

# Building for Sustainability

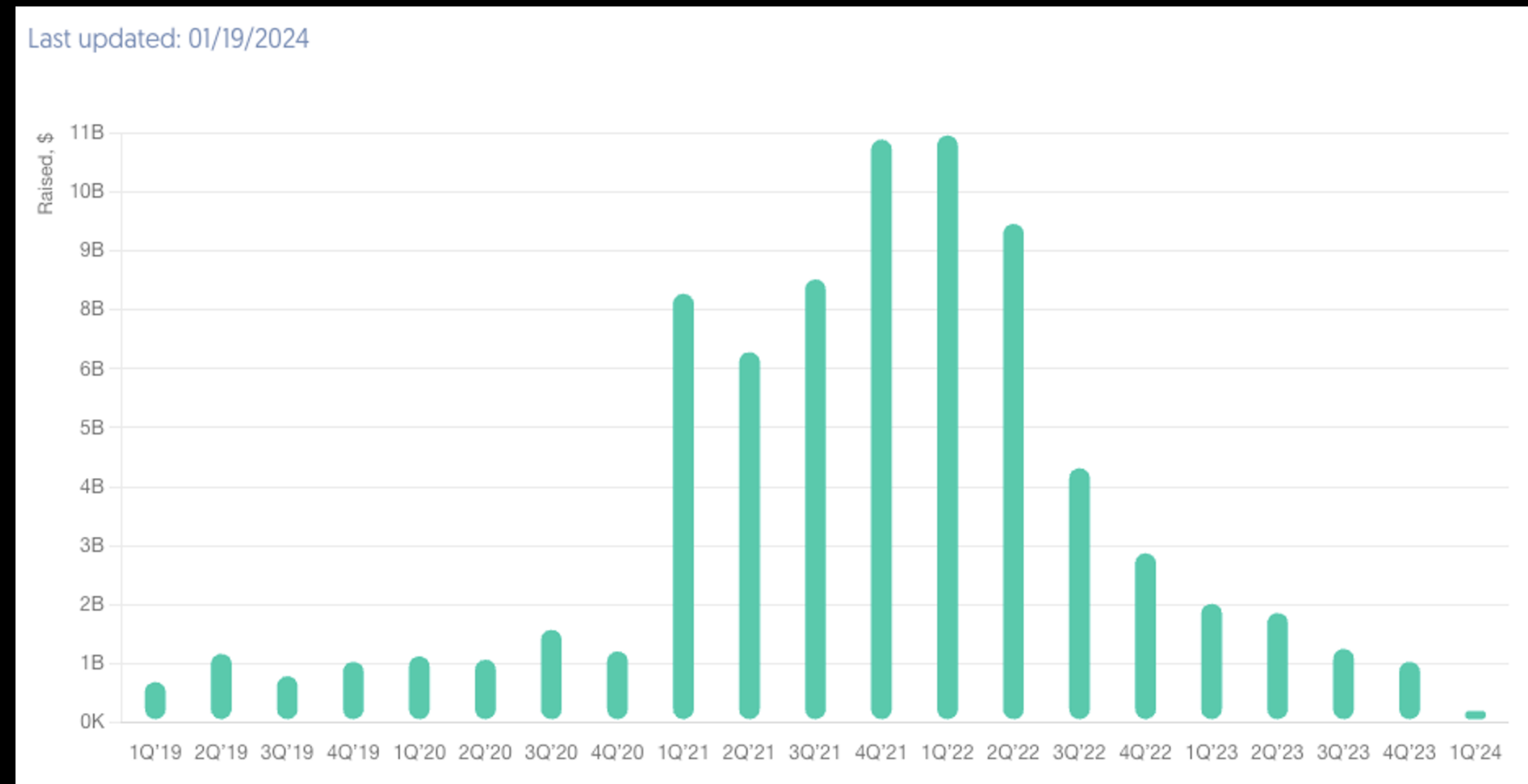
Identifying opportunities and  
building sustainable ecosystems  
with real-world impact

Over the last 5 years, we've worked closely with over 60 different project teams on their product, brand, and organizational design.



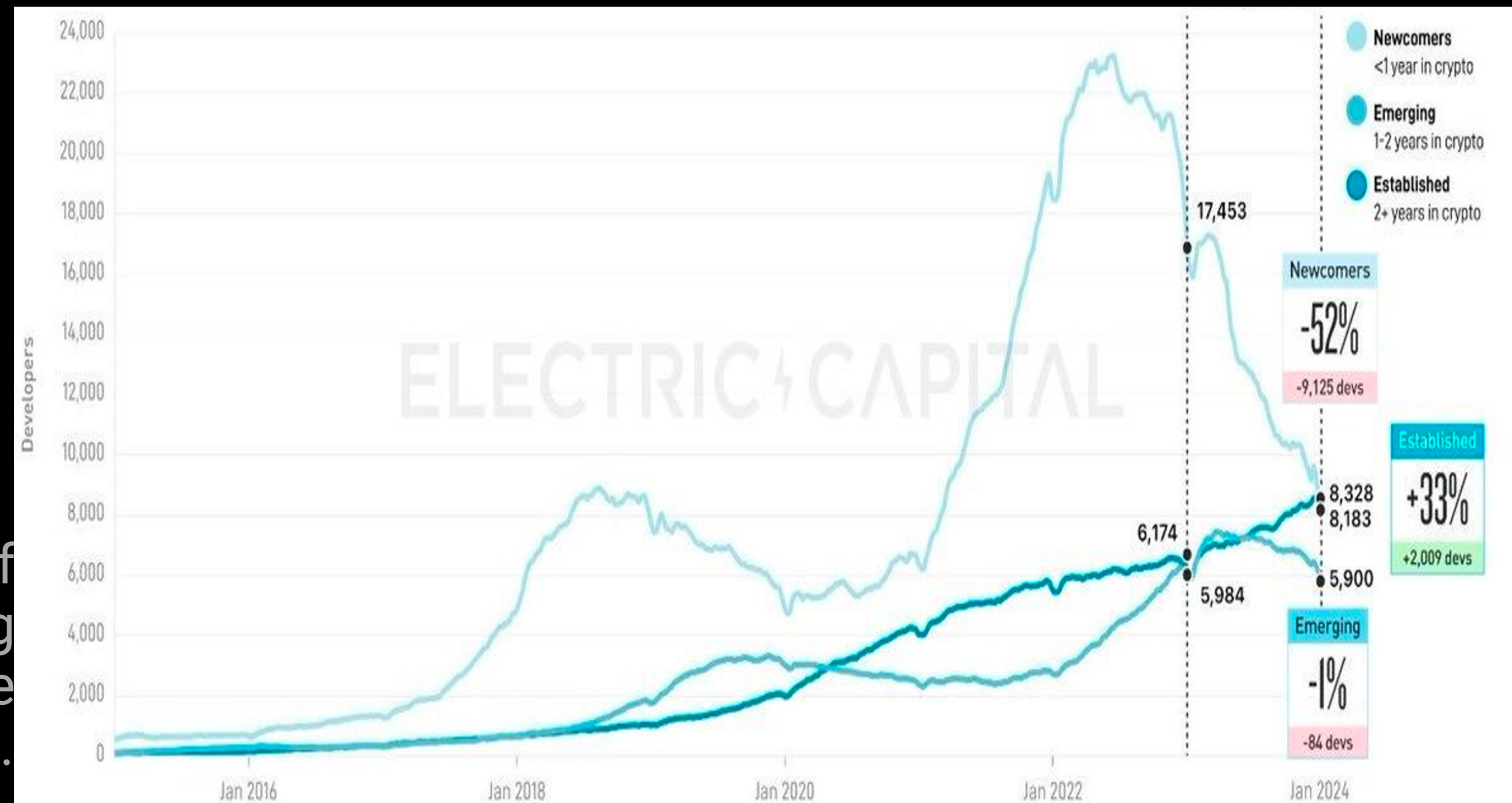
Since 2021 VCs were able to pay back only 15% of the investments they received and their limited partners and investors are asking for their money. There is over \$300bn of unspent cash<sup>1</sup>.

Investments are at their lowest since the pandemic<sup>2</sup>. Since startup collapses have in 2023<sup>3</sup>, VCs seem to be increasingly cautious.



But discovering new opportunities gets harder in an increasingly noisy market.

In the last bull cycle, the number of inexperienced developers joining web3 skyrocketed and now the space is heating up again.



We identified clear opportunities for improvement in web3 projects

## Internal cohesion

Inconsistent team management, vague mission statements, goals and KPIs often lead to internal conflicts that delay shipping timelines

## User Research

Absent or at best flawed user research approaches hinder impact measurement and slow down the discovery of product-market fit

## Treasury management

Lack of treasury policy and management results in unnecessary burning of invested funds

Internal cohesion

User research

Treasury management

**Most teams lack clear goals** and had a lack of articulation and alignment on their organizational chart. Shifting roles and scattered internal documentation often result in proliferation of internal conflicts and blame-culture.

**Example of pivoted project:**

“In two years time we want to be the Data engine behind the blockchain economy.”

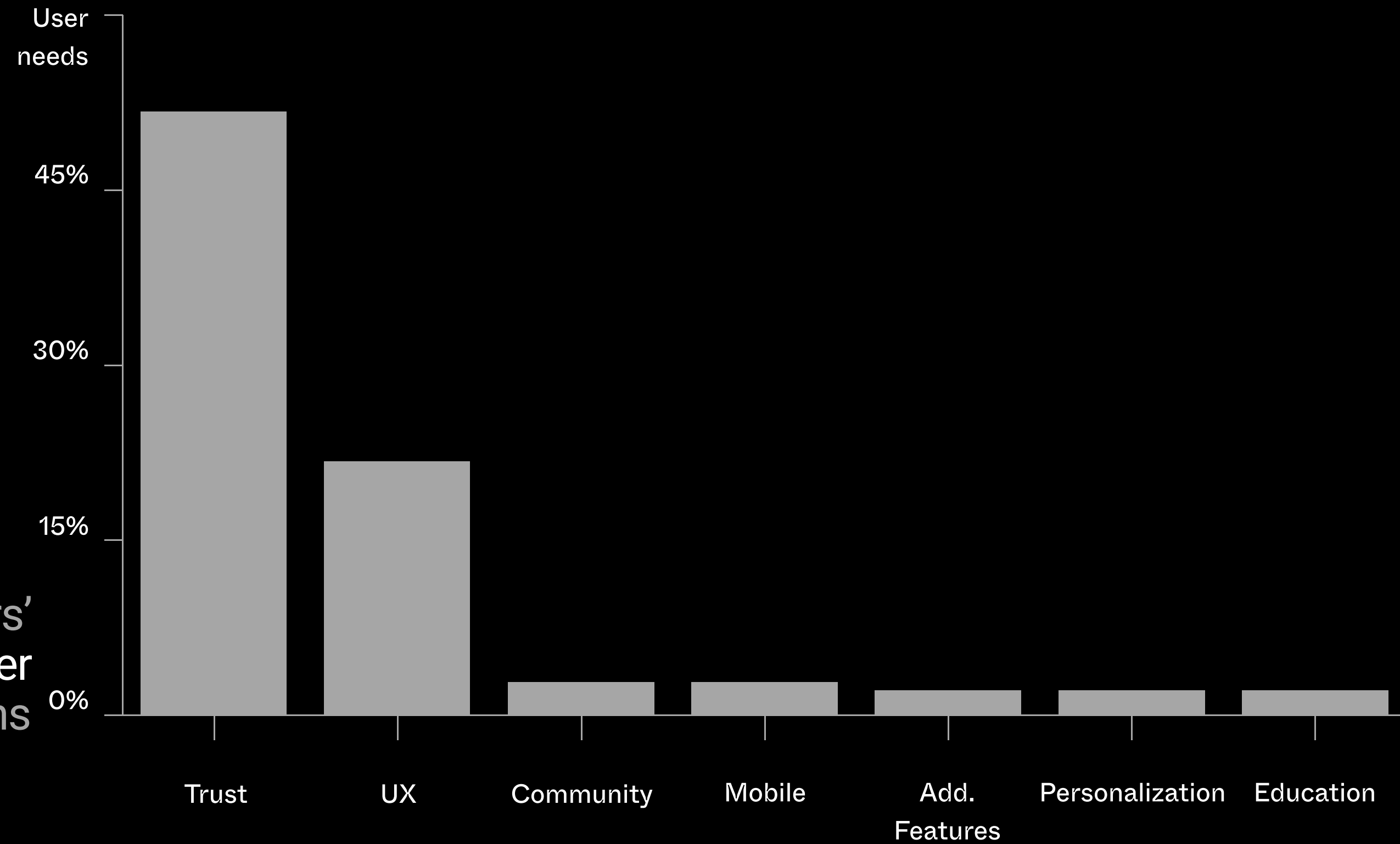
**Example of successful project:**

“In two years time, visitors to the site will intuitively understand and trust XXX and are inspired to explore web3 memberships & monetization by a rich and diverse collection of inventive projects. And it's easy for people to get involved with the community.”

Internal cohesion  
User research  
Treasury management

Based on our insights,  
users don't trust almost half of the web3  
products

Our researchers'  
recommendations to teams after  
user testing their applications



Internal cohesion  
User research  
Treasury management

Most startups are burning their funds faster than necessary. As the macro financial environment experienced a major regime change from ZIRP (Zero Interest-Rate Policy) to a positive real interest rate environment over the course of a few months, most groups we have worked with continued to store the large majority of invested funds in either fiat currency bank accounts or stablecoins pegged to fiat, both earning 0% interest. With proper oversight and direction, these projects could have pivoted their policy and shifted funds to risk-free UST paying 6%.

Quote from an interview:

“We keep our money in a US bank account and some in crypto because the funding is just for payroll, it is managed by Paco (name changed), who is a freelancer. Our token has 3x-ed in the last week. We are trying to figure out why people are buying it.”

We did not encounter a single project with a treasury management policy that was optimized for their unique project, nor continually aligned with the shifting landscape of the macro-economic environment.

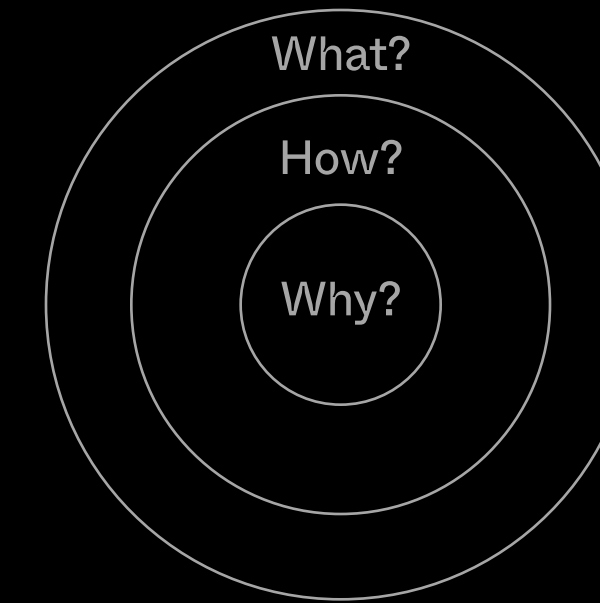


## Three pillars to assess and improve sustainability

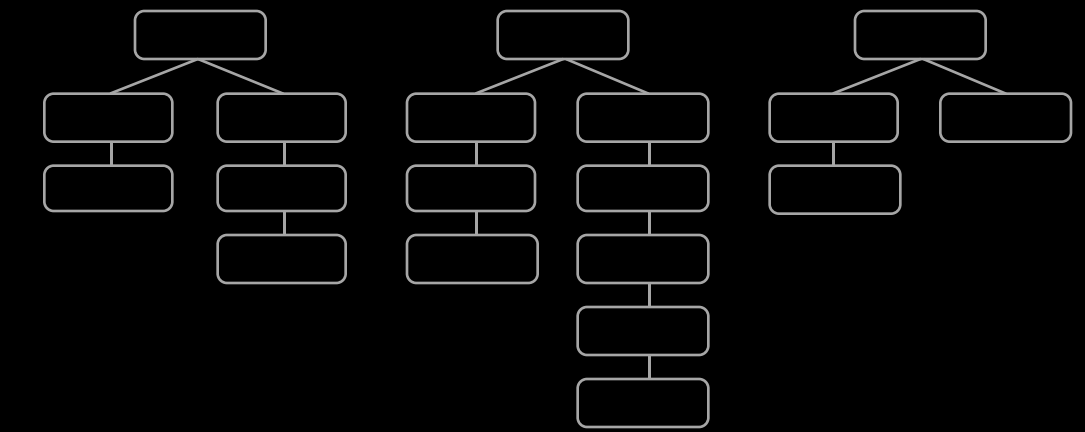
### Internal cohesion

Mission Statement & Values

“We are building ...  
for ... so that ...”



Organizational Chart



An internal mission statement and alignment on core values are the most succinct pieces of information that capture the goal.

The values of a company create authenticity and shine through in branding, marketing material, and communication style. They give users confidence to keep interacting with the project long-term.

An organizational chart and granular documentation of roles will visualise the ongoing work and how it relates to the mission. It motivates the entire team to work together and provides everyone with a reference point for conflict resolution.

[Try our workshop templates →](#)

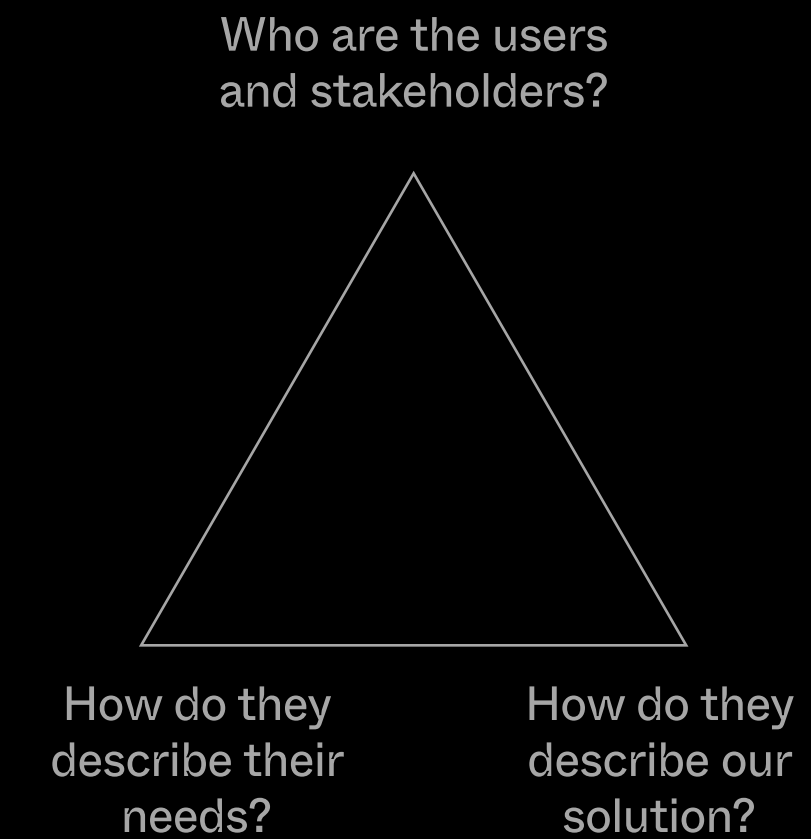
## Three pillars to assess and improve sustainability

### User research

The type of user or stakeholder and their problems are initially assumptions and usually start with individuals the team can approach directly.

The solution can be prototyped quickly and presented to the potential users for feedback.

This feedback reveals more details about the problem and creates unlimited opportunities to improve the solution design.



Here are a few general principles for asking good questions:

**Retrieve past experiences:** “What worked well for you?” or “Where did you see challenges in the past?”

**Make them open-ended:** “How do you interpret...?”

**Don’t give away clues:** “Show me what you would do next...”

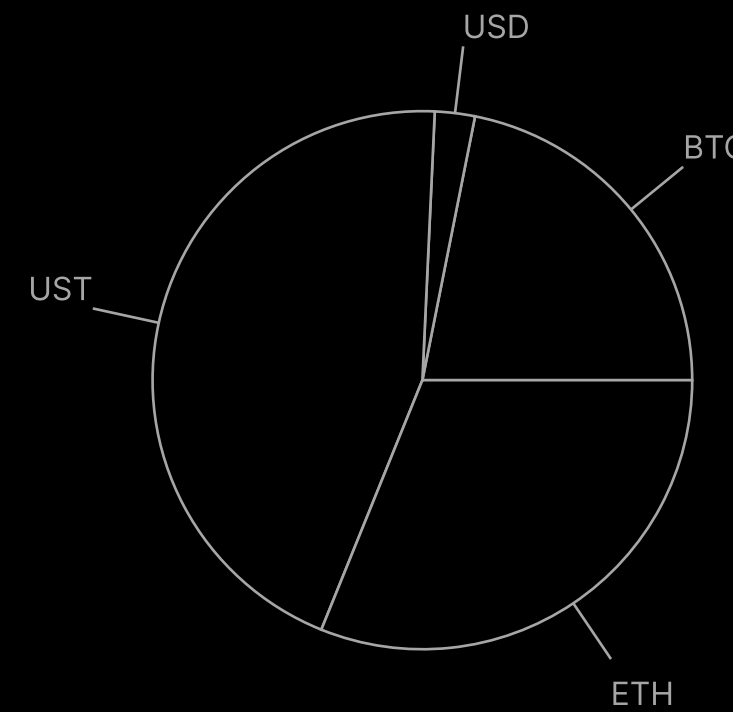
**Start broad, get specific later:** “Why is that?” “When did you notice that?”

**Avoid confirmation bias:** “Why do you like this? What do you like about it?”

[Learn from our internal user testing workflow →](#)

Three pillars to assess and improve sustainability

## Treasury & Business management



A project with \$5 million in remaining operating capital and a runway of 2 years (burning \$200,000.00 monthly), could generate a risk-free return of \$330,000.00 over the course of said two years.

The feedback from users and stakeholders shows how valuable the solution is and how close the team is in achieving their goals.

Profitability of the business develops as a consequence of closely following the information from the two previous points and directing resources towards the highest value density.

[Learn about our treasury policy design](#) →



Learn more about our  
assessment framework or  
tell us about your project.