

# Working Group Zero Stewards Final Report

AIP-196: BORED AIP: Bringing Order and Reliability via Ecosystem Decentralization

WG0 soulbound token artwork by @Pizza\_Later

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AIP-196 - Origin of Working Group Zero (WG0)

Following the rejection of AIP-183, which led to the expiration of the APE Foundation's administrator contract for the second time in eight months in December 2022, it became clear that ApeCoin DAO needed to develop the internal capabilities necessary to avoid reliance on any external resource that could create a singular point of failure in the DAO.

A group of DAO contributors came together to craft what would be known as AIP-196: BORED AIP: Bringing Order and Reliability via Ecosystem Decentralization.

BORED AIP was developed in consultation with the ApeCoin DAO Special Council, staff members at Cartan, and a number of significant delegates and larger voters in the ApeCoin community. The authors held numerous meetings with these groups and shared multiple drafts of the AIP with different cohorts and individuals within the DAO.

The goal was to find a solution that had buy-in from both the most active members of the DAO – notably everyone on the Discourse Forum and the large delegates / voters who ultimately decide whether a proposal passes or not in order to make sure the Ape Foundation was able to maintain continuity and compliance.

AIP-196 Authors

AIP-196 was crafted in a shared document that allowed for feedback from anyone interested in contributing to the work that needed to be done. It truly demonstrated the power of collaboration and decentralized governance in action.

Lead Author: Badteeth

Main Authors: Amplify, BoredApeG, Waabam

Contributing Authors: 0xSword, AdventurousApe, AlexM, Bored.eth, Brooklyn, 8uddha, DrJDR, Gerry, Halina, Lost, Mantis, NFTC, NovoCrypto, RedVulkan, SSP, Vera, ZastrowBradley, j-mart, wapow, wrongplace, 12GAUGE, title courtesy of CoachMcGuirk

Motivation

There were three main problems that needed to be addressed following the rejection of AIP-183.

1. Per AIP-113, the current APE Foundation administrator contract was expiring on December 31, 2022
2. There was an imperative need to maintain continuity and compliance of APE Foundation operations
3. ApeCoin DAO did not have the organizational structure or capabilities to execute any internal operations

AIP-196 proposed the following solutions.

1. Extend contract with current APE Foundation administrator (Cartan Group, LLC.) two months to maintain continuity and compliance
2. Implement a transparent Request for Proposals ("RFP") process to identify future APE Foundation administrators during the extension period (January 1 - February 28, 2022). If necessary, complete handover to future DAO administrator
3. Form interim working group composed of key DAO stakeholders tasked with developing DAO working group structures and internal capabilities

Rationale

Along with implementing a transparent RFP process to find the next APE Foundation administrator, we were motivated to further the decentralization of the DAO by creating a working group composed of key stakeholders. These stakeholders were community members who had shown commitment to the DAO through either participation in the governance process or willingness to hold significant amounts of \$APE. We believed these voices were invaluable in determining the future of ApeCoin DAO and together they would form WG0.

Voting

After a week of Snapshot voting and many passionate voices on both sides of the table across multiple Twitter Spaces and Discord VCs, AIP-196 was approved by the DAO on January 4, 2023 with 4.7 million votes in favor (72.7%) and 1.8 million

votes against (27.3%).

## WG0 Stewards

As provisioned in AIP-196, three WG0 Stewards were selected by the Special Council in order to begin the work that needed to be done immediately upon passing of the proposal. The appointed Stewards, selected from the Discourse Forum Trust Level 3 members, were Adventurous Ape, Amplify, and Waabam.

The remaining four Stewards – Badteeth, Halina, Lost, Vulkan were elected on January 18, 2023, by WG0 using a per-token holder vote for those that met the WG0 membership criteria outlined in AIP-196.

Of the 507 tokens distributed to wallets that met the WG0 criteria, 131 votes were cast representing 25.8% of the eligible votes. For point of comparison there were over 121,000 wallets that held \$APE and were eligible to vote while only 755 of them voted on AIP-196 – representing .62% of eligible voters. Granted this includes some delegate wallets, the participation in the WG0 Steward elections was far and away the highest percentage of wallet voting participation for any vote in the DAO thus far.

## AIP-196 Details

In the following two sections we're outlining the specifics around both the DAO Administrator functions and the Working Group Mandate included in AIP-196 along with some of our comments on the decision making process and takeaways.

### DAO Administrator Functions Under 2-month Extension

1. Cartan Group LLC ("Cartan") will continue to provide APE Foundation administration services as initially detailed in AIP-1 then extended in AIP-113, for the period January 1, 2023 - February 28, 2023.

#### Comments:

One of the more complicated parts of the proposal was balancing the need for compliance continuity with the fact the DAO had voted decisively to terminate the relationship with Cartan. Determining an extension that would both facilitate a smooth transition and not offend DAO voters was a challenge in consensus building.

We ultimately landed on a two-month extension period which in retrospect should have been three months due to the challenges of working with an outgoing contractor.

1. Cartan will assist the interim ApeCoin DAO working group ("Working Group Zero" or "WG0") in determining and transitioning all functions that don't explicitly require a Cayman foundation administrator to the DAO on a schedule as determined by WG0. WG0, in consultation with the Special Council of the APE Foundation, will determine which tasks explicitly require a Cayman foundation administrator.

#### Comments:

Cartan stopped processing AIPs during the transition period, so it became immediately necessary for the WG0 Stewards to take on this responsibility in order to keep the DAO's governance processes functioning. 0xAmplify, Lost, and Vulkan led the implementation of these responsibilities throughout this transition phase.

1. Cartan will assist WG0 in running a transparent RFP process to elect the next DAO administrator by sharing all relevant information related to the administration of the APE Foundation with WG0. Cartan is not precluded from submitting a proposal under the RFP process that will be evaluated on its merit along with all other applicants.

#### Comments:

Working Group Zero, in collaboration with the Ape Foundation, worked alongside Cartan to ensure that the WG0 Request for Proposal (RFP) team had the necessary information to formulate the RFP and delineate the responsibilities of the DAO administrators.

1. Cartan will assist WG0 in transitioning APE Foundation administration to the next administrator in the case that they are not willing or elected to serve as the APE Foundation administrator following the conclusion of the RFP process.

#### Comments:

Cartan chose not to answer the RFP. If the DAO needs to change administrators again in the future, we need to make sure that it's coordinated beforehand by the Ape Foundation. We can't rely on an outgoing administrator, who already knows that they aren't being renewed, to prepare the transition.

The transition should be prepared beforehand, regardless of the outcome of the AIP to renew or change the administrator. We recommend the renewal process begins 4 months prior to the expiration of the current administrator's contract.

### Interim Working Group Functions Under 3-month Mandate

1. Working Group Zero will determine and submit a budget to the Special Council on a monthly basis for approval to

execute the functions transitioned from the current APE Foundation administrator and complete the additional functions listed below during the 3-month interim period. The first month's budget will be pre-approved up to US\$44,710 in order to be able to begin executing immediately upon the start of the interim term January 4, 2023. WG0 will review budget requests weekly with the Special Council throughout the interim term. Any money not allocated to expenses approved by the Special Council during the interim term will be returned to the APE Foundation.

Comments:

Despite the understanding that WG0 would be funded from the day the mandate began, it took the Ape Foundation until February 17, 2023 to make the first deposit to the WG0 wallet. Stewards didn't receive their first payments until March 17, 2023. Both of these delays were due to the fact that Cartan was responsible for processing payments – highlighting again the need for the Ape Foundation to manage the Administrator transitions prior to the end of their contract. These delays effectively rendered the weekly review and monthly budget requests a moot point.

Under the challenging circumstances, the operating expenses were tightly controlled, and used for:

- Setup and ongoing security of the WG0 Discord, which will be passed on to the Marketing and Communications Working Group as soon as feasible
- Creation of the WG0 soulbound NFT that allowed for voting on WG0 Stewards
- Project management expenses
- Graphic design needs for AIP-239 and AIP-240

WG0 Stewards spent 4124 of the 7082 \$APE received, returning nearly 42% of the operating expense allocation.

Due to the volatility of \$APE, if budgets are denoted in \$USD, we recommend payments in \$APE reflect the \$USD value at the time of the transaction.

See Appendix 2 for full budget and expense details.

1. WG0 will determine and transition all functions that don't explicitly require a Cayman foundation administrator to the DAO on a schedule as determined by WG0. Due to the corporate structure of the APE Foundation it is not legal for WG0 to take on all of the responsibilities of any Cayman foundation administrator.

Comments:

As we dug in on specific functions that could be taken on by the community, it was clear that the Discourse Facilitator Role was the priority. The Discourse Facilitators were integral in restarting the AIP process which Cartan had neglected during the transition. 0xAmplify, Lost, and Vulkan led the implementation of these responsibilities throughout this transition phase. This position was subsequently formalized through a DAO-wide vote, as detailed in AIP-240.

And while there were significant other needs around communications, e.g. managing the Twitter account – without clear guidelines regarding general strategy, tone of voice, legal considerations, etc. it would have been impossible for WG0 to take on these responsibilities within the bounds of the mandate established in AIP-196.

1. WG0 will run a transparent RFP process to elect the next DAO administrator in Q1 2023.

Comments:

The RFP was managed by WG0 with Waabam as the team lead. The WG0 team drafted the RFP, researched potential bidders to inform them about the RFP, and then announced the RFP and interviewed the main bidders. After conducting extensive interviews with the main bidders, the WG0 team had the RFP posted to snapshot as a vote, with an assessment by the WG0 team based on the grading criteria included in the RFP. The RFP can be found [here](#).

1. WG0 will propose recommendations for the extension or evolution of AIP-1 prior to its next expiration.

Comments:

These recommendations were drafted over the term of WG0, and consist mainly of administrative improvements to the AIP process. The full recommendations can be found in Appendix 1 of this Report.

1. WG0 will propose future Official ApeCoin DAO Working Group guidelines and objectives via AIP that will also delegate all WG0 responsibilities to said working groups by the end of the 3-month term and dissolve.

Comments:

This was the main responsibility of WG0 from March onwards.

WG0's term was extended until the end of April by request of the WG0 Stewards and with approval from the Special Council, to ensure there was enough time to complete the full task carefully. [AIP-196: BORED AIP Extension Notice](#)

WG0 developed the Working Group guidelines after many weeks of consultations with operations leads from other notable DAOs, and after months of meetings with community members to workshop the working group ideas. The final guidelines are contained in AIP-239, which can be found in Appendix 3.

One of the key takeaways from the socialization and communication process for AIP-239 is that 3x weekly meetings made it impossible for anyone except the Stewards to keep up with all the changes that were occurring. With both language and timezone challenges, weekly or bi-weekly meetings would have been a much more efficient way to iterate on the AIPs.

## Timeline

### January 2023

- Held weekly meetings in numerous focus groups (including the governance focus group, communications focus group, operations focus group, mission focus group, and more).
- Used focus group meetings to gather feedback and perspectives from the ApeCoin community, and to brainstorm how future working groups could be structured.
- Organized an internal comparative analysis of other DAOs including Uniswap, ENS, Maker, Aave, Synthetix, Safe, Compound, Nexus, Yearn, Gitcoin, Curve, FWB, and more.
- Held numerous meetings with representatives from the aforementioned DAO to discuss their experiences and ask them how they would structure their DAO operations and governance structure differently if they could start over.

### February 2023

- Continuing to brainstorm and develop working groups; synthesizing lessons and research from other DAOs into an early draft of the working groups AIP
- Running transparent RFP process to select a new Cayman Islands DAO Administrator
- Preparing Transition of Discourse Facilitation

### March 2023

- Stewards take on Discourse Facilitation
- AIP-239 posted to Discourse
- Campaign to gather feedback on AIP-239 and socialize working groups concepts
- Continuous changes to AIP-239 based on community feedback
- Working Group Zero Mandate extended 1-month until the end of April, funded by Special Council's discretionary fund

### April 2023

- AIP-240 posted to Discourse
- Continued campaign to gather feedback on AIP-239 and socialize working groups concepts
- Continuous changes to AIP-239 based on community feedback
- AIP-239 and AIP-240 both went up to vote on April 20, 2023
- AIP-239 was approved by the DAO on April 26, 2023 with 4.1M \$APE In Favor, 3.3M \$APE Against, and 2.7M APE Abstain
- AIP-240 was approved by the DAO on April 26, 2023 with 2.3M \$APE In Favor, 615K \$APE Against, and 3.1M \$APE Abstain

### May 2023

- Returned unused operations expenses – 2958 \$APE, nearly 42% of total allocation.

## Our Vision for the Future of the DAO

The goal of AIP-239 is to operationalize the ApeCoin DAO through autonomous Working Groups, beginning with the Governance Working Group which will allow our community to continue the DAO approved governance process which allows for the suggestion, discussion, voting and implementation of proposals. This will empower members of the DAO to

make meaningful contributions and participate in facilitating governance operations, in order to further decentralize key functions of the DAO. Working Groups enable a sustainable infrastructure which will allow the DAO to operate efficiently while adapting to any challenges.

### Lessons from WG0

- Onboarding and education for new members is a huge priority for our DAO
- Marketing and Communications have been lacking, and need concentrated efforts from the Marketing and Communications Working Group.
- Sustainability of our Treasury, and ability to participate in IRL ventures is a huge priority for our DAO.
- Uplifting our creators, and giving them a channel to communicate less formally allow us to inspire each other. Together creating stronger and more focused ideas as a community.
- We need to focus on creating \$APE use cases and utility if ApeCoin is going to achieve its potential as an ecosystem and as a DAO.
- Including reflection periods in AIPs are a valuable method to allow for feedback and iteration in the mid-term, while ensuring progress is made in the short-term.
- People are excited to participate in DAO governance if you give them the opportunity to contribute and be heard. The WG0 Discord went from zero to over 1,000 members in 3 months. This is nearly 5x the participants in the other unofficial Discord.
- Small teams with specific focus are a key tool to achieve significant milestones in the DAO environment.

### 3-Month Reflections

- The lack of defined structure around the Ape Assembly initiative has created more confusion than progression and thus far has not been an effective tool to help lessen election fatigue or give DAO members a chance to discuss the global challenges facing the DAO.
- Putting up working group structures without at least one appointed and compensated Steward has been a significant impediment to getting the Metaverse and Marketing and Communications Working Groups get up and running.
- The lack of sustained voter education around the Treasury Working Group and its subsequent failure to be approved will be a challenge to meet the community demands around sustainability and revenue generation.

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](https://global.discourse-cdn.com/apecoin/original/2X/3/36aada1495cddad6ccb981b470359e84bf5db0e9.jpeg)

WG0 Stewies artwork by @BrazyNFT

### Appendix 1: Recommendations for Amendments to AIP-1

Public discussion for these recommendations can be found on Discourse under [Working Group Zero Mandated AIP-1 Recommendations](#)

### OVERVIEW

AIP-1 helped the DAO get off the ground, but as we have experienced this process for the past year it's evident there are improvements that can be made to increase the efficiency of the proposal process. The recommendations below aim to do just that. The goal here isn't to significantly alter AIP-1; we know it works. Instead, the goal is to fine-tune it and make it more efficient.

These are just the WG0 Stewards' recommendations based on our experience with the AIP process. These are not set in stone but rather require much more thought and feedback from the community. The idea here is to allow the Governance Working Group to continue leading this discussion to see if anything should be added/removed/altered.

The WG0 Stewards are not proposing any official changes at this time. These recommendations stem from our mandate in [AIP-196](#).

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Additions From Previously Approved AIPs

1. Addition of "Author Description" and "Team Description" to the Draft Template from approved AIP-121
2. Addition of "Abstain" voting choice from approved AIP-200 and clarity on what its purpose is

#### General

1. The Community Discourse Facilitators will be responsible for the Discourse Moderation process. The Cayman Administrators will still facilitate Snapshot, perform KYC and manage grant agreements / disbursements for grant recipients and contractors.

#### AIP Idea

1. The AIP Idea Phase would no longer be a mandatory seven day period. Anytime during the AIP Idea Phase, the author may request a Facilitator to have their proposal sent to the Draft phase and begin the rest of the AIP process.
2. Topics would no longer close when they are between the Idea and Draft phases. This was deemed an unnecessary step that did not add value to the process. The AIP topic on Discourse would only be closed after the AIP has found resolution through the DAO process, either being labeled as: "Withdrawn AIPs", "Implemented AIPs", "Accepted AIPs", or "Rejected AIPs".

#### AIP Draft

1. The AIP Draft Template would no longer require Authors to include a Proposal Category. The Discourse Facilitators will assign AIPs a Proposal Category when they are assigned an AIP number, after the Draft Phase.
2. The Abstract, Motivation and Rationale sections in the current AIP Draft Template always felt similar with a decent amount of overlap between the three so we are proposing the Motivation section should be removed. The Abstract would include motivation for the proposal and the Rationale would include details on how the proposal aligns with the Mission Statement and Guiding Values of the DAO.
3. OKR & Reporting Schedule - Proposal authors should include Objectives and Key Results for their proposal, in addition to the schedule and mediums by which this information will be reported to the ApeCoin DAO. This would increase transparency to the community.
4. If an author has not responded to Facilitators within 14 days (originally 30), the AIP would be recategorized as a "Withdrawn Idea" AIP. This would help clear up the backlog as it develops.

#### Moderation

1. Discourse Facilitators provide AIP DAR packages to the Ape Foundation, which may highlight risks to the Foundation, but they do not "approve or disapprove" DARs. This would be a change to the wording of AIP-1.

#### Snapshot

1. AIPs should be posted to Snapshot during the same day/time window each week.
2. Drafts that have been processed and published on Snapshot during the Weekly AIP Release, cannot be edited, but can be removed.
3. Discourse Administrators, not Facilitators, are the only ones that would be able to post AIPs to Snapshot because they must ensure that each one has gone through the correct approvals process.

#### Appendix 2: WG0 Budget & Expenses

##### Original Approved Budget

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##### WG0 Expenses

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WG0 Transactions (wgzero.eth)

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\*Values rounded to nearest whole number

\*\*Etherscan for details on all transactions [here](#).

Appendix 3: AIP-239: Working Group Guidelines & The Governance Working Group Charter

Proposal Name: [AIP-239: Working Group Guidelines & The Governance Working Group Charter](#)

AIP-239 [FAQ](#)

Voting Results: [Snapshot](#)

Appendix 4: AIP-240: Community Discourse Facilitators

Proposal Name: [AIP-240: Community Discourse Facilitators](#)

Voting Results: [Snapshot](#)