**CLAIMS**

1. A distributed computing system configured to enable a network of users of the system to participate in one more transactions, comprising:

a distributed ledger system comprising:

a network of computing devices including at least one group of user nodes in communication with one another to participate in transacting and recording transactions in an associated blockchain, at least one user node in the group being initiated and operable via an instance of one or more web-application(s) running in a web-browser executed by one or more associated computing device(s),

the web-application(s) being configured to initiate and operate an associated user node to participate in transacting and recording transactions for at least one blockchain of at least one group of user nodes by:

obtaining a node address for the associated user node for each blockchain that the user node is configured to participate in, the node address including an indication of the associated blockchain;

requesting data indicative of a current iteration of the blockchain from the group of user nodes and storing the current iteration of the blockchain in electronic memory of the computing device(s) associated with the user node, for at least one blockchain that the user node is configured to participate in; and

enabling the associated user node to:

communicate with the group of user nodes to participate in transactions with the group of user nodes, for at least one blockchain that the user node is configured to participate in, and

carry out one or more blockchain-related tasks including creating, updating and/or maintaining the blockchain based on the transactions between the group of user nodes, for at least one blockchain that the user node is configured to participate in:

the network of computing devices enabling at least one ephemeral user node of at least

one group of user nodes to temporarily join and operate within the group of user nodes by initiating a temporary instance of the respective web application(s), the blockchain(s) associated with the group of user nodes remaining active after the temporary instance of the respective web application(s) is terminated;

the network of computing devices enabling at least one ephemeral user node of at least one group of user nodes to temporarily join and operate within the group of user nodes by initiating a temporary instance of the respective web application(s), the blockchain(s) associated with the group of user nodes remaining active after the temporary instance of the respective web application(s) is terminated; and

one or more databases accessible by the at least one node of at least one group of user nodes for recording and reading data relating to one or more transactions of at least one blockchain of the distributed ledger system.

2. A distributed computing system as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one blockchain of the distributed ledger system is substantially synchronised with the at least one database such that transactions stored in the blockchain are also stored in the at least one database; wherein each user node of at least one group of user nodes is configured to execute data access layer software for translating blockchain-related transaction data acquired from the at least one database to data suitable for use as a transaction in the distributed ledger system; wherein each user node of at least one group of user nodes is configured to execute data access layer software for translating

blockchain-related transaction data acquired from the distributed ledger system to data suitable for use to store as a transaction in the at least one database; wherein each user node of at least one group of user nodes is configured to execute database management software for enabling the node to create, read, update and/or delete one or more blockchain related transactions on the at least one database; and wherein each user node of at least one group of user nodes is configured to execute database management software for enabling the node to transmit one or more blockchain related transactions stored in the at least one database to the user node for use in distributed ledger system.

3. A distributed computing system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein each computing device is configured to execute address filtering software for identifying blockchain-related transactions originating from the node software or from the database management software for one or more node addresses related to a particular user node, for one or more blockchains.

4. A distributed computing system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the network of user nodes is operable to enable at least one ephemeral user node to temporarily join and operate within the group of user nodes and to rejoin and operate within the group of user nodes during multiple independent instances of the respective web application(s).

5. A distributed computing system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein at least one database of the one or more databases is associated with at least one user node of at least one group of user nodes and wherein for each of the at least one user node, the transactions of each blockchain of at least one blockchain associated with the user node are stored in the corresponding databases(s) and accessible by the user node; wherein the at least one user node in at least one of the group(s) of user nodes is configured to obtain executable code from associated computer-readable medium, including from a blockchain, to perform the one or more blockchain-related tasks, or to facilitate creation or launching of an instance of a distributed computing application; more wherein the network of computing devices includes a server and a database, and the at least one user node in at least one of the group(s) of user node is configured to access and execute the blockchain related tasks by communicating with the server and the database.

6. A distributed computing system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein at least one user node in at least one of the group(s) of user nodes is configured to obtain data indicative of the current iteration of a blockchain from corresponding peer user nodes in the group of user nodes, for enabling the execution of the blockchain-related task(s).

7. A distributed computing system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein at least one ephemeral user node is a full-node, wherein the full-node is operable to execute a mining task of the blockchain-related tasks for selecting a node within the network to write a next validated block to the associated blockchain; wherein the mining task is operative using a proof-of-stake method.

8. A distributed computing system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein one or more transactions executed and stored via the distributed ledger system and/or via the database have associated therewith any one or more of the following identifiers: user identifier, blockchain identifier, hierarchy level identifiers associated with a hierarchy system for a group of the user nodes, and/or an entity identifier associated with a user node.

9. A distributed computing system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the network of computing devices is configured to verify a predetermined user identity associated with a user node prior to the user node establishing communication with at least one user nodes in a group of user nodes, for the purposes of carrying out one or more blockchain-related tasks; wherein verifying the predetermined user identity comprises a two-factor authentication process.

10. A distributed computing system as claimed in claim 9, wherein the two-factor authentication process includes a biometric identification stage where a predetermined biometric characteristic of a user associated with the user node is verified .

11. A distributed computing system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims 1-9, wherein at least one user node of at least one group of user nodes is configured to access and maintain in an associated computing device, a database containing only transactions associated with at least one node address related to the user node.

12. A system as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein each user node of at least one group of user nodes is configured to access data stored in the database(s) relating to transactions associated with the user node.

13. A method for maintaining at least one blockchain stored in a distributed ledger system, the method comprising:

enabling communication between a network of computing devices including at least one group of user nodes in communication with one another to participate in transacting and recording the transactions in an associated blockchain,

enabling at least one user node in at least one of the group(s) of user nodes to be initiated and operable via an instance of one or more web-application(s) running in a web- browser executed by one or more associated computing device(s),

the web-application(s) being configured to initiate and operate an associated user node to participate in transacting and recording transactions for at least one blockchain of at least one group of user nodes by:

obtaining a node address for the associated user node for each blockchain that the user node is configured to participate in, the node address including an indication of the associated blockchain;

requesting data indicative of a current iteration of the blockchain from the group of user nodes and storing the current iteration of the blockchain in electronic memory of the computing device(s) associated with the user node, for at least one blockchain that the user node is configured to participate in; and

enabling the associated user node to:

communicate with the group of user nodes to participate in transactions with the group of user nodes, for at least one blockchain that the user node is configured to participate in, and

carry out one or more blockchain-related tasks including creating, updating and/or maintaining the blockchain based on the transactions between the group of user nodes, for at least one blockchain that the user node is configured to participate in; and

enabling at least one ephemeral user node of at least one group of user nodes to temporarily join and operate within the group of user nodes by initiating a temporary instance of the respective web application(s), the blockchain(s) associated with the group of user nodes remaining active after the temporary instance of the respective web application(s) is terminated; and

utilising one or more databases accessible by the network of nodes for creating, maintaining and updating the one or more transactions of at least one blockchain maintained by at least one of the group(s) of user nodes.

14. A method for enabling the development of a distributed computing system as claimed in any one of claim 1 to claim 13, the method comprising providing access to one or more application interfaces for enabling the generation of web-application(s) executable by the one or more computing device(s).

15. A computing platform for enabling the development of a distributed computing system as claimed in any one of claim 1 to 13, the platform comprising one or more application interfaces for enabling the generation of web-application(s) executable by the one or more computing device(s).