

SAMUEL BABALOLA

Product Manager | Web3 Ecosystem Builder

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SUMMARY

Product manager with hands-on ownership of roadmap and delivery for Kharon Pay, a Starknet-based fiat-crypto on- and off-ramp, combined with 2 years leading operations and program design at Web3Bridge, Africa's largest blockchain developer education organization. Guided 20+ student capstone projects, authored PRDs for Cohort 10, and curated student-proposed ideas from Cohort 11 onward; several went on to secure ecosystem grants from Starknet and Lisk. Also built the organizational systems that scaled Web3Bridge from a lean startup team to a team of 30+. Comfortable operating across the full stack of a product: strategy and roadmap, frontend implementation (Next.js/React), user feedback loops, and stakeholder and grant management.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Product Manager & Frontend Engineer, Kharon Labs | Aug 2024 – Jan 2026

- Owned product strategy and roadmap for Kharon Pay, a Starknet-based fiat-crypto on/off-ramp, from architecture decisions through internal beta testing ahead of a planned public launch
- Designed and built production frontend flows in Next.js/React, working directly with backend engineers to define API contracts and align on fiat-crypto conversion logic
- Ran internal beta-testing rounds that surfaced recurring UX issues in payment flow, modal design, and mobile responsiveness, feeding fixes back into the frontend ahead of public launch
- Raised early concerns about building exclusively on Starknet given limited token liquidity and usage in the target Nigeria/Africa market; the team proceeded given the available education grant and technical interest
- After Starknet awarded a \$5K grant to validate product-market fit ahead of a conditional \$25K liquidity grant, it could not demonstrate PMF within the six-week window and sunset Kharon Pay in January 2026 rather than continue carrying microservices infrastructure costs without it

Head of Operations / Ecosystem Lead, Web3Bridge | Aug 2023 – Aug 2025

- Directed day-to-day operations for 5 Solidity bootcamps (Cohorts 09–13) plus Starknet and Cartesi bootcamps, covering curriculum, student welfare, staff and facilities, and capstone demo days; onboarded 300+ developers and graduated 150+, including a record 50+ graduates from 60+ accepted in Cohort 11, the highest completion rate in Web3Bridge history
- Led admissions and onboarding for Cohorts 10–13; shifted from a three-stage to a two-stage assessment process for Cohort 10 (moving the blockchain-fundamentals test into the first week of classes) to speed decisions without lowering the bar, and onboarded students via soulbound tokens, Discord, and Collab.land
- Built v1 and later managed the team that shipped v2 of Classmate, an on-chain attendance and assessment dApp. Since Web3Bridge issues no formal certificates, differentiated NFTs minted at each program stage doubled as attendance records and portable proof-of-completion, giving students, mentors, and sponsors a single verifiable source of truth in place of spreadsheets
- Built and deployed a Node.js/Flutterwave registration payment system with real-time Google Sheets tracking after a Telegram impersonator began targeting applicants during manual transfers, closing the fraud vector and giving leadership live visibility into payments
- Authored PRDs and assigned Cohort 10's capstone teams, including Strimz (token streaming), CrowdPass (event management), HostIt (event management), and Coiton (real estate listing and trading), then moved later cohorts to a student-proposed model, personally assessing and selecting ideas for execution; several went on to secure grants from Lisk and Starknet
- Independently secured the Starknet Education Grant and ran a 6-week Cohort 10 masterclass that led capstone teams (e.g., CrowdPass) to port projects from Solidity to Cairo and secure follow-on Starknet grants; Cohort 10's results also led Lisk to extend sponsorship for three additional cohorts
- Built GitHub-based repositories for program delivery and reporting (Cohort XII, Cohort XIII, Rust Masterclass I), adopted by 170+ contributors and forked 190+ times, cutting manual sponsor-reporting overhead

- Designed organizational systems and reporting structures that enabled the team to scale from under 10 to 30+ members across departments
- Oversaw Discord/Telegram developer communities of 1,000+ members; trialed a training-officer pod model (Cohorts 11–12) against a fully separated onsite/online program structure (Cohort 13), and dropped the training-officer model once the program split showed stronger retention
- Organized flagship ecosystem events, including Web3Lagos Conference & Hackathon 2024 (Africa's largest Web3 conference: 1,800+ registered, 1,500+ attendees), Celebrating Ethereum at 10, Scroll RWA Summit Lagos, and three others
- Also directed a separate Web2 developer track (Launchpad and Advanced, spanning HTML/CSS/JS through React.js) across 4 cohorts, onboarding an estimated 500+ additional developers alongside the Web3 program

Media & Community Associate, Web3Bridge | Jun 2023 – Aug 2023

- Produced photography and video documentation for Cohort 09
- Supported cohort management and event logistics ahead of transitioning into operations leadership

SKILLS

- **Product Management:** PRD authorship & product strategy, roadmap ownership, cross-functional delivery with engineering, user feedback loops, dApp product onboarding & adoption
- **Technical Foundation:** Next.js/React (production), Solidity, Node.js/Express, Web3.js/Ethers.js
- **Program & Operations:** Bootcamp design & delivery, admissions strategy, curriculum development, organizational systems design
- **Partnerships & Grants:** Proposal writing, sponsor engagement & reporting (Starknet, Lisk, Scroll)
- **Community & Ecosystem:** Discord/Telegram community management (1,000+ members), retention strategy, developer onboarding
- **Tools:** Notion, Figma, Trello, Slack, Google Workspace, Miro, Mailchimp, Collab.land

EDUCATION & CERTIFICATIONS

- Tekedia mMBA: Completed, 2025
- B.Eng, Mechanical Engineering, Kwara State University, Nigeria
- Google Project Management Certificate: In progress
- LinkedIn Learning: Product Management: Launching Your Product; Technical Product Management; Technology for Product Managers (Mar 2023)
- Udemy: Become a Product Manager, Learn the Skills & Get the Job (Cole Mercer & Evan Kimbrell)