CIP-Draft: Delegation Program Initiation & Snapshot Settings Update Authors: c3rnst, middleway.eth Status: Draft Created: 2024-11-1

Simple summary

This proposal marks the succession of prior discussions on the [Delegation Program](#)" and "[Update on Recognized Delegates](#)" as well as includes administrative Snapshot setting updates.

With this CIP, CoW DAO's Snapshot settings will NOT enable split delegation and transitive delegation. If CoW DAO decides to include these features (developed by Gnosis Guild, refer to their [GitHub repository](#)) at a later stage, none of the existing delegation will break and hence it's considered useful to emphasise the existing delegation feature.

Motivation

The governance structure of CoW DAO is designed to adapt and improve. By fostering delegation, the aim is to increase participation and promote informed decision-making. Delegates are expected to serve as knowledgeable representatives of the COW token holders, acting in the best interest of the community.

As CoW DAO continues to manage and oversee the protocol, it is crucial to ensure that decisions are driven by well-informed, community-oriented judgment.

Details

While many DAOs have implemented delegation programs, one common challenge is the gradual inactivity of delegates. Staying current with governance requires a consistent time investment. In this proposal, there are no additional incentives for delegates apart from holding greater voting power and influencing governance outcomes, though CoW DAO may revisit this aspect in the future (possibly with the split delegation launch) - a good opportunity to kick-off the program now and for the community to gauge and discuss how to best iterate.

Snapshot's delegation function can be viewed independently of active delegate management or an official program.

Snapshot's delegation ensures that governance can continue even if recognized delegates become inactive, by allowing anyone to become a delegate and for (v)COW token holders to remain in control. Voters will have full visibility over their delegation and can reassign or revoke their delegation at any time. No official updates are required by the program's design.

Roles

Delegators

As a delegator, you are and remain

central to CoW DAO's governance. You retain the ability to vote directly, even if you've delegated your voting power. You can reassign or revoke your delegation at any time. If this is developed, use the provided analytics tools (linked RFP below) to ensure your delegate is actively voting and aligned with your values. Else, you can see details on each proposal's page. Your tokens remain in your account and are not frozen when delegating.

If you reduce or increase the voting power attached to your account, the delegate's voting power updates accordingly.

There is no expiration date set for your delegation, so make sure you do some ongoing due diligence.

Delegates

Anyone can become a CoW DAO delegate. Candidates are encouraged to introduce themselves on the CoW DAO Forum and complete their Snapshot profiles. Becoming a delegate is permissionless, aligning with CoW DAO's principles of decentralization. Delegates are expected to act in the best interest of the CoW DAO community.

Recognised delegates

Recognized delegates have been vetted by a member of the GrantsDAO committee based on subjective evaluations of their expertise, knowledge, and contributions. These delegates must allocate 10,000 COW tokens to their delegate address, signaling alignment with the community's goals. They are also expected to disclose any conflicts of interest.

Recognized delegates are key participants in governance, contributing through active engagement, proposal discussions, and sharing insights. Over time, recognized delegates may evolve into vital thought leaders within the ecosystem. CoW DAO may consider additional remuneration based on their success and contribution.

However, the committee may not continuously update the list of recognized delegates, so community members are encouraged to do their own research (DYOR) when selecting delegates.

Thank you to our recognized delegates and please include your introduction in [middleway's post](#) and on your Snapshot profile.

Snapshots's interface:

Snapshot's delegates tab on CoW DAO's space provides an easy way to rank delegates by "voting power" and "number of delegators." Recognized delegates can only be found on the CoW DAO forum and don't have a special badge on Snapshot.

NOTE: Private delegates also appear on the interface

, such as individuals who delegate to their own EOA for ease of voting, or a trusted party.

Publicly available delegates are expected to include a Statement on their Snapshot profile.

Recognised delegates can be found on CoW's Forum.

For delegation to become active (and visible on the interface) there can be a few hours delay.

Analytics

To facilitate informed decision-making, comprehensive and user-friendly analytics are essential. A GrantsDAO request-for-proposal (RFP) was issued for such analytics to be developed. These tools will empower delegators to make quick, data-driven choices and stay informed about their delegates' activities.

Communication and information

Upon successful passing of this proposal, a new "Delegation" section will be created on the CoW DAO forum, featuring sub-sections for delegates and recognized delegates (applications are currently posted in this thread). Delegates are encouraged to introduce themselves here, and recognized delegates will be listed and maintained by the GrantsDAO committee. All official delegate information should be kept up to date by the delegates themselves, on their Snapshot profiles. Community members are advised to avoid delegating to those without a complete Snapshot profile.

Recognized delegates who wish to be included can reach out to the GrantsDAO committee through their Forum introduction.

Conclusion

By introducing Snapshot delegation features, CoW DAO is creating a more robust, balanced, and effective governance structure. The delegation program fosters participation, enhances decision-making, and improves public discourse. It is a standalone improvement that strengthens CoW DAO's ecosystem and contributes to its long-term success.

In future, CoW DAO may decide on iterations of the program or for the GrantsDAO to give out a Grant for active program management and/or include additional features such as transitive delegation or split delegation.

Additional changes to the Snapshot settings

As per this Forum discussion, additional changes are proposed to be approved with the passing of this CIP:

CIP Template Revision: It is still recommended to include transactional data to a CIP (the tenderly simulation is optional). This way, there is time for experts, community and voters to review the transaction and comment below.

The CIP draft must also include a text description of what the transaction should achieve. Moving forward, CoW DAO will emphasize the need for verification of the proposed transaction on Snapshot: the transaction posted on Snapshot is the relevant one as that transaction that will execute when the proposal is successful.

Hence, the CIP template will be amended to add a bold line, mandatory to be included in the CIP text and then on Snapshot: "Transactions intended for execution on CoW DAO's Safe are included using the oSnap plugin, to be automatically executed upon successful passing. When voting on Snapshot, voters, please verify its content and the corresponding Tenderly simulation, cross-checking with the intended purpose of the transaction described in the CIP text."

This CIP proposes to introduce a new version 3 of the oSnap Snapshot plugin. This updated plugin will automatically include a Tenderly simulation of the proposed transaction on the Snapshot page - for the convenience of verifying it.

Proposed transactions

This CIP shall trigger the following transactions once moved to Snapshot:

1. Update to version 3 of the oSnap module: https://github.com/cowprotocol/snapshot-settings/pull/10

(in review; compatibility with v2 is being checked also)

1. Include the new CoW DAO logo for its Snapshot space: https://github.com/cowprotocol/snapshot-settings/commit/3e687197a2cc06355ffbbc696e13deaebb67371d

When moving to Snapshot, the new Github state will be put on IPFS and CoW DAO will point to that IPFS.

Transactions intended for execution on CoW DAO's Safe are included using the oSnap plugin, to be automatically executed upon successful passing. When voting on Snapshot, voters, please verify its content and the corresponding Tenderly simulation, cross-checking with the intended purpose of the transaction described in the CIP text.