

# Crypto for social good: meet Cherubim Labs founder Brian Magierski

*As part of our quick fire questions series - or QFQs - we spoke to Brian Magierski, founder and CEO of Cherubim Labs, a company striving to reimagine how communities and capital can come together to serve and fund charitable causes using the power of crypto and NFTs.*

Temps de lecture : minute

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## What is Cherubim Labs?

Cherubim Labs is set up as a crypto venture studio. I intend to launch a few powerful solutions from this studio that have blockchain and crypto economic mechanisms at the foundation, and target solutions for preventing and curing Alzheimer's disease. When I speak of a cure, extending prevention is also a form of a cure. It is a very complex condition which will require a portfolio of solutions to help the population of people susceptible to Alzheimer' disease. Therefore, I feel like we can contribute to this portfolio through the Cherubim Labs venture studio.

Alzheimer's disease is a mass market problem. While it is a risk for all people with Down syndrome, the numbers for Alzheimer's are staggering. Globally, it is expected that over 75M people will be impacted directly by 2030 at a societal cost of over \$2T. That means that nearly every one of us will be dealing with this disease directly or via a family member or close friend if we don't do something about it soon.

Cherubim Labs' business model is to develop solutions and release them into the market as independent projects. If our projects have a token, we will retain a founding share of tokens and if we provide services to our projects, we will earn a fee for those services.

Our first project is the Cherubs DAO, which is the *first NFT* funded and governed impact fund DAO, targeting brain health overall with a specific initial focus on Alzheimer's disease.

## What was the catalyst for launching Cherubim Labs?

My youngest of three children, Ruby Mae, was born with Down syndrome. As my wife and I learned more about the condition after her birth, we quickly discovered that one of the health issues of Down syndrome is an accelerated ageing process. This leads to the population of people with Down syndrome having a higher risk of Alzheimer's disease emerging earlier in life than in typically developing people - even those with higher risk of acquiring this disease.

This is a story of success in many ways, because the life expectancy of people with Down syndrome has expanded dramatically in recent decades as has their overall quality of life and independence. Therefore, solving this medical challenge later in life for people with Down syndrome is the next major river to cross to extend their healthy productive lifespans.

Ruby Mae is now 10 years old, and a few years ago she started seeing some of the early autoimmune conditions that would precede this pathway to neurodegeneration. I knew that we had about 20 to 30 years to see real solutions developed to prevent and ultimately cure Alzheimer's disease, and that might be how long it could take with intense efforts globally.

Sadly, for many decades, little progress has been made. However, recent developments now show promise thanks to the persistent work of some amazing pioneers over many decades. I decided a couple of years ago that I would apply my skills and experience in entrepreneurship, software, blockchains, and crypto economic mechanism design to play a role in the pursuit to prevent and cure Alzheimer's disease. This is Cherubim Labs, and our first project, the *Cherubs DAO*.

## How has the business evolved since its launch?

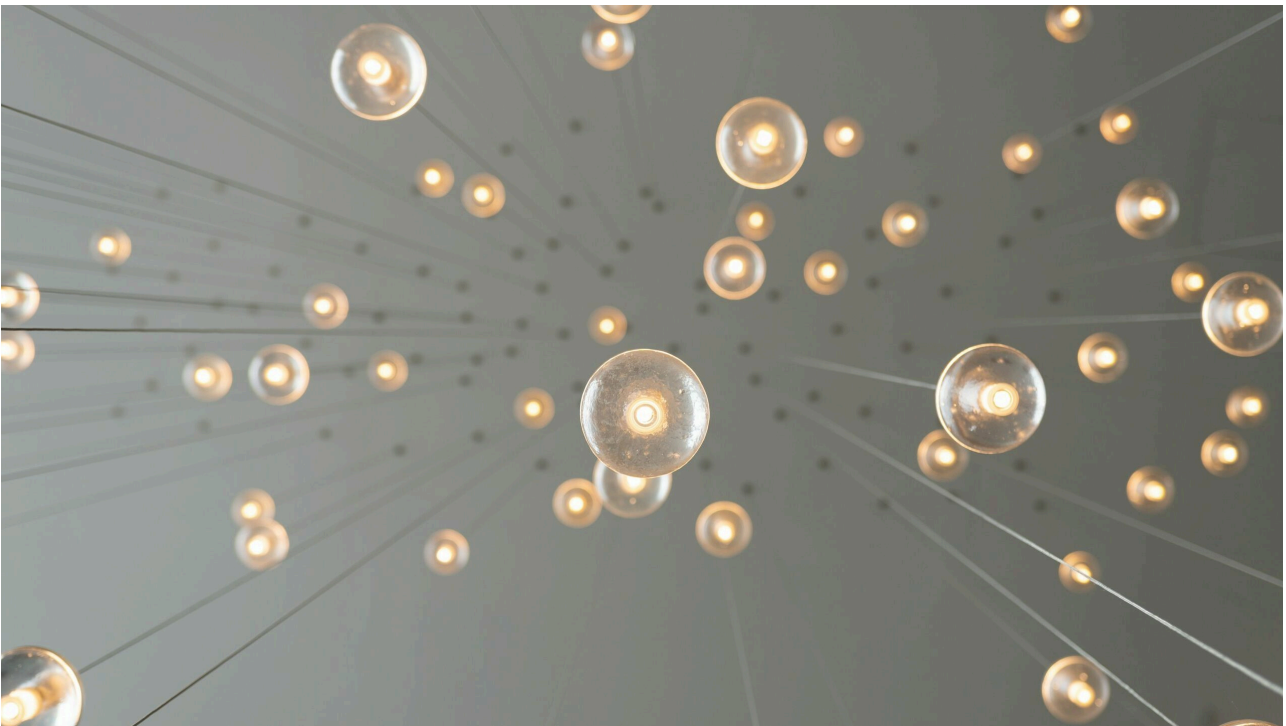
I initially thought Cherubim Labs could contribute by creating a solution for providing individuals self-sovereignty over their health data using crypto economics, a token, and the security of the blockchain. After some work and time on this solution, I concluded that it was too early – the technology was not mature enough and the business model was not evident. Adoption would be a huge mountain to climb as well.

In this process, I engaged with many researchers trying to cure diseases, including Alzheimer's disease. I learned along the way the challenges that many of these groups had in attracting awareness to their causes and funding. Many diseases, and especially Alzheimer's disease, get their funding from centralised sources. These sources include government institutions such as the US National Institutes of Health and mega billionaire foundations like the Gates Foundation. On the one hand, it is incredible that these resources are available. However, on the other hand, these organisations tend to be very conservative and also fund projects that fit into these conservative profiles.

*My knowledge and experience in the crypto and blockchain industry made me aware that crypto*

*economic systems, if well designed, are incredible mechanisms for organising talent and capital globally to pursue a common mission.*

After briefly flirting with the idea of using the high yields of DeFi to fund research grants, I pivoted to where Cherubs DAO is now - an NFT funded and governed Impact Investment Fund targeting a massive cause. I was inspired by the Nouns DAO project and their funding mechanism through the daily sale of NFTs at auction. We applied our own NFT design and created a legal wrapper for the Cherubs DAO to allow it to function as a publicly funded impact investment and research granting institution.



*Unsplash © Skye Studios*

## How are you funded?

To date, we have been largely self-funded by me. I did take a small amount of angel investment from some close friends and can continue to do so from people that are inspired by our mission.

In advance of launching the Cherubs DAO, we will be conducting a commemorative NFT sale to our community starting in mid to late April. This sale will serve as a funding event for the Cherubs DAO and also as a way for our community to own a piece of history at an accessible price.

The commemorative NFTs are constructed using the original artwork that inspired the final artwork that is being used in the Cherubs DAO. Our original artwork took the traditional Cherubs from the Renaissance period and turned them into fun clipart. Therefore, we will be selling 10,000 Commemorative Cherub Clipart NFTs. We believe these will be historical and commemorate the launch of the first massive NFT funded Impact Fund targeting curing major diseases.

## What has been your biggest challenge so far?

I moved my family over to Switzerland from Austin, Texas in late 2019 with the intention of pursuing this mission. The biggest challenge has been the combination of starting a new company in a new country, dealing with the business model evolutions outlined above, and doing it while hit with a once in a century pandemic.

I've overcome this so far with a clear sense of the mission, experience with startup challenges spanning over 20 years, and sheer persistence. Thankfully, the mission and the disruptive nature of our first project Cherubs DAO has attracted several people along the way who are each becoming their own "force multipliers" for me and Cherubim.

# How does Cherubim Labs answer an unmet need?

Focusing on Cherubs DAO and the mission against Alzheimer's disease, the key is to "stay in our swim lane" and be open to collaboration with others with common values and mission.

*The epidemic of Alzheimer's disease is a global unmet need that is only growing. Our "swim lane" is that we seek to energise a global pool of talent and bring more capital to the cause.*

By doing so, we hope we can encourage, source and fund more "shots on goal" to solve this immense challenge. We seek to be enablers or a "force multiplier" to the great researchers, scientists, and drug/therapeutic developers to allow them to take more risk and find and try more pathways. Ultimately, preventing and curing Alzheimer's disease will require many solutions to account for the complexity of the disease and the diversity of human genetics.

## What's in store for the future?

We sold our commemorative Cherub Clipart NFTs to the community starting in April 2022. This was a chance to own a piece of history with the original artwork that inspired the Cherubs DAO NFTs.

We expect to be making some amazing advisor announcements over the next couple of months, which will complete the Cherubs DAO total solution. This team is essential to operating the Cherubs DAO as an effective impact fund.

We are aiming to start onboarding members through the daily auction mechanism of Cherubs DAO NFTs by summer 2022. And yes, preventatives and cures to this horrible epidemic of Alzheimer's disease and longer healthy lifespans for many, especially those with Down syndrome.

## What one piece of advice would you give to future founders?

Have a clear sense of mission at founding and be prepared to sustain yourself longer than you think you need to in order to persist and make that mission a reality.

Brian Magierski is founder and CEO of *Cherubim Labs*.

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Article by Kirstie Pickering