You might've heard the saying, "great minds think alike!" That couldn't be further from the truth.

Many of the most productive partnerships throughout history worked precisely because two great minds thought differently in complementary ways. Case in point: Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak. Jobs was more sales-minded and more of a "big picture" guy, while Wozniak was the more technical electronics guru. Clearly, their partnership worked out well for Apple — despite (or likely because) the two Steves frequently butted heads.

Great minds don't think alike. They think together.

This principle poses a serious challenge to DAO governance as we know it. We must enable the broader community to advocate for their interest, lest they're exploited, and the organization is led to failure through pillaging. BUT, a large group with low context can be easily captured by narcissistic populists, as the history of humanity shows.

On the other hand, extensive research has shown that groups of non-experts can outperform individual experts in certain situations. "The Wisdom of the Crowds" is an excellent mechanism to make simple judgments on a variable; for example, it's been shown that a crowd can judge, visually, the weight of a cow (using the median, not the average value) better than individual experts can. So we could apply this "vote a number" technique to for example determine the amount of compensation for a specific role or the value of a variable in a prediction market.

When crowds voting make bad decisions is in complex situations. If there are complex trade-offs and individuals have incomplete information (e.g. most strategy decisions for organisations), then a crowd simply voting will likely result in the minimum common denominator being selected. This is a recipe for mediocrity.

For this reason, democracy researchers have been looking for a method to

- bridge the information gap between participants (so it's not just their initial judgments but their best judgments after having a more comprehensive set of insights and unpacked tradeoffs)

- While preserving democratic-legitimacy

Elections with vigorous debates being broadcasted somewhat fulfill this pattern somewhat. However, elections are very prone to capture by capital (only those who afford massive advertising stand a fair chance); perhaps more critically, this method of decision-making requires massive bandwidth (just look how much attention presidential elections consume). The consequence is a low throughput of decisions, i.e., the crowd can only participate in a few decisions, thus limiting actual democracy.

Another answer that's gained momentum over the last 2 decades is Citizen Assemblies - the selection of a diverse group of participants through the lottery, who will receive input from experts and key stakeholders and have extensive space to deliberate on the answer to a challenge and make a proposal (optionally ratified by vote).

Citizen Assemblies work by

- addressing the information gap through deliberation (facilitated workshops) and plennaries (public input from experts and stakeholders).

- Reducing the risk of bribes or agenda capture thanks to selecting citizens by lottery as opposed to by popular election.

- Using a representative sample to balance legitimacy with throughput (i.e. multiple assemblies can be run in parallel or over a short period of time on varying topics).

- Paying participants a nominal amount so economically disprivileged groups can afford to participate.

And as a bonus, Citizen Assemblies tend to be bridging instead of polarising, that is, the format enables participants to find common solutions as opposed to making extreme takes to gain clicks or denigrating their opponent.

As a downside, Citizen Assemblies do cost more than appointing a single or small group of experts to decide, and take time (about 2-4 months) to run as a full process. In consequence, not every decision should be run by an assembly but only those that are a) complex b) important enough to justify the time and cost.

We (currently an informal and amorphous group including a dozen delegates, serious people, RnDAO members, etc) have been discussing the need and approach to define a Strategy for the ArbitrumDAO. We'd love you to join us discussing this topic and finding a way forward

- in the telegram group (strategy channel): Telegram: Join Group Chat

- in the forum thread: Pre-Proposal for a Strategy Framework for Arbitrum DAO