Electio - User Manual

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Contents

1 Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the steps involved in installing and using the Electio application. Electio is intended to be used in a Linux environment as much of the software underpinning Ethereum is developed with Linux in mind. The steps which are instructed in this document are a reflection of the project as a proof of concept and as of current standing does not represent a fully-fledged application. The intended usage of this project in its current state is in a local environment with which I have enabled election processes to be simulated.
A version of this project can be found at

http://46.101.45.240:3000

In order to use the system at this address, the mnemonic key below is necessary. How to use it will be shown further in the document

Mnemonic:

foster decide decline bridge
behave clarify click final
dolphin universe february auto

2 Installation

Below I will go through the steps required in order to setup and install the electio application. First clone or download the project via gitlab using this command:

```
1 $ git clone https://gitlab.computing.dcu.ie/morrip25/2018-ca400-morrip25.git
```

2.1 Hardware Requirements

This is a list of the mininum hardware requirements that I would advise anyone who wishes to use this application to use.

- OS : Ubuntu 14.04/16.04 LTS
- RAM : 4gb+
- Disk space : 10gb+
- CPU : Intel i3 or AMD equivalent

2.2 Software Requirements

This is the list of the required software that a user must install to use this application in their local environment. As the levels of development in the Ethereum blockchain space is quite rapid, many of these packages are still in development and are not fully fledged tools. This led to some components of the application becoming deprecated such as with MetaMask.

- Nodejs v8.11.1
- npm v5.6.0
- Google-Chrome web browser
- truffle v4.0.0 (deprecated)

- ganache-cli v7.0.0-beta.0
- metamask* v4.4.0 (deprecated)

The MetaMask tool is a google chrome plugin which is used to make transactions to the blockchain. The working version for this application can be installed manually by these steps:

- Navigate to chrome://extensions/ via the options menu or the web address bar
- Select developer mode in the extensions menu
- Select Load Unpacked on the menu bar and navigate to the electio project folder
- Select the metamask-build folder and metamask will be installed

The final step in the installation is to navigate to the project folder and simply install all packages defined in the package.json file:

```
$ npm install
```

3 Configuration

3.1 Blockchain Environment

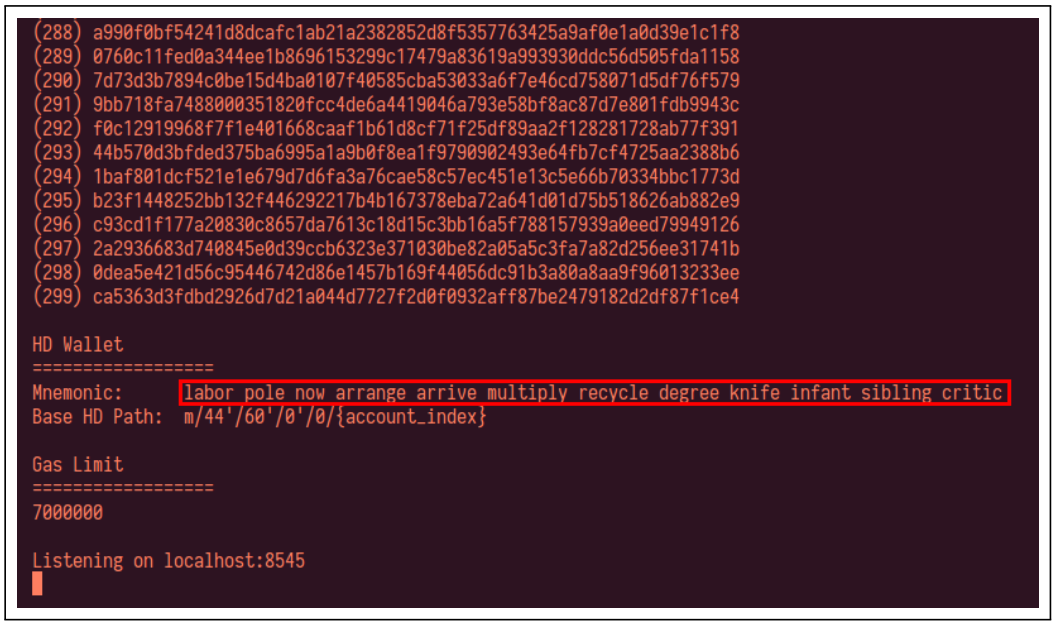
The backend of Electio is comprised of the Node.js server and the Ethereum blockchain node. The blockchain node for this application is a command-line tool called ganache-cli which simulates a blockchain environment locally. The ganache-cli can be started by simply calling

```
$ ganache—cli
```

But I find it preferable to call it with more arguments which I will explain

```
$ ganache—cli —a 300 —e 100000 ——gasLimit 7000000
```

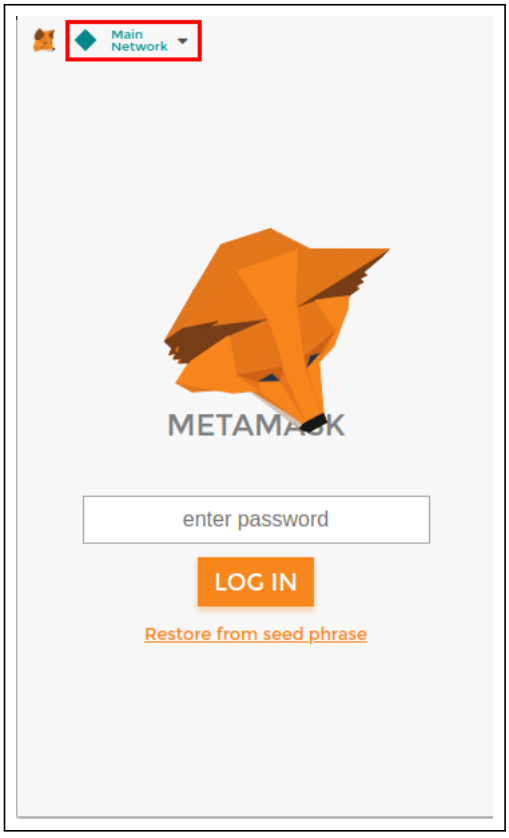
This declaration will generate a blockchain of 300 accounts, each with a 10,000 worth of ether and a network which accepts cost of execution (gas) at a value of 7,000,000. This would then produce a result as below:



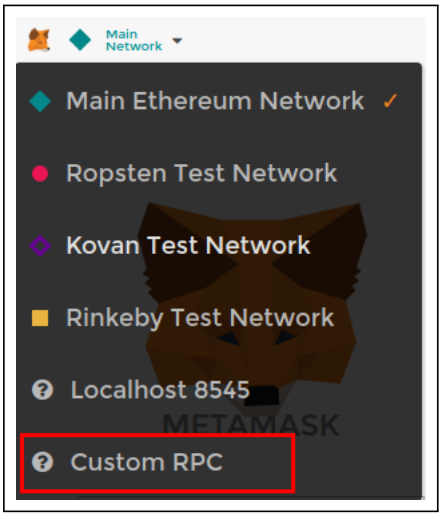
Highlighted in red is the account mnemonic which is used to generate the accounts. In order for us to use these accounts we copy this mnemonic into our metamask account plugin. We also must connect our metamask plugin to identify the local blockchain node

3.2 MetaMask Integration

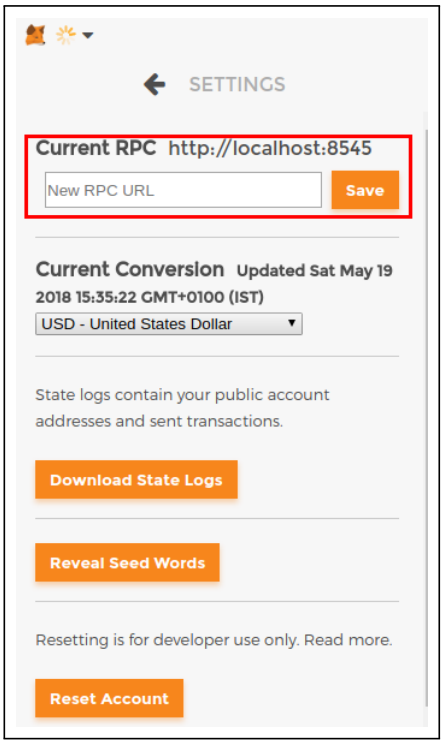
Metamask is a **wallet** which enables a user who has an ethereum account to interact with the blockchain by sending ether to other ethereum accounts. This system is crucial in dapps as it allows users a somewhat easy way of connecting to the blockchain. In Electio, it is used as a method of authenticating users as everyone has a unique ethereum account, Electio does not need to have an authentication system of its own.



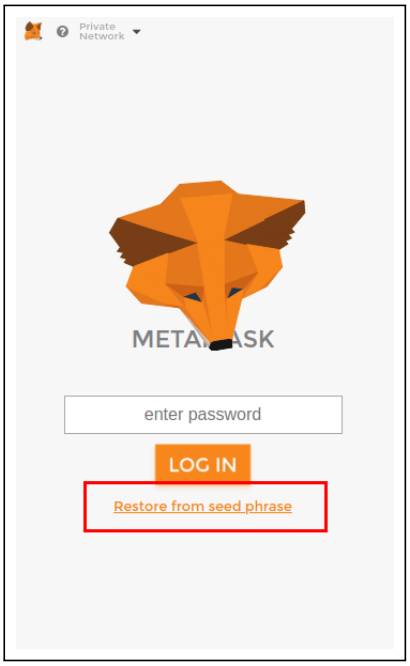
Select Network Dropdown menu



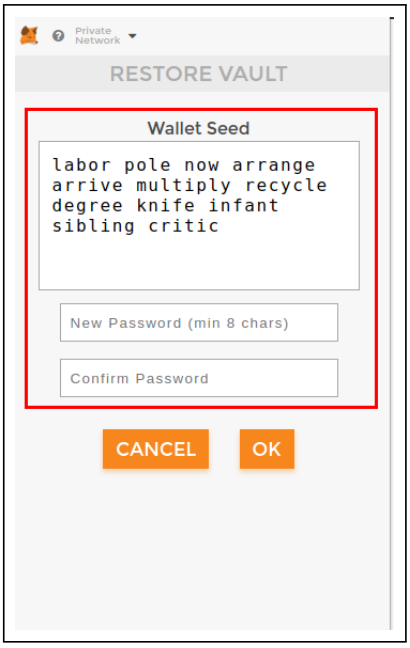
Select the Custom RPC menu



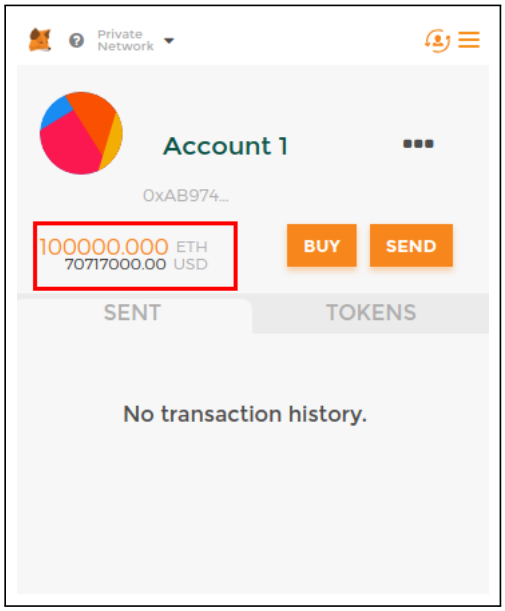
Input the url `http://localhost:8545` which will give a local network option for metamask to connect to.



To generate the accounts from our local test blockchain we select to restore accounts from a seed phrase.



Copying it into our metamask account, a user must also select a user and password.



The final result should look like this. To gain access to more accounts, select the option on the left of the hamburger and select create account.

3.3 Starting The Server

To start the server :

```
1 $ npm start
```

3.4 Contract Building & Deployement

Smart Contracts are the logic that enables users of the application to use perform election functions on the blockchain. The Ethereum network can be defined as a global computer which allows people to instantiate a piece of logic which everyone can execute and achieve the same result from the execution. The gas which was alluded to in the ganache instructions is the cost of using this computer. The more work the logic does, the more gas it will cost but the benefit is that we can be assured as to what occurred as it is executed across the public domain.
We use truffle to create the environment to generate our contracts. These exist in the project folder under src/contracts. We build these using the command

```
$ truffle compile ——all
```

which compiles these down to binaries which then can be deployed on the blockchain. Truffle can be used to migrate these binaries but I have written my own scripts to streamline this better. They can be found under src/generators. There are two generator scripts which are used to create the election environment, genDeployer.js and genScenarios.js. Both deploy an instance of the main Electio smart-contract which is used to keep a record of all elections which are generated. These both return an ethereum address listing where the contract is located.
The difference between the two is that the scenarios script generates 9 scenarios to simulate the election process in different election systems and in different stages whereas the other will setup a blank Electio system.
To use, run :

```
$ truffle exec src/generators/genDeployer.js
$ truffle exec src/generators/genScenarios.js
```

This will output a result like so:

```
~/code/electio develop*
❯ truffle exec generators/genDeployer.js
Using network 'development'.

Deployer Address :: 0xabf1e6a27c1225acb9e30069139a290161b5b1ea
```

This deployer address is to be copied into the file src/App.js : line:15

At this point, the application is setup and ready to use. The frontend can be accessed via http://localhost:3000

4 Testing

Testing using this system is straightforward and can be done in a series of simple automated steps. I employed two methods in testing the application, unit testing and end-to-end testing which are written programatically using a modified version of mocha.js and chai.js which truffle provides.
Open two seperate terminals and in each respectively run from the project src directory:

```
$ ganache—cli —a 300 —e 100000 ——gasLimit 7000000
$ npm start
```

4.1 Unit Testing

The unit testing portion targets the basic functionality of the system. This involves the simulation of the contract functions which allow voters to register and deposit a vote. It also tests for the encryption, decryption and tallying utilities of the system. A large portion of the functionality is time-specific so the tests are carried out with a series of 1-5 second waits between some tests.
The units can be automatically tested by running:

```
$ truffle test src/tests/unit*
```

4.2 End-to-End Testing

The End-to-End tests are generated in the same fashion as the unit tests but test a full simulation of the election process for the three electoral systems. They can be run using the command:

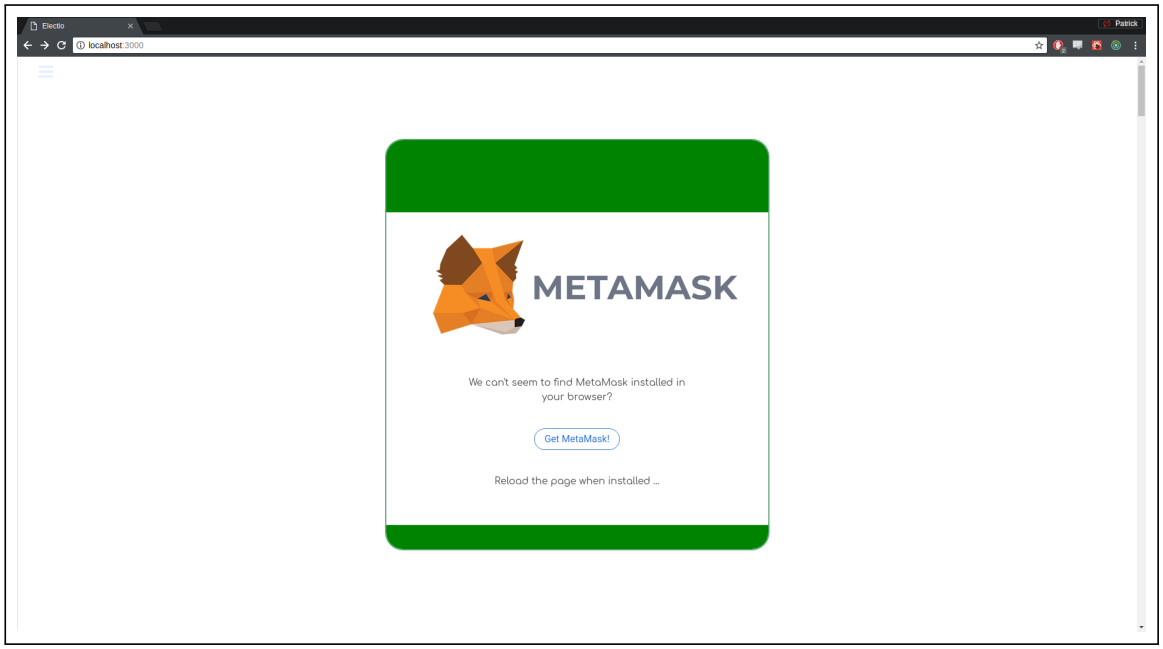
```
$ truffle test src/tests/e2e*
```

Alternatively, all tests can be executed by running the command below from the src directory

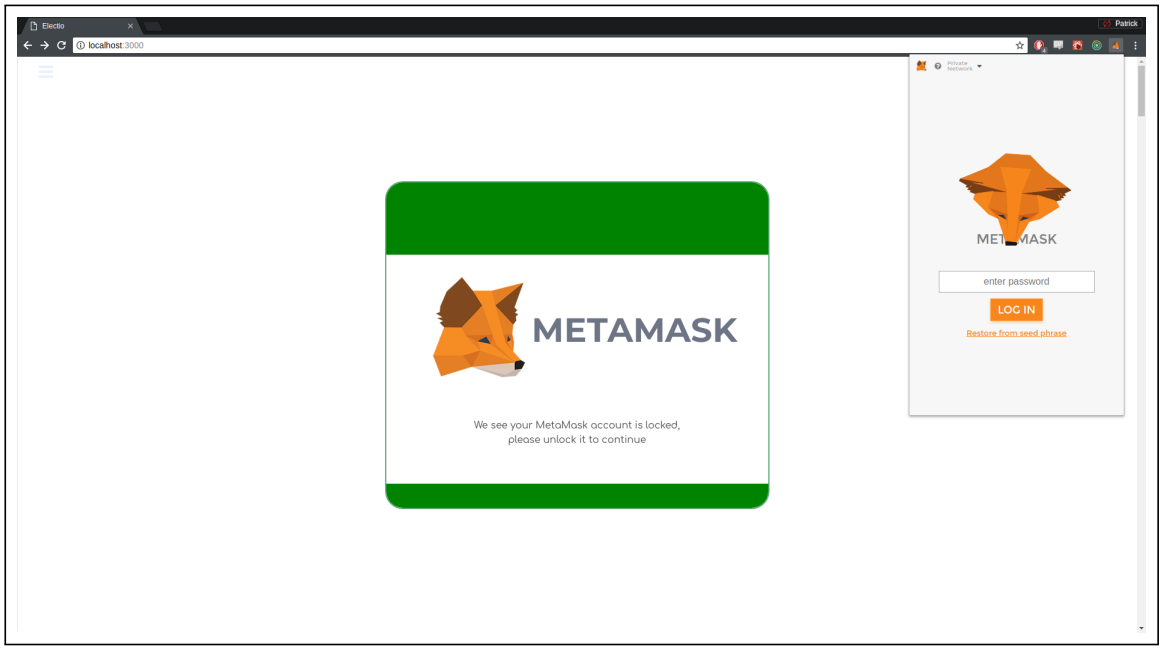
```
$ truffle test
```

5 Usage

5.1 Authentication

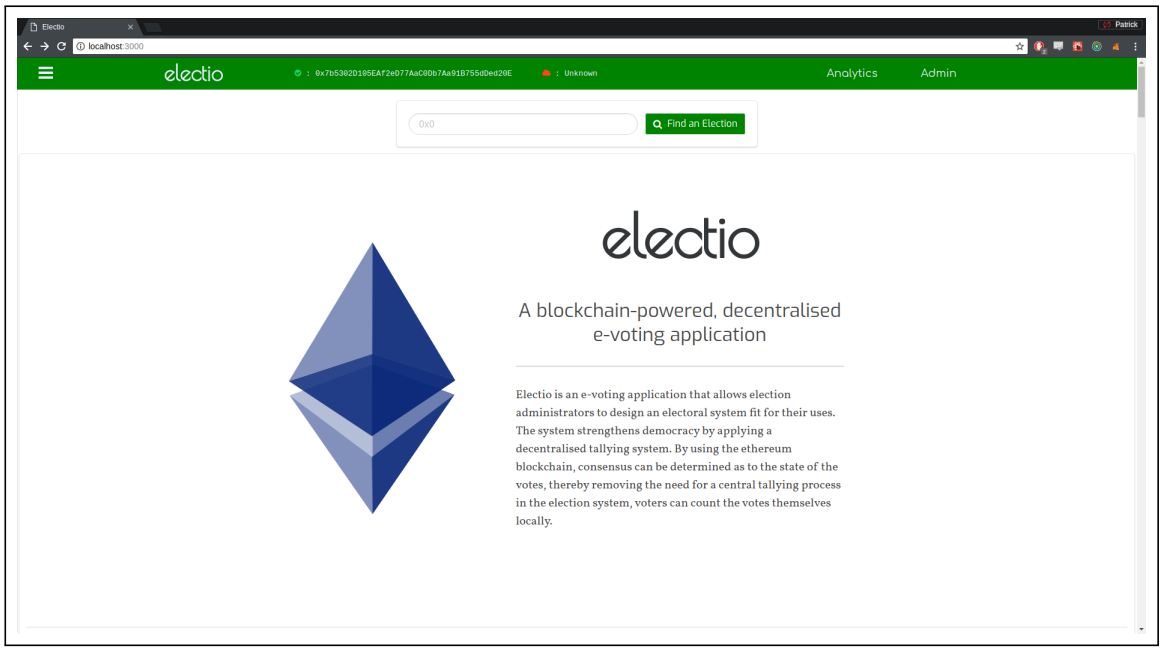


Authentication is exercised using the MetaMask plugin as before. If the screen above is displayed than MetaMask is not installed. The link to **Get MetaMask** will install the latest working version of MetaMask which will not work for this system. If the above is the case, please revert back to the manual instruction.



Where MetaMask is locked, the above will be displayed.

5.2 Landing Page



This is the landing page for Electio which is presented to the user once MetaMask is unlocked. The landing page has no function in the system other than explaining the core concept and ethos of the project.

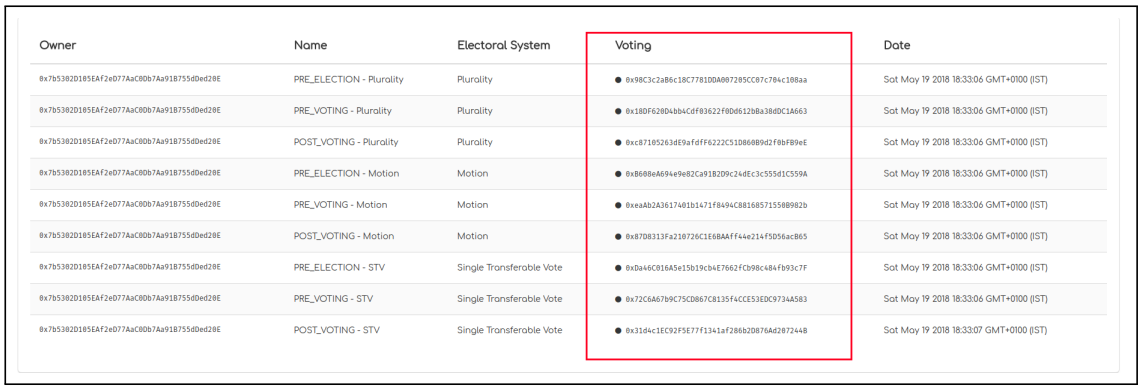
The main things to note on the landing page are uniform across the application.

- The wallet information labelled in red displays the current user's ethereum account address and the network they are connected to. This changes dynamically in response to the user changing network or address. Unkown represents any custom network.
- In yellow is the navigation links to the Analytics and Admin pages. The Analytics page merely lists all elections created on the system and enables any

user to find any election. The Admin page enables users to become the administrator of an election which will be explained later.

- In blue is the search bar. An election is represented with an ethereum address similar to the one which represents a user account and the deployer address. This election address is the location of the voting contract of a created election. By copying and pasting that address into the search input, that election will be loaded.

5.3 Analytics Page

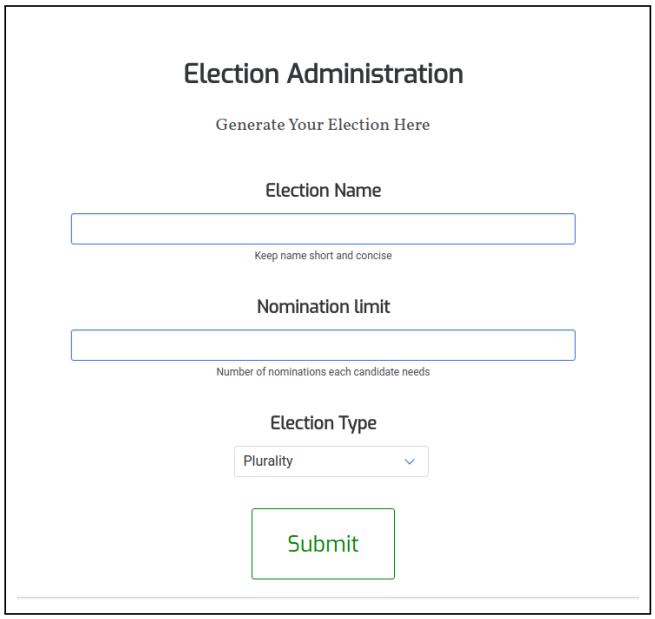


Owner	Name	Electoral System	Voting	Date
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_ELECTION - Plurality	Plurality	0x98C3c2aB6c18C7781DDA007205CC07c704c108aa	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_VOTING - Plurality	Plurality	0x18DF620D4bb4Cdf03622f0Dd612bBa38dDC1A663	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	POST_VOTING - Plurality	Plurality	0xc87105263dE9afdff6222C51D860B9d2f0bFB9eE	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_ELECTION - Motion	Motion	0xB608eA69e9e82Ca91B2D9c24dEc3c555d1C559A	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_VOTING - Motion	Motion	0xeaAb2A3617401b1471f8494C88168571550B982b	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	POST_VOTING - Motion	Motion	0x87D8313Fa210726C1E6BAAff44e214f5D56acB65	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_ELECTION - STV	Single Transferable Vote	0xDa46C016A5e15b19cb4E7662fCb98c484fb93c7F	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_VOTING - STV	Single Transferable Vote	0x72C6A67b9C75CD867C8135f4CCE53EDC9734A583	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	POST_VOTING - STV	Single Transferable Vote	0x31d4c1EC92F5E77f1341af286b2D876Ad207244B	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:07 GMT+0100 (IST)

The above is the table display of the genScenario's script which produces 9 elections across different stages.

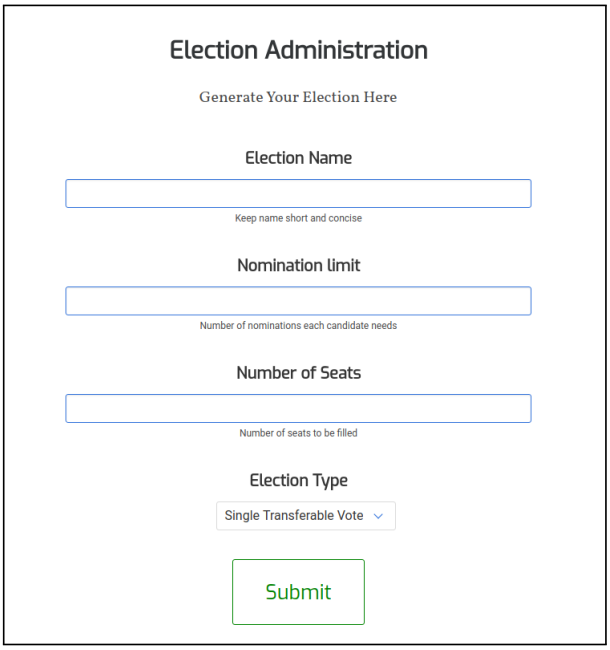
- The Owner column refers to the administrator of the election
- The Name column refers to the name of the election as instantiated by the administrator
- The Electoral System column refers to what election type that election is out of the three provided.
- The Voting column is the election address for each election, these are listed as links which if clicked loads that election as with the search bar option.
- The Date refers to the creation date of that election.

5.4 Admin Page - Election Creation



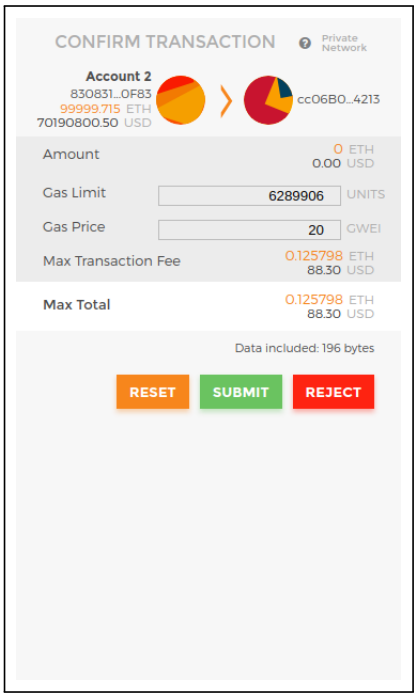
The Admin page displays a simple form which can be used by any user of the system to create an election. The dropdown **Election Type** option will dynamically change specific to what is selected. In the case of plurality the above is represented. The **Nomination Limit** is of special significance for the election process as it defines the number of nominations required for a user who has applied to become a candidate to be validated.

The motion option does not require the nomination limit to be set as no human candidates utilise are to participate. Voters will vote on a motion which are defined by the administrator later on in the election.



The Single Transferable Vote option displays a **Number of Seats** input. This electoral system is for an election which allows users to elect a descending preference candidates to a number of seats.

5.5 Making a Transaction

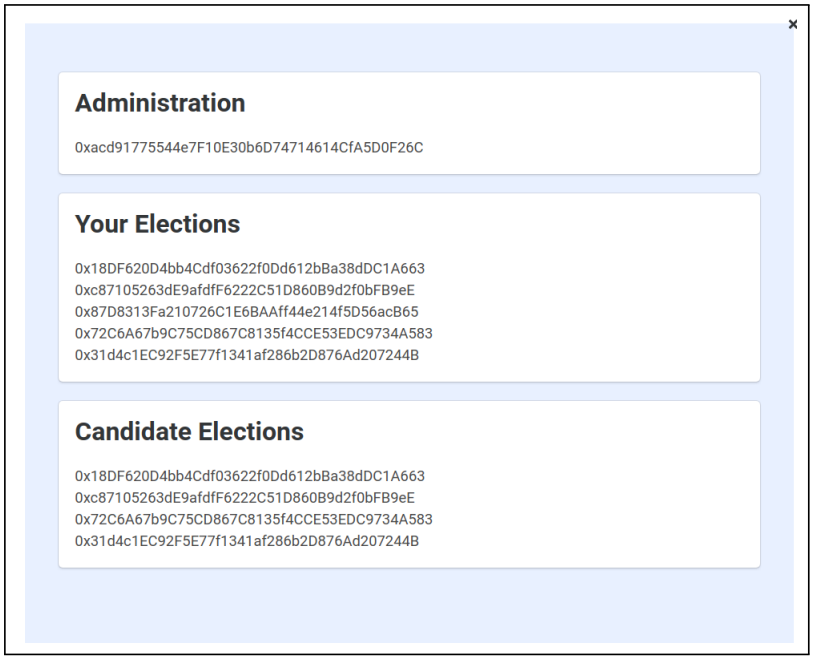


Filling out a form with details of your choice and hitting submit will generate a popup like above. This popup is from MetaMask asking for confirmation for a transaction to be sent to the blockchain. This transaction contains data which is used to perform the logic on the smart contracts which generates an election as per the form details. By clicking submit, the transaction is sent to the blockchain awaiting to be accepted and mined.

Once submitted, a series of confirmation callbacks are received by the application. The 12 confirmations verifies that the transaction has succeeded.

Owner	Name	Electoral System	Voting	Date
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_ELECTION - Plurality	Plurality	0x98C3c2aB6c18C7781DDA807205CC07c704c108aa	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_VOTING - Plurality	Plurality	0x18DF620D4bb4Cdf03622f0Dd612bBa38dDC1A663	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	POST_VOTING - Plurality	Plurality	0xc87105263dE9afdfF6222C51D860B9d2f0bFB9eE	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_ELECTION - Motion	Motion	0xB608eA694e9e82Ca91B2D9c24dEc3c555d1C559A	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_VOTING - Motion	Motion	0xeaAb2A3617401b1471f8494C881685715508982b	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	POST_VOTING - Motion	Motion	0x87D8313Fa210726C1E6BAAff44e214f5D56acB65	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_ELECTION - STV	Single Transferable Vote	0xDa46C016A5e15b19cb4E7662fCb98c484fb93c7F	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	PRE_VOTING - STV	Single Transferable Vote	0x72C6A67b9C75CD867C8135f4CCE53EDC9734A583	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:06 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x7b5302D105EAf2eD77AaC0Db7Aa91B755dDed20E	POST_VOTING - STV	Single Transferable Vote	0x31d4c1EC92F5E77f1341af286b2D876Ad207244B	Sat May 19 2018 18:33:07 GMT+0100 (IST)
0x830831e99Da649A07E0929316EE10d7D1ad30F83	My New Election	Plurality	0xacd91775544e7F10E30b6D74714614CfA5D0F26C	Sat May 19 2018 19:14:45 GMT+0100 (IST)

Navigating back to the Analytics page we find that the new election has been generated.

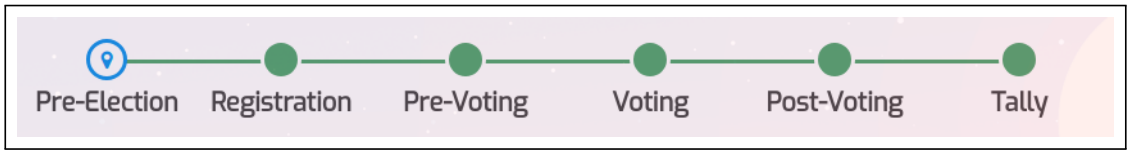


The hamburger menu which exists on the extreme left of the top navigation bar produces a slideout list of the elections specific to a user.

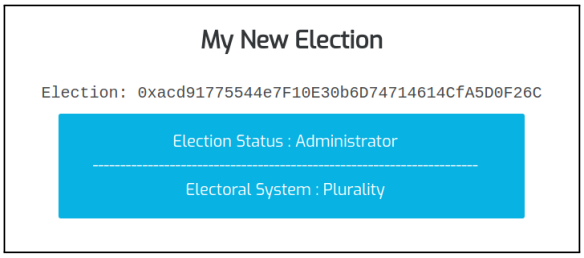
- Under **Administration** is all the elections in which the user has created
- Under **Your Elections** is all elections the user is a participant voter
- Under **Candidate Elections** is all elections the user is a candidate

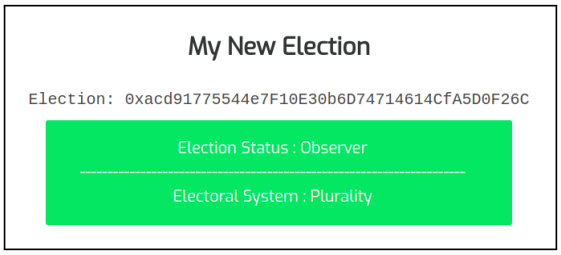
6 Election Stages

All state-level elections are constructed within a timeline which I have designed the application around. This timeline is broken into a number of stages which enable the system to designate a specific set of actions to certain users of the election suitable to that stage.



The above is the election timeline which is displayed during every election. The current stage marker progresses left-to-right across the timeline as the election occurs. The 9 scenario's generated by the script sets the 3 electoral systems in Pre-Election, Pre-Voting and Post-Voting stages. Both the Registration and Voting stages are time-windowed and the Tally stage will be a permanent view of the election when the election is over.

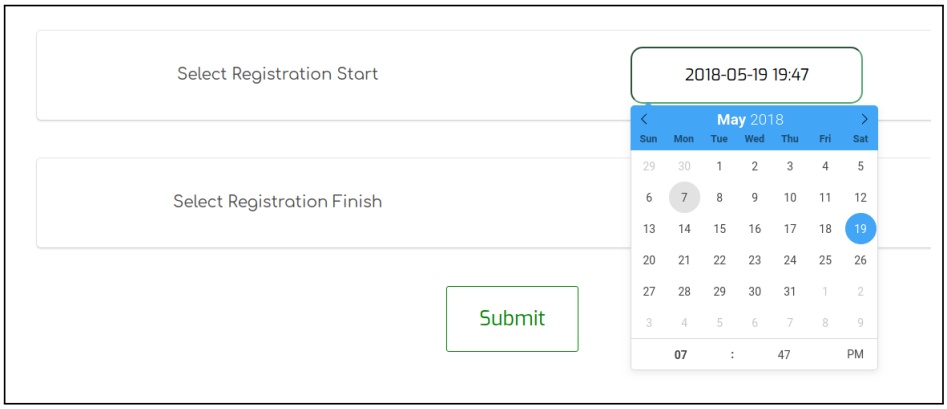




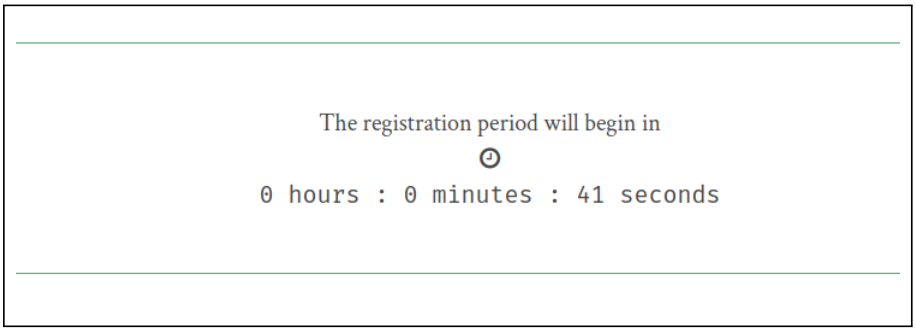
The above is a representation of the election status which changes dynamically to what user is signed in to MetaMask.

6.1 Pre-Election

Before an election starts all users with the exception of the Administrator are Observers. Observers are all outside participants in the election and have a limited role in the process.



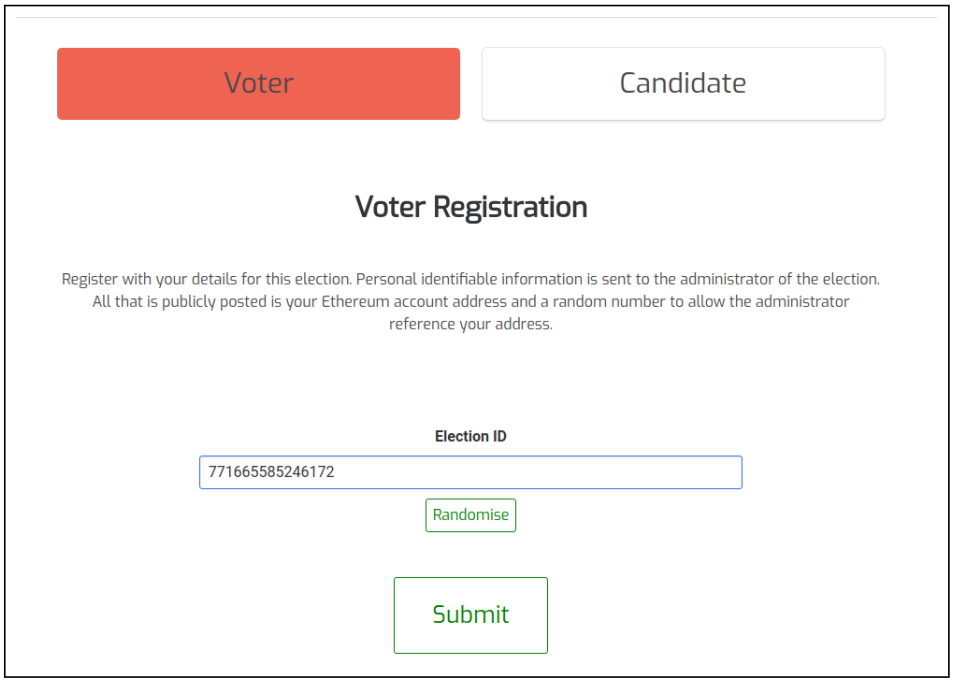
The Administrator will be displayed two datepicker calendars which are used to select a time-window in the future for the registration period. This time-window ought to be long enough so that all particpants can register at their convenience. Submitting generates a MetaMask popup like with election creation.



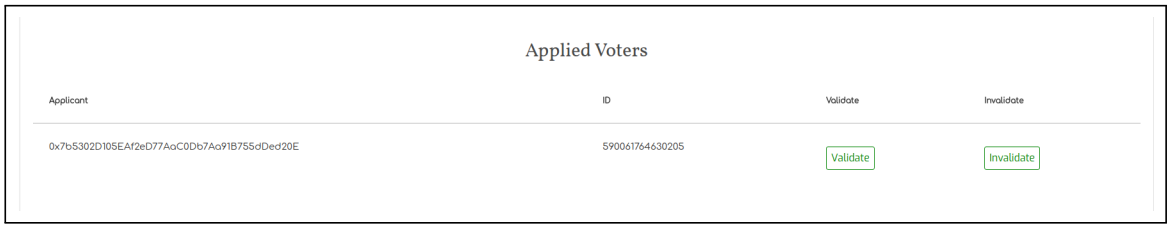
When the registration time-window is set, a countdown timer for when that begins will be displayed.

6.2 Registration - Plurality & STV

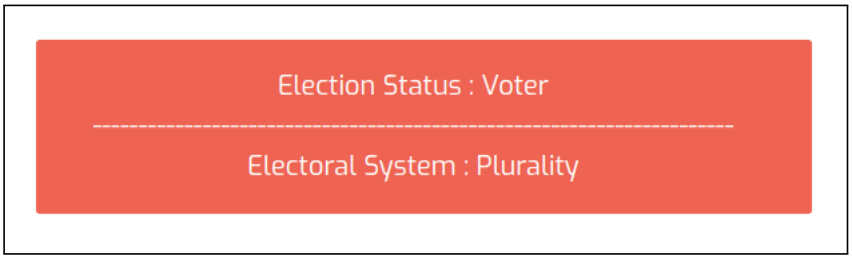
6.2.1 Voter



In the registration stage, all observers are able to apply as voters and candidates. To register as a voter, the observer submits a random Election ID to the blockchain. This Election ID is to be sent outside of this application along with identification information to the Administrator. If the Administrator identifies an applicant as a valid voter, they can correspond the Election ID they were given with the one mapped to the applicants address on the blockchain.

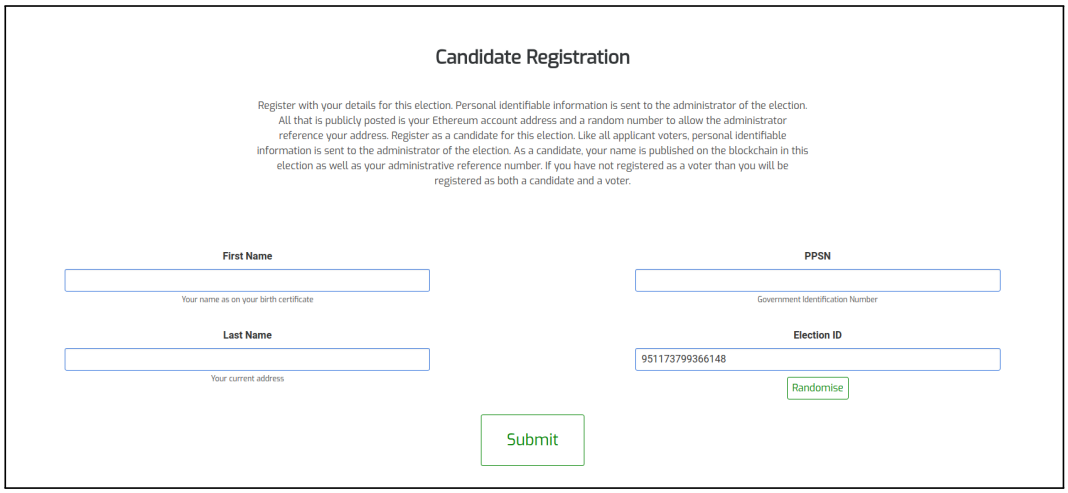


The Administrator view displays a table of data which fills as new observers apply. Administrators can choose to validate or invalidate users. Once validated by the Administrator, that address is identified by the system as a Voter.

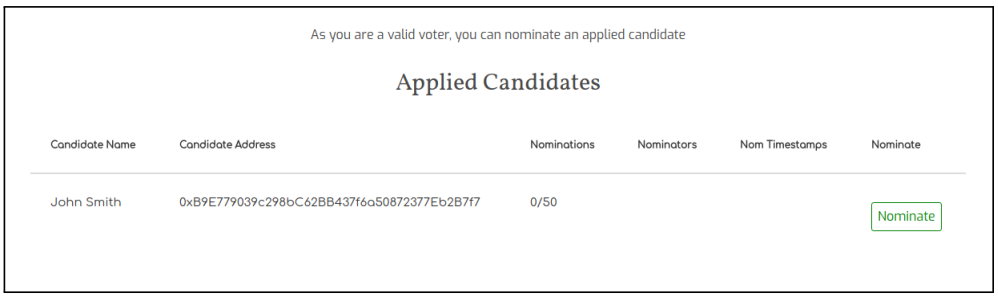


Voters will then have an election status as above.

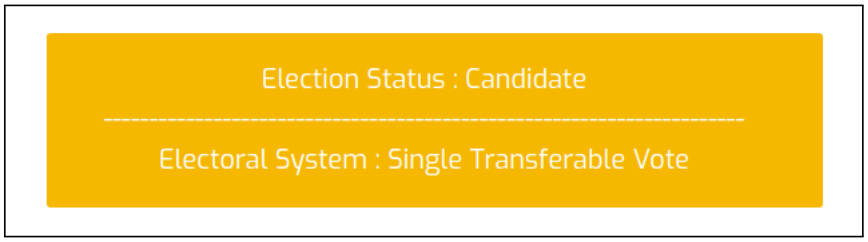
6.2.2 Candidate



Registration as a Candidate is also straightforward as users submit their Election ID as a Voter would but also submit their first and last name to the blockchain. Candidates are not deemed valid by the Administrator, but instead are validated by the Voters.



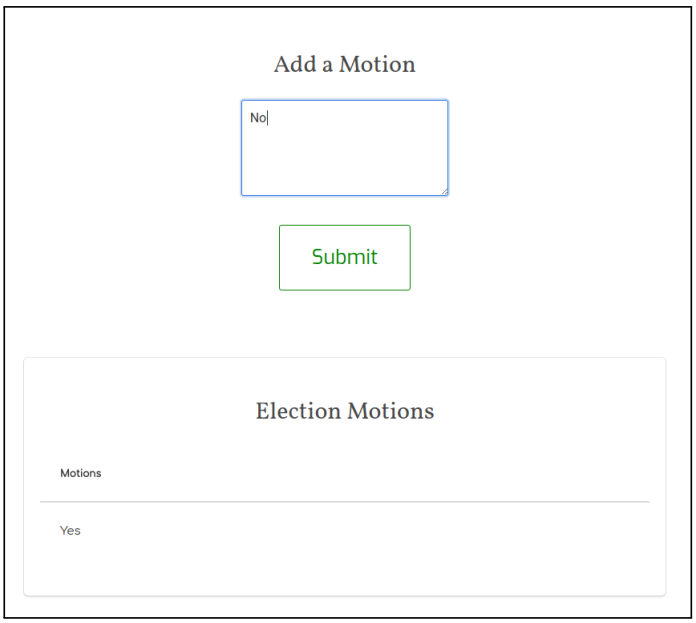
The nomination limit set by the Administrator is illustrated here as the number of nominations required by the applicant Candidate. This is the view displayed to a Voter during the registration period. Each voter has only one nomination and can nominate a candidate by clicking the **Nominate** button. When a candidate is nominated, the address of the nominator and the time of nomination is recorded.



When an Observer receieves enough nominations, they are then validate. Their election status will also change to the above.

6.3 Registration - Motion

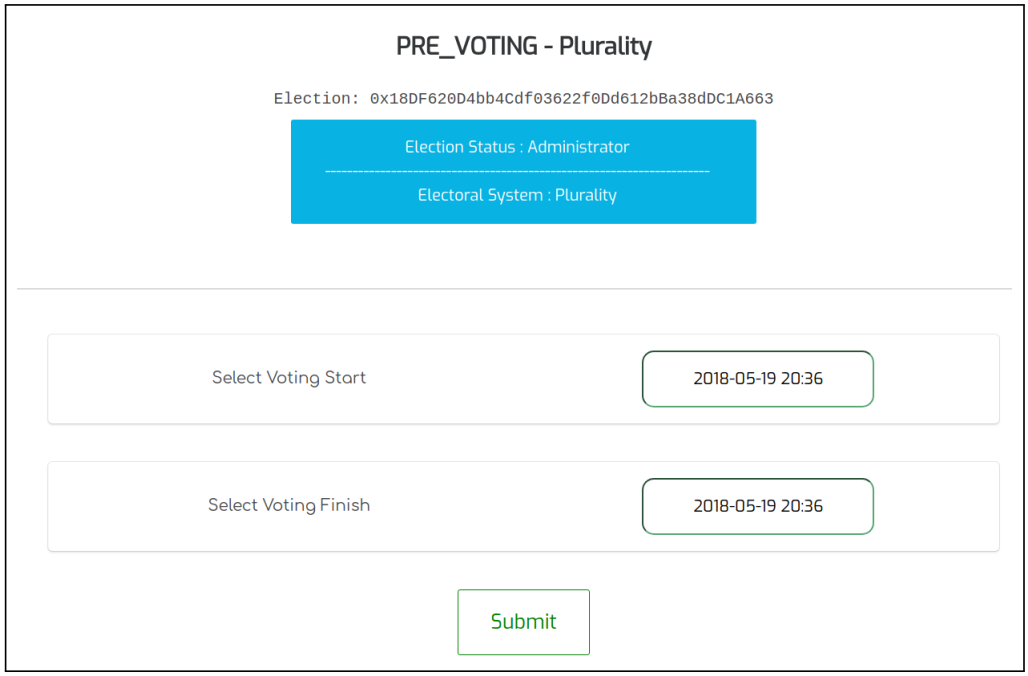
The motion electoral system differs from the Candidate registration stage. In this section, an Observer can only register as a Voter and the Administrator selects the motions which are to be voted on.



The Administrator in this case simply fills an input box with the motion to be voted.

6.4 Pre-Voting

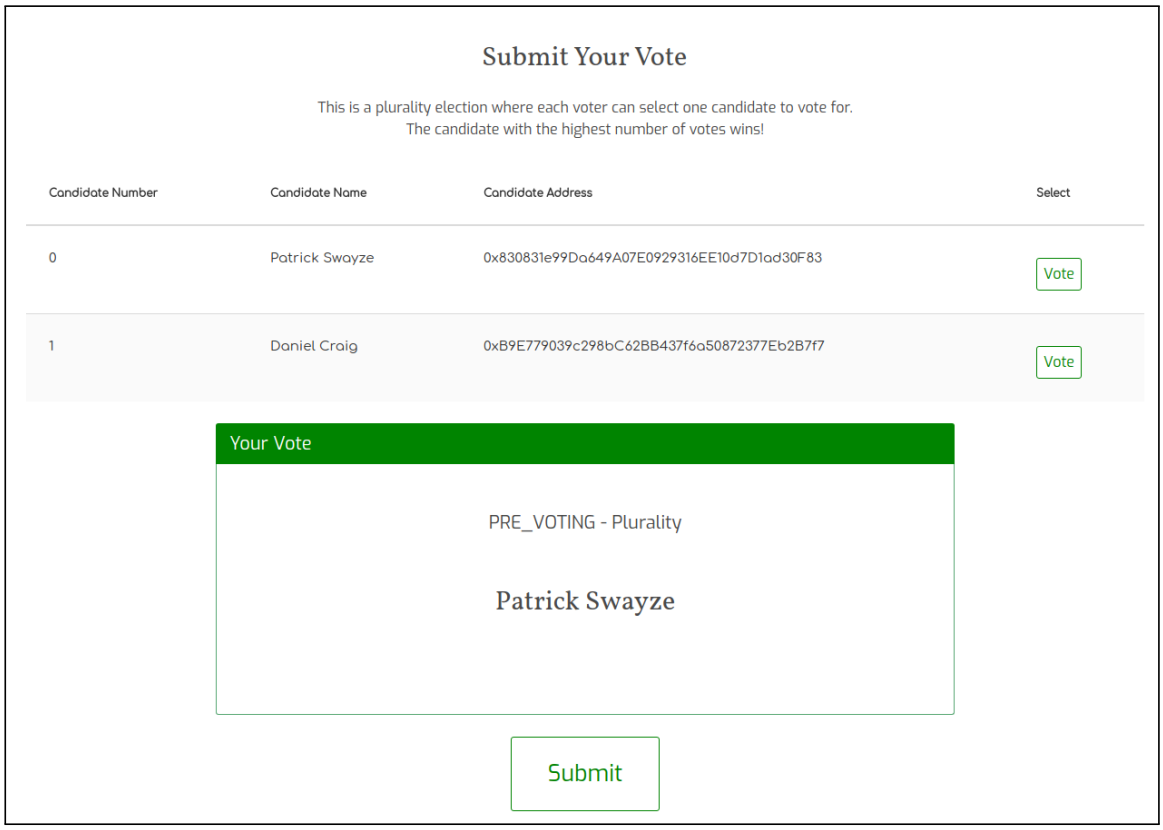
The pre-voting stage, much like the pre-election stage is about setting the voting time-window. Also a countdown timer will be displayed for when that time will be.



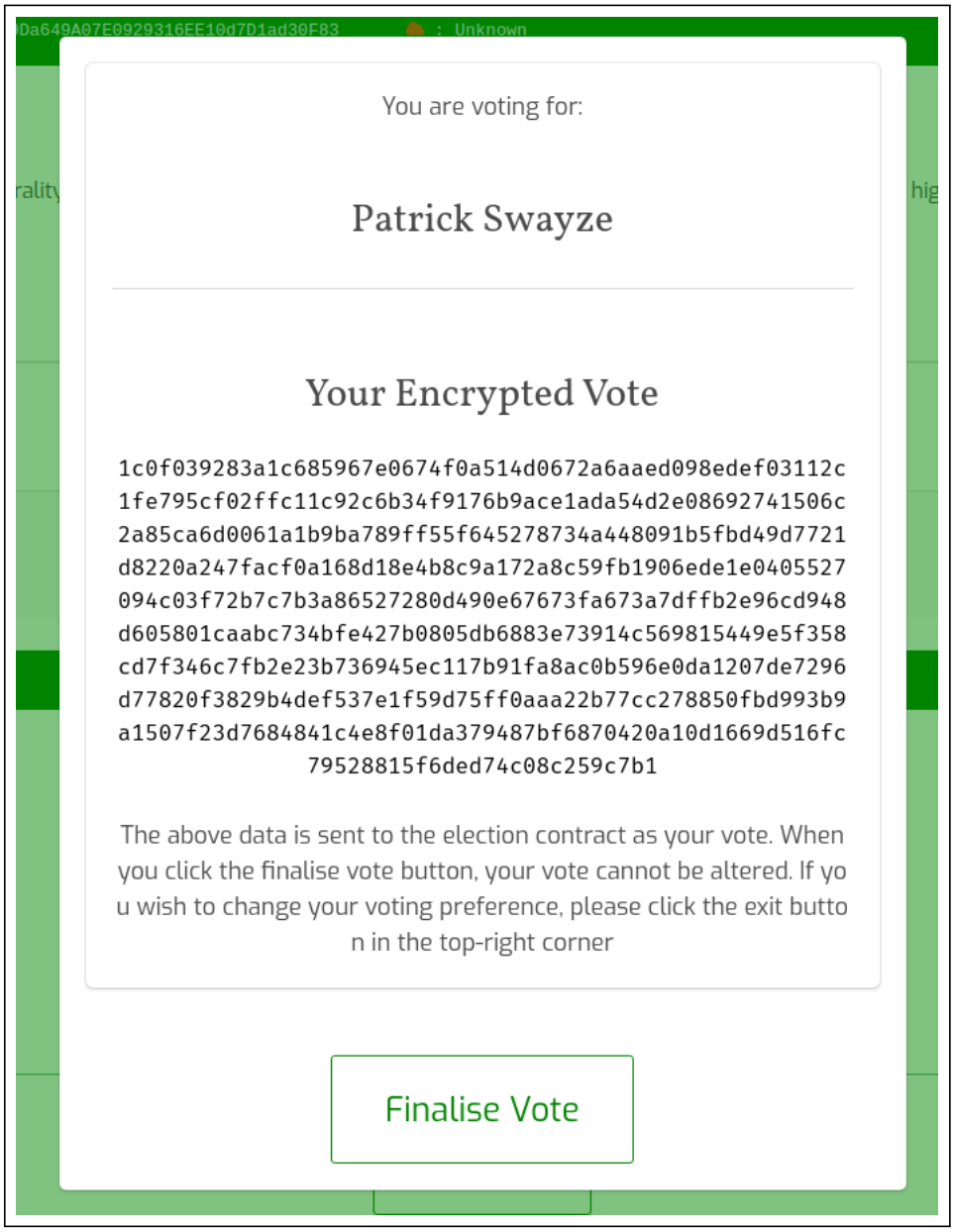
In the background to this, the Node server will generate a public-private keypair which will be used to encrypt and tally the votes later on. The public key is published on the blockchain during this stage.

6.5 Voting - Plurality & Motion

Voting in the plurality system is straightforward and involves a Voter to select a single favoured candidate. Users who registered as Candidates are also registered as Voters should the Administrator deem them valid.



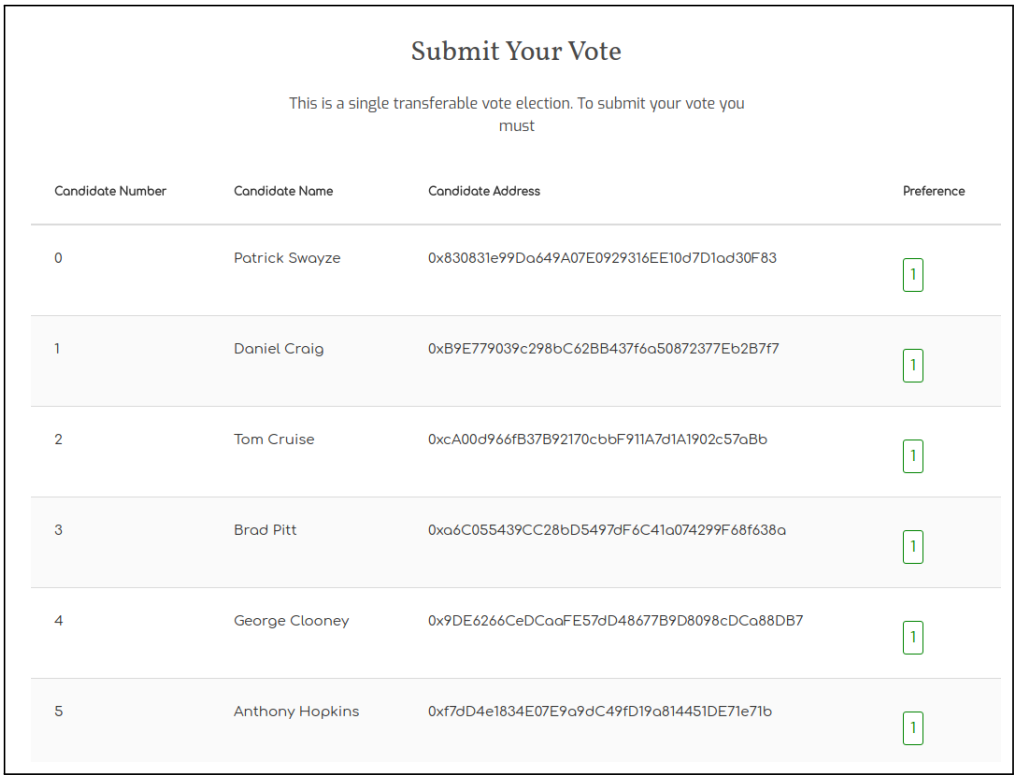
The **Your Vote** box indicates the selected vote and will change on the selection of any other candidate. Selecting submit will present the Voter with a final chance to change their vote.



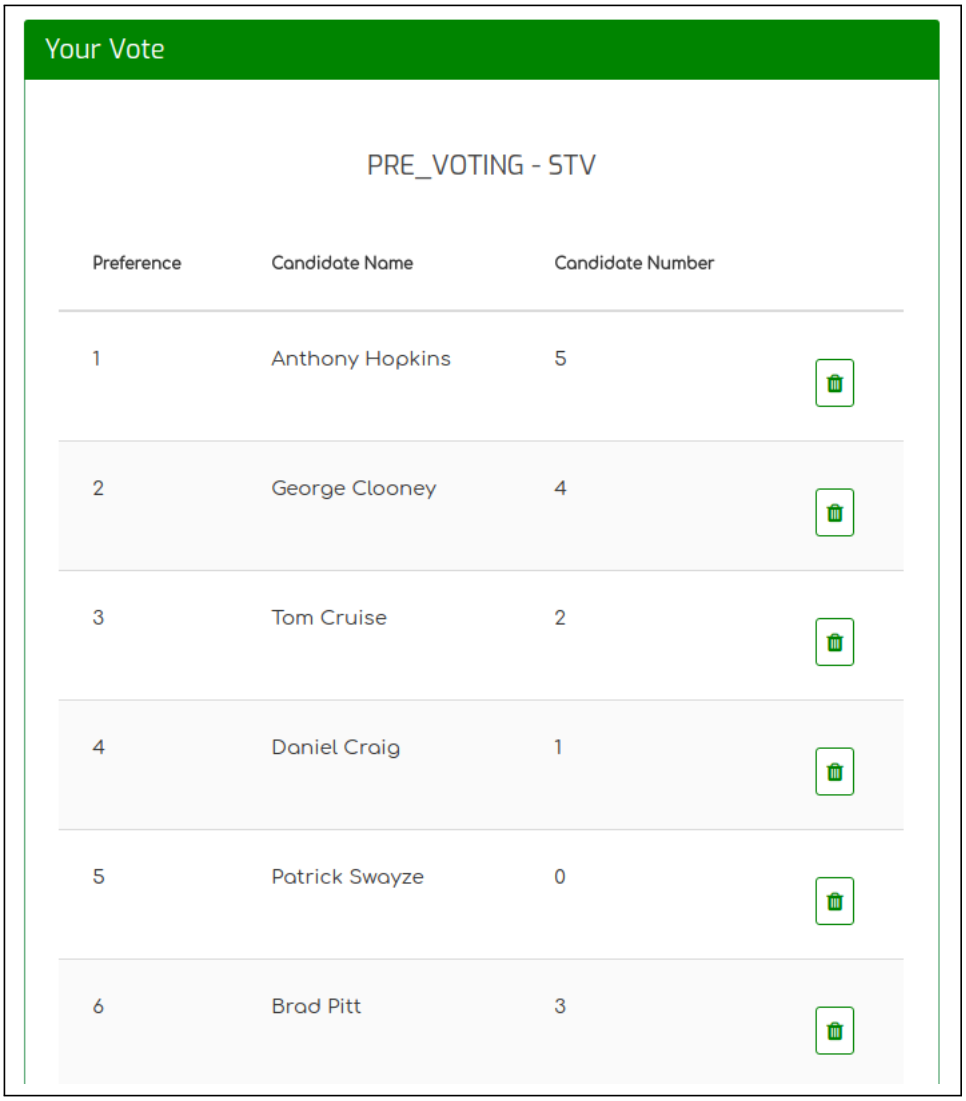
When a vote is to be finalised, the Voter is represented with a voting card containing their preference and their encrypted vote. This encryption is submitted to the blockchain and remains encrypted until all votes are gathered after the election. This method is also the same for the motion electoral system where one voting option is selected.

6.6 Voting - Single Transferable Vote

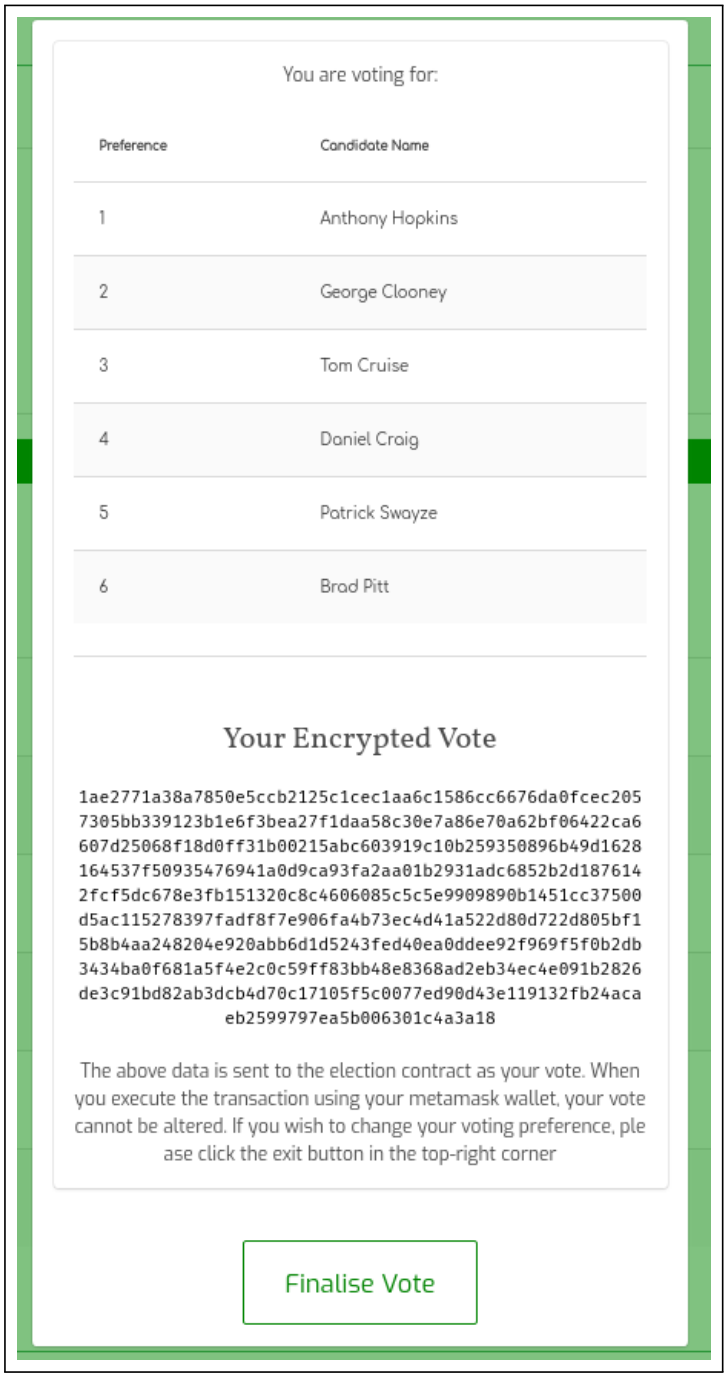
Voting in an STV election has a slight variation in comparison to the plurality system. Voters in STV elections are able to make their vote in the form of descending preference.



This table is what a Voter in a STV election would be displayed. The electio system records the votes as before in a **Your Vote** table where selections can be changed and removed. In order to vote, the rule is that the submitted vote must contain at least one preference.

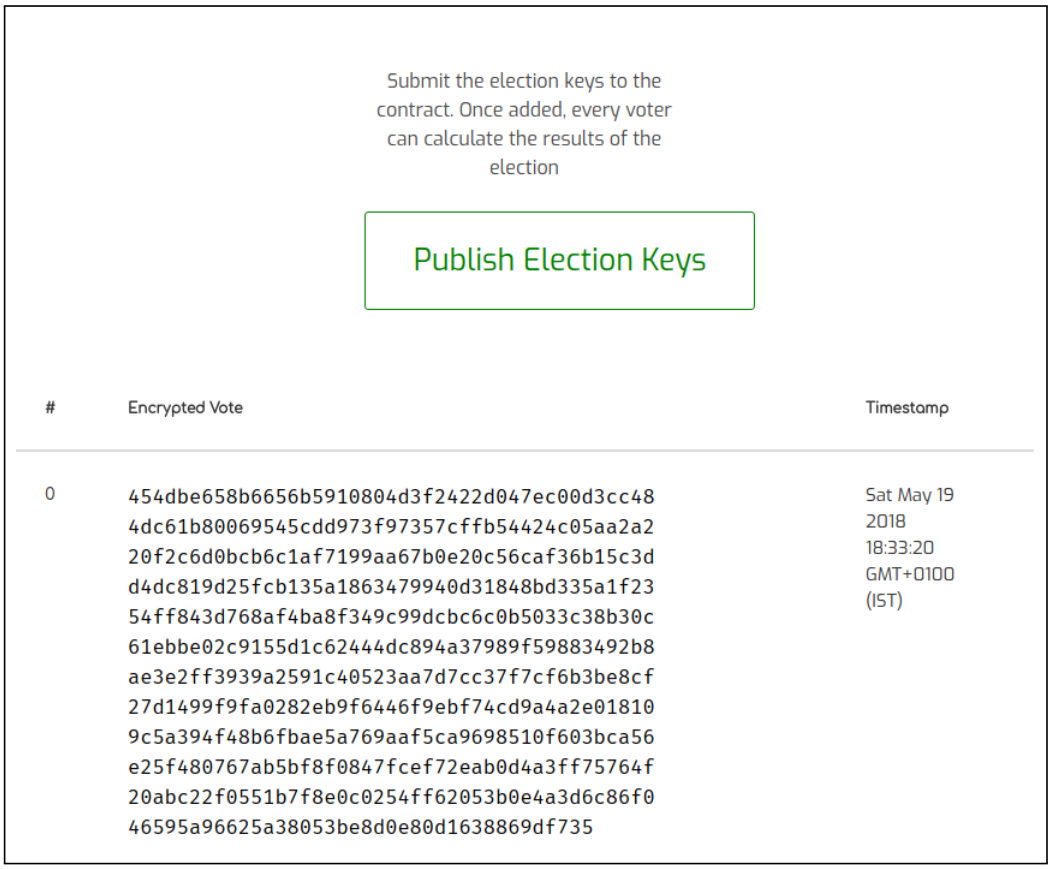


In this instance above, a Voter could select all displayed candidates. Should a Voter wish to remove a preference, they would select the delete icon.



The finalise vote menu also generates the final selection for that Voter, giving them the chance to change if necessary. Once the transaction is submitted, the vote is final and cannot be changed.

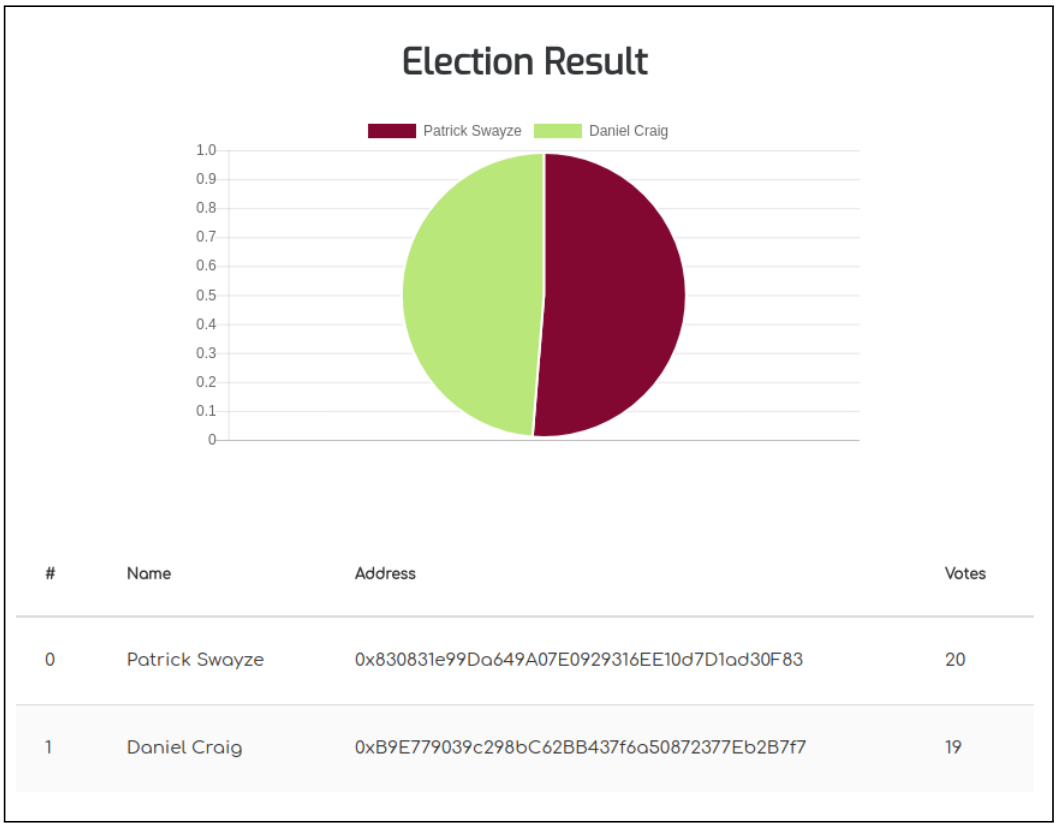
6.7 Post-Voting



The above is the post-voting stage for the Administrator. During this stage, all encrypted votes are displayed which gives Voters some meaningful feedback as to the particpation of the election. The Publish Election Keys button will publish the private-keys of the election to the blockchain. Only the Administrator can do this.These keys will be used by all users during the tallying process to generate an election result.

6.8 Tallying - Plurality & Motion

This is the final stage for all elections and is viewable by all users of the system. It enables anyone to search for any past election and regenerate the results of the election as time goes on. As the blockchain is permanent, the results are permanent and gives a degree of finality and assurance as to the result.



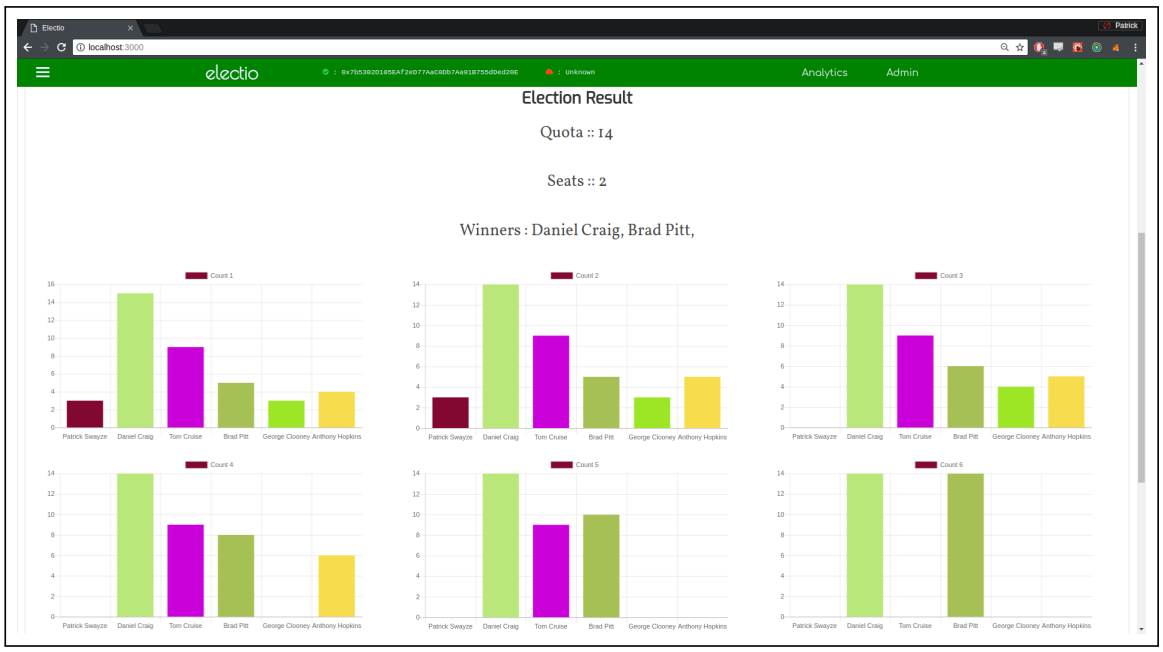
The result of this election is represented in a pie-chart and a table. These results are auto-generated on the loading of the election in the application. In both the plurality and motion voting systems, the result is straightforward and the table is presented in order of most votes.

6.9 Tallying - Single Transferable Vote

The results of the Single Transferable Vote system is more complicated as the result is generated by distributing all votes for any Candidate over the election quota or the removal and distribution of votes of the lowest remaining candidate. One pass of either of these actions is called a count. The election quota, is calculated by :

```
1 Math.floor(num_voters / (num_seats + 1) + 1)
```

When either the number of candidates that remain equal the number of seats to be filled or the number of candidates that have reached the quota equal the seats to be filled, those candidates are elected.



The result of an STV election is displayed as above for all Electio users. Each bar chart represents a count and at each stage a user can visualise the process. In the final slide, the two remaining candidates have reached the quota and are deemed elected.