

Whitepaper

Australia's Crypto Investors

Trends shaping financial services engagement



Contents

Crypto in 2025	3
Adoption	4
The Crypto Investor	7
Inside the crypto investor's portfolio	10
Crypto in overall investment strategy	12
Australia's crypto advice gap	13
Crypto in superannuation	14
About Us	17

Crypto in 2025 Building bridges to the new digital economy



In 2025 cryptoassets continue to transition from the fringes of finance to the core of global capital markets. With global market capitilisation peaking close to \$6.5 Trillion AUD in mid-August, cryptocurrency investment now outpaces the market capitalisation of Microsoft (\$5.8T), Apple (\$5.2T), and long-valued precious metal, Silver (3.3T)¹. Bitcoin, which held a market dominance of around 60% in August, hit new all-time-high, surpassing \$188,000 AUD – garnering renewed mainstream attention to the asset class².

Once viewed as a speculative niche, CoreData's research finds cryptoassets like Bitcoin and Ethereum are increasingly being integrated into the portfolios of everyday Australians. While cryptocurrencies remain a relatively young asset class, they are now over a decade on into their maturity, and market participants increasingly recognise them as a lasting fixture of the financial landscape.

This shift is evident in the rise of institutional investment seen globally in recent years, as leading asset managers, pension funds, and banks expand their exposure — not only through direct holdings, but also via custody solutions, tokenised assets, and blockchain-enabled financial services. A key catalyst has been the growth of crypto exchange-traded funds (ETFs), which provide investors with simple, regulated, and liquid access to the market. Following ETF approvals in the U.S. and Europe, similar products such as the Global X 21Shares Bitcoin and Ethereum ETFs gained momentum in Australia, attracting interest from self-managed super fund (SMSF) trustees and financial advisers seeking new avenues for diversification.

In Australia, the regulatory landscape is maturing as the government seeks to balance oversight and innovation. The Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) and the Treasury have issued clearer guidelines on digital asset licensing, custody, and disclosure, providing a stronger foundation for compliance and growth. Recently, ASIC has taken steps to make stablecoins more accessible in Australia, easing the rules so intermediaries can distribute coins issued by AFS-licensed providers. ASIC has also moved to support the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) and the Digital Finance Cooperative Research Centre (DRCRC) in Project Acacia, a joint initiative exploring the potential use cases of digital assets in the Australian economy. Such efforts bring greater clarity and trust to the market, giving local platforms room to grow and making Australia a more attractive destination for global firms looking to invest and innovate.

Together, these developments are reflective of a new era in the evolution of cryptocurrency. Once the antithesis to traditional finance (TradFi), crypto and the broader field of decentralised finance (DeFi) now increasingly intersect with mainstream finance. For those in the financial services, this convergence is no longer a distant curiosity but a strategic consideration for those looking to stay relevant, build trust and differentiate. This means understanding how crypto is reshaping customer expectations, driving investor behaviour, and creating new demands in wealth management. This paper explores the trends driving crypto adoption in Australia, and their potential implications on the financial services.

¹ According to data from CoinMarketCap and CompaniesMarketCap, 2025. Values converted to AUD.

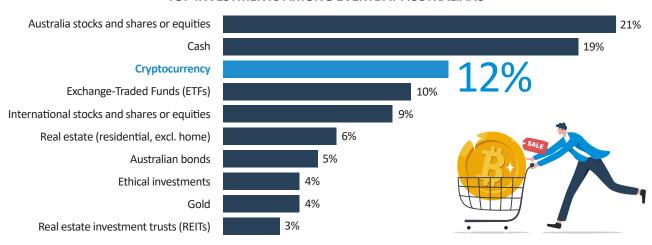
² As per CoinMarketCap 2025.

Adoption

More than one in ten adult Australians own cryptocurrency

Exploring crypto adoption in the Australian population, this years' research found that 12% of Australian adults hold cryptocurrency. Cryptocurrency is now the third most commonly held asset, surpassing ETFs as well as international equities, a testament to its mainstream appeal¹.

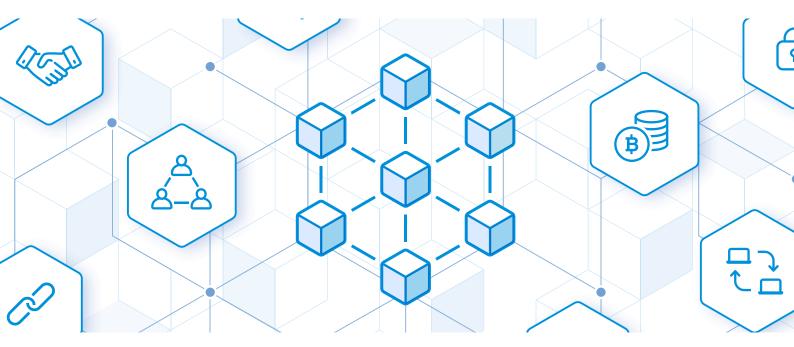
TOP INVESTMENTS AMONG EVERYDAY AUSTRALIANS



Seven in ten crypto holders entered the market between 2020 and April 2025, with adoption rates peaking in 2020 amid the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Lockdowns and social isolation gave people more time to invest and trade, while the shift to digital channels changed how consumers managed their money.

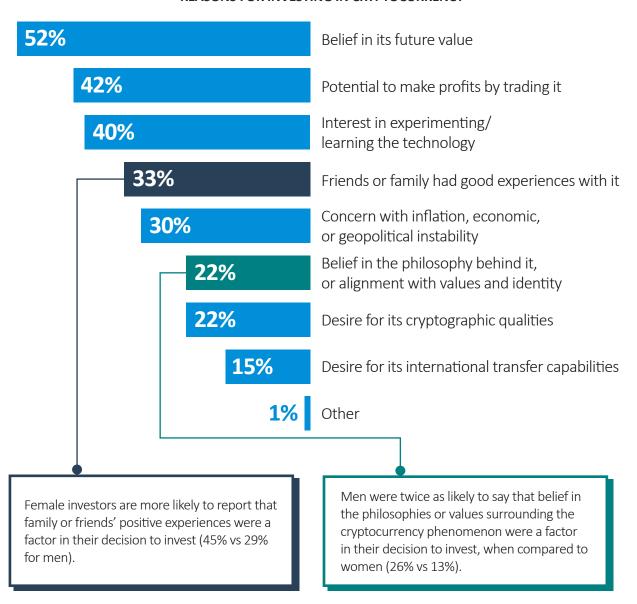
Around the same time, regulators took a more proactive approach toward tax reporting, product requirements and consumer protection – reflecting recognition that cryptocurrency was no longer a fringe activity but a financial market in its own right, warranting the same level of oversight as traditional assets. While clearer rules added responsibilities, they also worked to legitimise the sector and enable fintechs and investors alike to make commitments to the space.

¹ Excluding primary residence and standard superannuation accounts.



Half adopted crypto for its future potential, with one in five drawn to its philosophy or cryptographic qualities

REASONS FOR INVESTING IN CRYPTOCURRENCY



Investor motivations for entering cryptocurrency are diverse but telling. Over half (52%) cited belief in the long-term value of cryptoassets, while 42% pursued trading profits, a trend amplified by the rise of trading content across social media platforms amid the pandemic. Four in ten wanted to understand the technology through hands-on experience, while a third were encouraged by positive experiences from friends or family who had invested. Interestingly, 22% were motivated by philosophical alignment with the principles behind crypto, such as decentralisation and autonomy. While a smaller group, it highlights the rise of alternative views on money and value that financial institutions should monitor for future consumer trends.

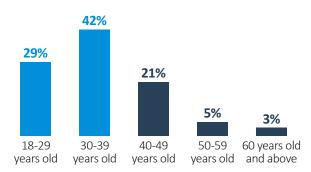
The typical crypto holder is a man in his 30s, with ownership peaking among those earning \$150-\$250k annually

GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF CRYPTO OWNERS



More than three quarters of crypto holders in Australia are male (77%). Females make up 23% in 2025, on par with November 2023 (26%).

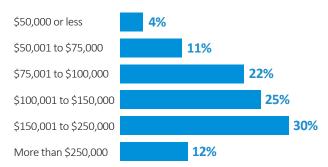
AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CRYPTO OWNERS



71% of crypto holders are under 40 years old. The largest group of crypto holders are those in their 30s, making up 42% of the total crypto holder population.

Since gauging gender distribution in 2023, crypto markets remain largely male dominated, with just a quarter of holders in Australia being women. Ownership also skews younger, with cryptocurrency most common among people in their 30s. Cryptocurrency has often been renowned by enthusiasts as an easily accessible asset class – offering 24/7 access globally, without the need for an intermediary – yet navigating cryptocurrency requires users to develop their technical literacy in ways not required by traditional asset classes. As a result, cryptocurrencies still predominantly appeal to those who are tech-savvy, yet also financially confident enough to navigate risk. Not only do holders have to be comfortable with market volatility, they also need to exercise continuous awareness of scams, cybersecurity and risk management to keep their cryptoassets safe.

CRYPTO OWNERSHIP BY PERSONAL ANNUAL INCOME

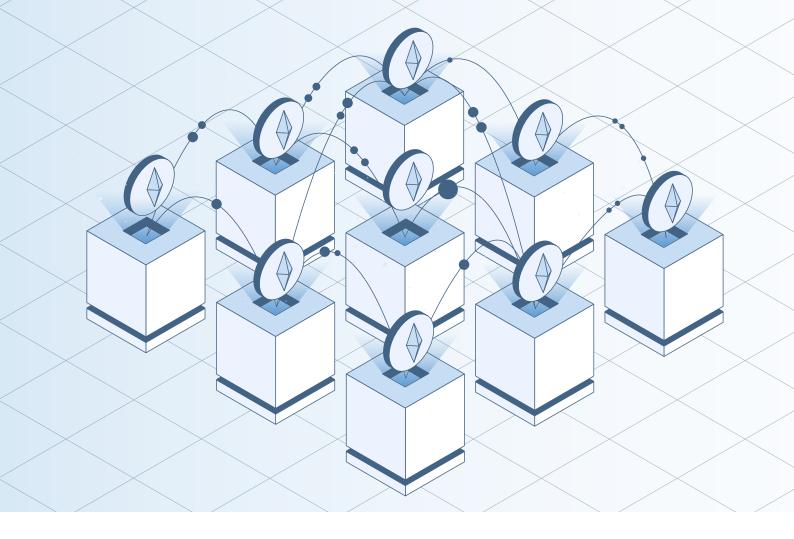


If you live in Australia and earn over \$100k a year, you have a 1 in 4 likelihood of having invested in crypto. This compares with just a 1 in 10 chance for those earning \$100k or under annually.

High earners are more likely to own crypto

Cryptocurrency ownership in Australia rises with income up to a threshold, peaking among individuals earning \$150,000–\$250,000, where around 30% hold the asset. Beyond this level, ownership declines, suggesting limited penetration among the very highest earners. Nevertheless, crypto has gained traction among the top 20% of earners; a group with greater discretionary income and relatively high rates of financial literacy.

Financial independence also plays a role. Among those solely responsible for their finances, 16% hold cryptocurrency, compared with 9% of partnered individuals and 6% of those sharing financial responsibilities with a close family member. This indicates that personal control over financial decisions, free from shared obligations such as mortgages, increases the likelihood of investing in higher-risk assets.



The Crypto Investor

Over a third of Australian investors own cryptocurrency

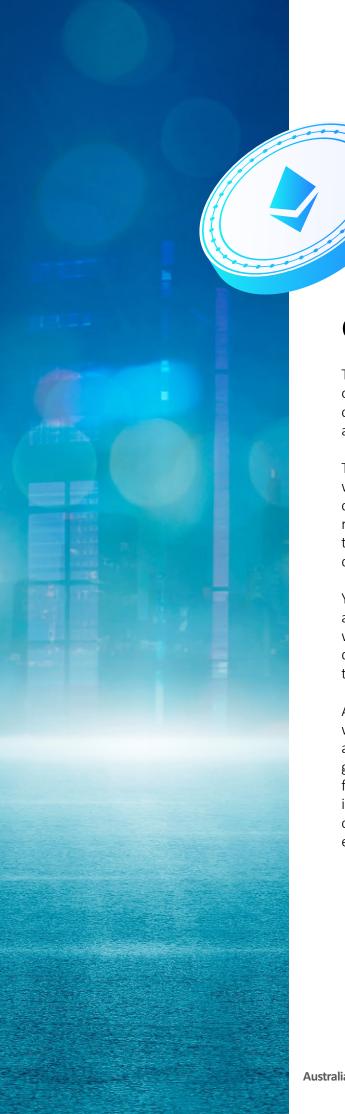
Cryptocurrency ownership among Australian investors has seen significant growth in recent years, reaching 38% in April 2025. These results demonstrate a notable shift in investor sentiment, whereby once niche assets are cementing their place in mainstream diversified portfolios.

Notably, 90% of cryptocurrency holders are not solely invested in digital assets – they also hold more traditional investments, such as Australian equities (57%), cash (55%), exchange-traded funds (37%), international equities (36%) and gold (24%).

Such figures demonstrate that today's crypto crowd is mainly comprised of broadly engaged investors rather than speculative outliers, signaling that crypto investors in 2025 are seeing it as one part of their overall wealth management strategy.

Beyond highlighting the growing legitimacy of digital assets, this trend carries significant implications for the financial services sector. These include shifting investor preferences among a rising cohort drawn to digital assets, and the mainstream adoption of new perspectives on money and value, shaped by the cultural context of cryptocurrencies.

AUSTRALIAN INVESTORS 38% 62% Holds crypto Does not hold crypto





Crypto as a gateway asset

This years' research uncovered another compelling trend: one in four crypto holders with diversified portfolios said cryptocurrency was their first investment – making it a 'gateway asset' for 22% of holders.

This pattern is especially pronounced among young investors, with a third of multi-asset holders under 30 reporting that crypto marked the beginning of their investment journey. This reflects how cryptocurrency has broadened investment access through brokerless transactions, fractional investing, and digital-native infrastructure.

Yet this trend points to something deeper: financial journeys are increasingly starting outside traditional channels. Investors whose first exposure is through crypto markets are likely to develop different risk appetites and expectations compared to those who start with more conventional, regulated assets.

As a growing number of young investors enter the financial world through crypto markets, they bring with them new assumptions and demands. Traditional institutions will face growing pressure to offer products and services that mirror the flexibility, decentralisation, and speed of the options available in crypto markets. This includes not only broader access to cryptoassets themselves, but also meeting a new generation's expectations for borderless, private, and instant transactions.



Investors turn to crypto to chase growth, invest fractionally and engage in fast, borderless transactions

Today's crypto investors are increasingly weighing cryptocurrency against traditional asset classes such as stocks and real estate when considering long-term performance.

More than eight in ten crypto investors believe cryptocurrencies will ultimately outperform traditional investments. This optimism is not without reason: Bitcoin has delivered a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 75% over the past year, far surpassing the S&P 500's 15% return in the same period. Such figures illustrate why crypto is viewed not merely as a speculative play, but as a serious contender in diversified portfolios.

Comparing cryptocurrency to traditional assets, over half cite the potential for growth as a key benefit. Accessibility is another differentiator: 4 in 10 highlight the absence of minimum investment requirements as a major drawcard. This resonates particularly with women, of whom 48% say it is among their top three perceived benefits, compared to 35% of male investors, suggesting crypto may play a unique role for them in expanding financial inclusion and practical access to capital markets.

Beyond investment returns, investors are drawn to the distinctive attributes of digital assets. Around a third cite fast, borderless, and highly liquid transactions as critical benefits, alongside the appeal of decentralised ownership and control. While cryptocurrency comes with challenges of uncertainty and volatility, 84% believe the upside potential is greater than the downside risk.

Interestingly, a significant portion of crypto holders (76%) say they are even willing to trade convenience for greater control over their asset. Such findings demonstrate a growing appetite for decentralised finance (DeFi), the emerging class of products and services built on blockchain technology, which are positioned as challenging the traditional gatekeepers of capital and offering investors greater autonomy over their wealth.

TOP BENEFITS OF CRYPTOCURRENCY VS TRADITIONAL ASSETS

54% High potential for value growth No minimum investment 39% amounts Fast, borderless transactions/ 32% liquidity Decentralised ownership 32% and control More accessible to a wider 23% range of investors Enhanced privacy, security and 23% censorship resistance Less correlation to traditional 22% markets/ portfolio diversification Increased transparency and 20% publicly visible transactions Yield opportunities **16%** Access to leverage and trading strategies



84% of crypto holders agree:

"I invest in cryptocurrency because I believe it will outperform traditional assets over the long-term"

Inside the crypto investors' portfolio

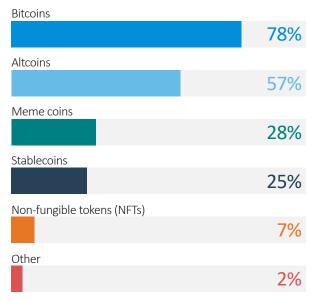
Bitcoin remains the cornerstone of crypto portfolios, held by 78% of cryptocurrency investors. As the original cryptocurrency, Bitcoin has built a reputation over more than a decade as a trusted store of value and a foundational asset in the crypto ecosystem. Its dominance reflects the confidence investors place in its stability and long-term potential.

For many, trust in Bitcoin stems not only from its historical performance and longevity, but also from the belief that it is more decentralised than other cryptocurrencies. The Proof-of-Work consensus it uses to validate transactions on its blockchain means no single entity can control the network, with changes to the software requiring proposals to be reviewed and accepted by a global community of developers, miners,

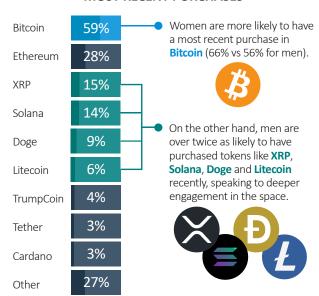
node operators and users. Bitcoin's fixed supply of 21 million coins has also earned it comparisons to gold, a trait known as 'digital scarcity'. These distinctions have led many to argue that Bitcoin belongs in a class of its own.

Regardless of strong market favouritism for Bitcoin, over half of crypto holders invest in altcoins. Popular choices include *Ethereum*, a leading platform for smart contracts and decentralised apps, *XRP* (*Ripple*), a blockchain platform designed to enable fast, low-cost cross-border payments and settlements for financial institutions, and *Solana*, a general purpose blockchain platform aimed at powering DeFi applications, non-fungible tokens (NFTs) and other emerging internet infrastructure, often referred to as Web 3.0.

CRYPTO ASSETS HELD



MOST RECENT PURCHASES



Making sense of meme coins



A minority of crypto holders (28%) gravitate toward meme coins, often for the potential price gains, which also make them infamous for their pump-and-dump lifecycles. Often passed like hot-potatoes in times of volatility, these high-risk and often dubious tokens have gained devoted communities, signaling emerging — even if short lived — forms of exchange value, captured by themes of virality and cultural relevance.

Such phenomena are a reflection of the changing nature of money and value in the age of the internet, whereby value is increasingly imagined in symbolic, even personalised forms by the young and digitally-immersed. Amid the gamification and personalisation of finance, this trend speaks to a future where assets in one's portfolio are not mere values on a spreadsheet- they also carry social meanings, acting as status symbols or signalling membership in various communities.



Female crypto holders more likely to hold Bitcoin, while men engage more broadly across cryptoassets

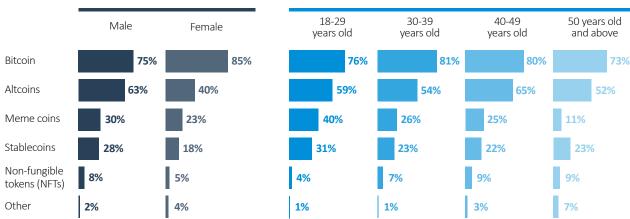
Differences in crypto ownership are apparent when looking at gender. Female crypto holders are found to champion Bitcoin, while showing lower engagement with the broader range of cryptoassets compared to male holders. This is especially pronounced with altcoins -63% of male crypto holders own altcoins, compared to just 40% of female holders. Similar, though smaller, gaps are also evident in holdings of meme coins and stablecoins, suggesting women may take a more cautious or selective approach to emerging, higher-risk digital assets.

This trend reflects deeper engagement among male investors more broadly, likely influenced by greater confidence in navigating financial decisions and risk. Cryptocurrency culture has traditionally resonated more with men, while its appeal to women remains comparatively limited. While this is gradually shifting as female adoption rises and more women enter the space, Australia still has ground to cover before women's engagement is on par with men's.

From an age perspective, Bitcoin holds broad appeal across generations. On the other hand, meme coins stand out among investors under 30, with 40% of crypto users between 18 and 29 years old reporting holding them. While partly expected due to younger generations' more carefree approach to risk, the prevalence of meme coins among this digitally native cohort also reflects strong ties to internet culture and online communities. Interestingly, while NFT ownership remains relatively low, it spans age groups — older investors are participating too, challenging the notion that digital collectibles are solely the domain of the young.

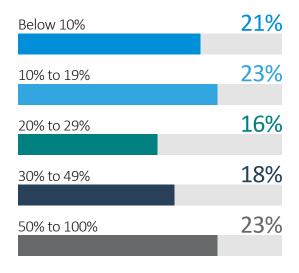
CRYPTOASSETS HELD BY GENDER

CRYPTOASSETS HELD BY AGE GROUP



Crypto in overall investment strategy

CRYPTOCURRENCY ALLOCATION IN INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO



Holders in the broad consumer segment (household income <\$150k or personal income <\$100k, excluding Mass affluent) tend to allocate more heavily to cryptocurrency, averaging 41% of their portfolio.

This concentration largely reflects lower diversification across other asset classes.

Allocations to cryptocurrency among Australian investors vary widely, reflecting differences in risk appetite and the role of professional guidance. While the median allocation is 20%, investor behavior spans extremes: 21% hold less than 10%, while 23% allocate half or more of their investable assets to crypto.

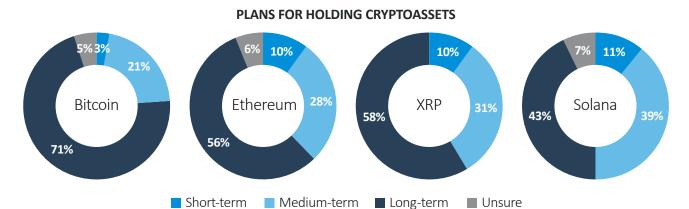
Investors who work with financial advisers- whether occasionally or on an ongoing basis — tend to allocate a smaller share of their portfolios to cryptocurrency. This pattern is also seen among high-net-worth (HNW) investors - many of whom are engaged with advisers- whose exposure to crypto as a percentage of their portfolio, is notably lower than that of the broader retail market.

The explanation lies partly in portfolio maturity. Advised and wealthier investors typically hold well-diversified portfolios across multiple asset classes. For them, cryptocurrency is an incremental addition to an established mix, rather than a foundation of their holdings. By contrast, many newer, self-directed investors encounter crypto earlier in their investment journey, resulting in larger proportional allocations within less diversified portfolios. As wealth grows, so too does the imperative for diversification, illustrating the important role advisers play in managing cross-asset risk.

Storage behaviours similarly differ by adviser engagement. Advised investors are more likely to use qualified custodian and self-custody solutions, whereas non-advised investors predominantly store holdings on centralised exchanges. These preferences highlight a growing emphasis on institutional-grade infrastructure and trusted custody as crypto matures within more traditional diversified portfolios.

7 in 10 plan to hold Bitcoin long-term

Most people holding Bitcoin consider it a long-term investment, likely thanks to its established track record, capped supply, and reputation as "digital gold". In comparison, close to half plan to hold top altcoins such as Ethereum, XRP and Solana long-term. While these altcoins may have compelling use cases and have deeply embedded infrastructure in the DeFi space, they also carry greater uncertainty, whether from governance, technology or regulation. This is leading some investors to treat them more like growth stocks than long-term stores of value.



Australia's crypto advice gap

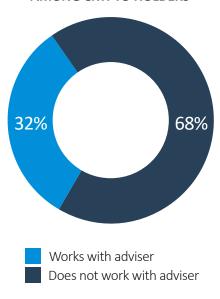
CoreData's research among financial advisers reveals just 11% have crypto products on their approved product list. The vast majority do not provide advice on crypto, creating a gap for investors seeking professional guidance. Yet demand is strong: seven in ten crypto holders say they would be interested in crypto advice if it were available.

A third of crypto investors already work with an adviser on an ongoing or occasional basis. Of these, nearly 9 in 10 have discussed cryptocurrency with their adviser, with most conversations initiated by the client themselves.

CoreData's research reveals that two-thirds of advised investors with crypto manage it outside the portfolio overseen by their adviser, highlighting a clear service gap. As more investors add crypto to their wealth mix, advisers face increasing pressure to incorporate these assets into holistic financial strategies.

Bridging this gap requires more than just an interest; advisers must be equipped to advise with confidence. This means understanding the role of crypto in a client's portfolio, knowing how to manage and custody it safely, and having access to adequate professional indemnity insurance to protect consumers and professionals alike.

FINANCIAL ADVISER ENGAGEMENT AMONG CRYPTO HOLDERS





TOP 3 EXPECTATIONS FOR ADVISER EXPERTISE ON CRYPTO



Risk management strategies for crypto assets



2 Strategies for earning yield on crypto (i.e. staking, lending, DeFi)



Personal experience in cryptocurrency investing

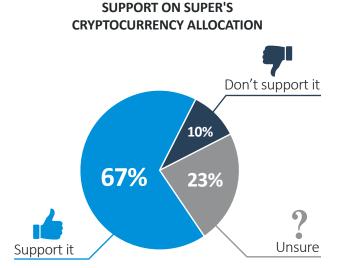
When selecting an adviser for crypto guidance, 43% of crypto investors said risk management strategies are the top three areas an adviser should demonstrate competence in to earn their trust. Expertise in yield-generation followed closely, cited by 41%, while 36% said advisers' personal experience investing in crypto would help earn their approval.

Our research suggests some advisers are meeting this expectation - 21% invest in cryptocurrency in their personal life, 13% are considering, and 8% have invested in the past. However, the 58% who have never invested and have no plans to may struggle to connect with crypto-focused clients, indicating a potential split in the market between advisers who embrace digital assets and those who do not.

Crypto in superannuation

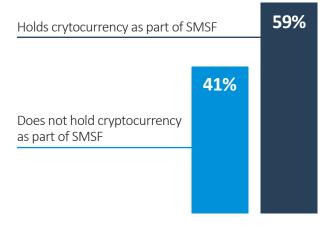
A pivotal moment for the Australian superannuation industry came in May 2024, when AMP became the first fund to allocate capital to cryptocurrency. Its \$27 million investment in Bitcoin, representing a modest 0.05% of its \$57 billion funds under management, was a significant step for the industry. At the time, Bitcoin traded between US\$60,000 and US\$70,000, and its subsequent appreciation underscored both the potential and volatility of the asset class.

To gauge investor sentiment, CoreData incorporated superannuation-specific questions into its latest crypto survey. The findings revealed strong support among existing crypto holders: 67% favoured the inclusion of crypto within super, 10% opposed it, and 23% remained undecided. While this support is unsurprising among current holders, it highlights a broader shift toward greater investment flexibility within superannuation as crypto ownership grows across the Australian population.

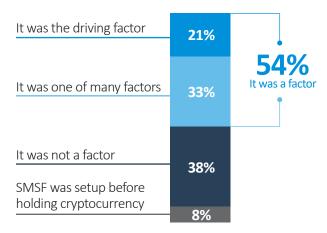


For crypto holders with Self Managed Super Funds (SMSFs), many have already acted on this sentiment, with 41% holding crypto within their SMSF. When asked whether crypto was a driver in their decision to set up an SMSF, 21% said crypto was the main reason, while 33% said it was one of multiple driving factors.

CRYPTOCURRENCY AS PART OF SELF-MANAGED SUPER FUND (SMSF) (AMONG CRYPTO HOLDERS WITH AN SMSF)



IMPACT OF CRYPTOCURRENCY ON SETTING UP SMSF



As Australia goes through its largest intergenerational wealth transfer, and wealth is passed to younger, more digitally comfortable cohorts, we may see more demands for cryptocurrency in super. However, the managed superannuation sector currently provides limited avenues for crypto exposure, leading some investors to turn to SMSFs to meet this demand.

As cryptoassets gain mainstream traction, offering structured access within super may emerge as a differentiator in an environment often marked by low member engagement. Success will depend on whether superfunds can integrate cryptoassets in a way that supports innovation while safeguarding the trust and stability that underpin the superannuation system. Given that cryptocurrency remains divisive as an asset class, success will require careful execution and ongoing dialogue with members, to ensure they are informed about the investment of their funds.



Toward blockchain integrated financial services

The growing engagement with cryptocurrencies is reshaping how individuals interact with the financial system. As access improves through ETFs, mobile platforms and regulatory clarity, crypto is no longer merely the domain of early adopters or tech enthusiasts. Investors across age groups, though especially younger investors, are increasingly viewing cryptoassets like Bitcoin and Ethereum not only as speculative opportunities but as components of diversified portfolios and vehicles for long-term wealth creation.

This shift in perception is mirrored by rising expectations around financial advice, with consumers seeking professionals who understand digital asset strategies, risk management, and yield opportunities. As adoption spreads, financial institutions looking to stay ahead of the curve must actively work to understand the world of *decentralised finance* — the growing ecosystem of financial applications built on blockchain technology which operate without traditional intermediaries.

Beyond cryptocurrency, blockchain technology is driving innovation through the tokenisation of real-world assets. By converting assets such as property, bonds and commodities into digital tokens recorded on blockchain networks, institutions can unlock liquidity, enable fractional ownership, and improve transparency in asset provenance and transactions. For financial services, this brings the potential to shorten settlement times, broaden investor access, and modernise legacy infrastructure to support interoperability, security and compliance.

In 2025, the bridges between traditional finance (TradFi) and decentralised finance (DeFi) are increasing, signalling a future shaped by deeper integration with emerging technologies. Consumers now expect always-on access to assets, seamless onboarding, and digital-native experiences that mirror the immediacy and control of DeFi platforms. These shifts also redefine trust: once grounded primarily in institutional reputation, trust is now being renegotiated around principles of decentralisation, transparency, and user autonomy. Such an evolution creates both opportunity and pressure for incumbents to rethink how they deliver services, safeguards, and advice in an environment where investors engage, often autonomously, with non-traditional asset classes.

The emergence of cryptocurrency also hints at a possible future where investments are increasingly symbolic, personalised, and linked to digital communities. Such trends suggest younger, digitally native generations will engage with finance in ways that differ markedly from today's norms. For the financial services industry, the implications are twofold: those that fail to adapt risk obsolescence, while those that evolve may find new relevance by offering trusted guidance, to bridge institutional expertise with consumer demand for autonomy and innovation. As cryptocurrency moves into the financial mainstream, institutions will be challenged to redefine their role, not as gatekeepers of capital, but as partners providing guidance, risk management, and trust in an increasingly decentralised landscape.

Methodology

In 2025, CoreData conducted a piece of in-house research to better understand the cryptocurrency landscape in Australia, by surveying Australians on their crypto adoption and investing habits. The survey included exploration of the following topics:

- Adoption and engagement with cryptocurrency
- Motivating beliefs, drivers and barriers
- Investor confidence and intentions
- Adviser engagement and views on cryptocurrency in superannuation

Fieldwork ran from 28 February 2025 to 2 April 2025, with the survey attracting 740 nationally representative responses to gauge crypto adoption rates and 311 responses from cryptocurrency users to examine engagement. To understand financial advisers' perspective on cryptocurrency, CoreData included thematic questions in its regular in-house research Adviser Pulse Check research in H1 2025, which attracted responses from 250 advisers. Together this research forms the basis of the analysis presented in this report.

About the Author



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Anna Vennonen is a Research Consultant at CoreData, where she leads research initiatives focused on cryptocurrency, alternative investments, and the evolving financial advice and broking landscapes. Her role encompasses full-cycle research design, data analysis, and strategic reporting for clients across the financial services and other sectors.

Before joining CoreData, Anna spent seven months conducting ethnographic research within decentralised finance communities, supported by Blockchain Research Lab. Her master's thesis examined how social constructions of value influence adoption, and how community ideals, practices, and social relations shape economic participation around cryptoassets. Anna has also contributed to academic literature on contemporary crowd theory, analyzing the social dynamics that drive herding behavior in cryptocurrency markets.

Alongside her Master of Social Sciences in Anthropology from the University of Helsinki, Anna holds a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Digital Humanities from the Australian National University.

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