also be used to build and create together, —in analogy to the virtual building blocks of the blockchain.

BLOCKCHAIN:UNCHAINED. New Tools for Democracy is accompanied by an extensive educational program: With its interactive and playful nature, the exhibition is particularly suited for school classes, for who special educational formats are offered on the topic of *Shaping Democracy*. Discussions and workshop formats for adults will also be offered. The detailed and continuously updated educational program is available at <https://www.mak.at/blockchain>.

After the exhibition opening on 19.11.2024 at 7pm, the MAK invites you to the Block-Party by (y)MAK in the MAK Columned Main Hall.

Press photos are available for download at [MAK.at/presse](https://www.mak.at/presse).



Press Conference

Tuesday, 19.11.2024, 10 am

Opening

Tuesday, 19.11.2024, 7 pm

Free admission to the exhibition opening

Exhibition Venue

MAK Gallery

MAK, Stubenring 5, 1010 Vienna

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Exhibition Dates

20.11.2024–17.8.2025

Opening Hours

Tue 10 am–9 pm, Wed to Sun 10 am–6 pm

Curator

Marlies Wirth, Curator, Digital Culture and MAK Design Collection

Assistance: Felix Kofler, MAK Design Collection

Education Concept

Janina Falkner, Head, Education and Outreach

Laura Purgie, Education and Outreach

Concept and Design

Katja-Anna Krug, Max Kure, Leo Mühlfeld, Anton Posch (design collective
Gemeinde-Bau)

Supporting Program

Details at MAK.at/blockchain

MAK Admission

€ 16,50/15,50*

reduced € 13,50/12,50*

every Tuesday 6–9 pm: Admission € 8/7,50*

Free admission for children and teens under 19

* Ticket price online

MAK Press and PR

Judith Anna Schwarz-Jungmann (Head)

T +43 1 71136-213, judith.schwarz-jungmann@MAK.at

Sandra Hell-Ghignone

T +43 1 71136-212, sandra.hell-ghignone@MAK.at

Yasmin Yazdian

T +43 1 71136-210, yasmin.yazdian@MAK.at

