

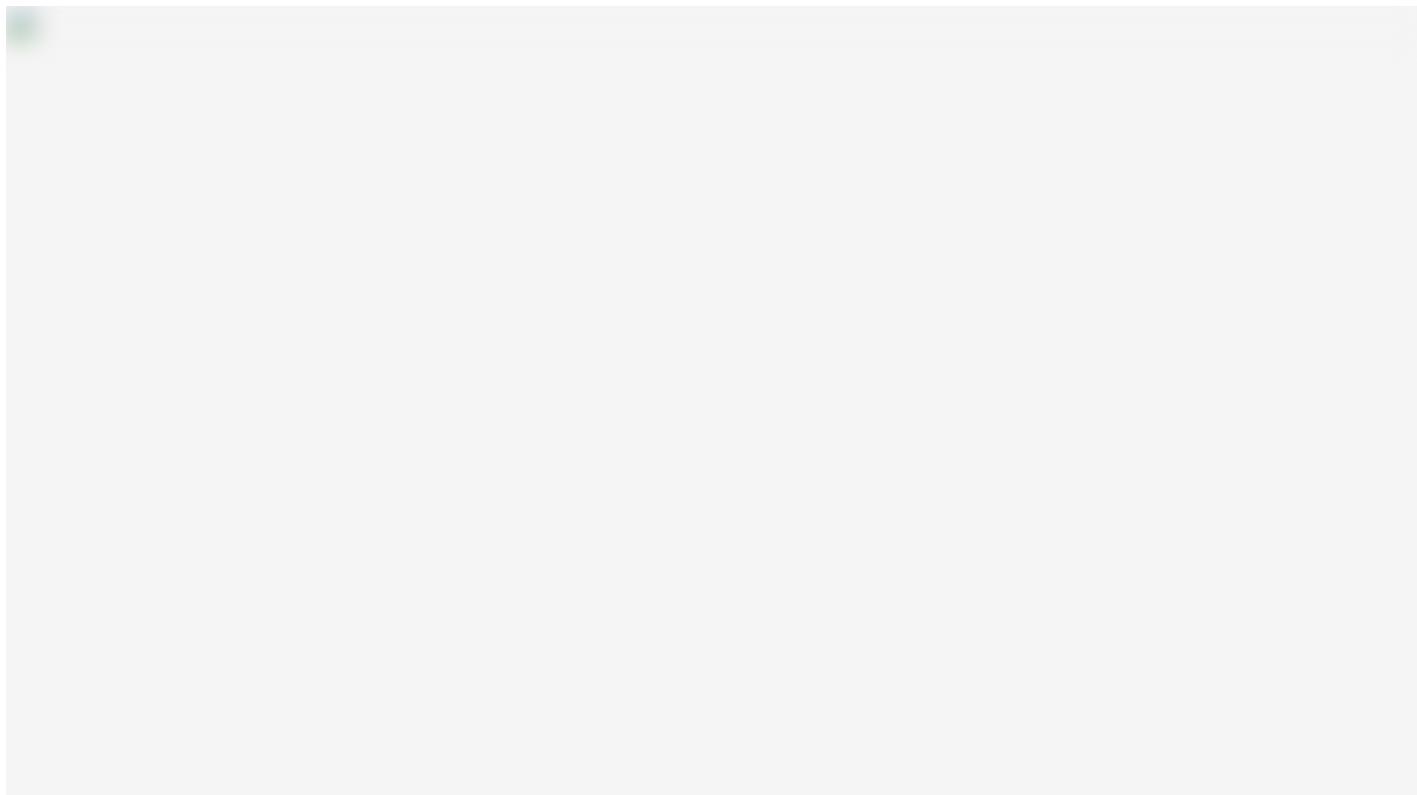
19-Year-Old Behind New Digital Currency Is Insanely Smart



Zara Stone

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**Ethereum**

Vitalik Buterin is 19 years old, and he has never been paid in dollars. Or any physical money for that matter. Ever since he started earning a full-time salary he has been paid solely in Bitcoin. That's not the most traditional route, but Buterin is the textbook definition of an early adopter. The Toronto-based writer and developer currently works for *Bitcoin Magazine*, has an ownership role for [KryptoKit](#), a Bitcoin browser plugin that simplifies fund transfers), and he helps develop programming for a number of Bitcoin-related services - check out [his Github](#) for

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His new project is called Ethereum, a new digital currency that Buterin created and which he's launching in about two weeks.

Ethereum is a brand new coin. Yes, another "AltCoin," a digital currency to add to the likes of Bitcoin, Litecoin, Dogecoin (the meme coin), the possible Kanye West Coin, and more.

But this is different. Why? Partly because this IS Vitalik Buterin, someone who, at 19, has been actively involved with digital currency for 2 years and has a ridiculously impressive array of accomplishments under his belt. He has developed multiple Bitcoin applications, has written code for BitcoinX ("colored coins") and co-founded *Bitcoin Magazine*.

In a whitepaper (professional document) that he showed me at CES in Las Vegas, Buterin writes Ethereum is "a superior foundational layer offering a uniquely powerful scripting system on top of which arbitrarily advanced contracts, currencies and other decentralized applications can be built."

In layman's terms, that's a new type of digital currency, similar to Bitcoin but expanded to allow new functionality. Buterin is opening up Ethereum to allow other things such as integration with stocks and bonds and algorithmic trading to be built on top of it.

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So what's his background? Buterin attended college for a year — and then left due to Bitcoin opportunities. "I don't regret it," he said. "Look at what I'm doing now."

So basically, this dude really REALLY knows his stuff, and if half of the terms he describes are incomprehensible to you, well, that's OK.

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More details to come soon. Will you be investing? Who wouldn't want to ride the first (possible) wave?

Update: You can watch our Google Hangout with Vitalik Buterin below, and [a longer interview with him here](#).

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