

The Ethereum Foundation as a model

*Dr Alexander Ressos, TEP
Attorney-at-Law (Switzerland), Solicitor (Hong Kong),
Solicitor (England & Wales)*

The Ethereum Foundation illustrates how a crypto foundation can develop over a decade. Having started in 2014 as the issuer of the ether sale and as the developer of the protocol, it became after the launch of the network in 2015 one of many contributors to its development, alongside independent teams and companies around the world. It describes itself as a non-profit organisation that supports the Ethereum ecosystem, with the stated aim of reducing its own role over time.¹ It funds research, grants and events and maintains teams working on specific areas of the protocol.

The foundation's history shows the advantages of the Swiss form, since its assets have been protected from the claims of its founders and its purpose has remained stable while its activities have changed. Its presence in Zug has given the canton a lasting link to one of the most important crypto networks. It also shows the limits of the form, because the governance of the Ethereum network itself is not in the hands of the foundation. Changes to the protocol depend on the consensus of developers, node operators and users, a process in which the foundation has only one voice. The foundation form served as a legal anchor for a project whose real governance lies outside any legal entity.

1 Notes

1. ethereum.org, "Ethereum Foundation": the Ethereum Foundation is a non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting Ethereum and related technologies; it is not a company and not a traditional non-profit; its role is to support the ecosystem, not to control Ethereum. ↩

For general information only. This article does not constitute legal or tax advice, does not replace advice on an individual case and creates no lawyer-client relationship. It reflects the legal position as of September 2026.

Online version: helveticaregister.com/zug-the-ethereum-foundation-as-a-model