

Proposal Name: Working Group Guidelines & The Governance Working Group Charter

Proposal Category:

Process

Abstract

The goal of this AIP 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.

Please see the [FAQ here](#).

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Links to other Working Group Charters:

1. Treasury:

[Working Group Charter - Treasury](#)

- The Treasury Working Group's Mandate is to: "Explore legal and governance structures that would enable the DAO to sustain operations and Initiatives in perpetuity. The Treasury Working Group would also oversee a portion of the ApeCoin DAO's assets, exploring ways to deploy them thoughtfully on-chain while promoting a non-custodial environment."
- Metaverse:

[Working Group Charter - Metaverse](#)

- The Metaverse Working Group's Mandate is to: "Drive culture forward into the metaverse by actively supporting metaverse-related efforts within the ApeCoin DAO."
- Marketing and Communications:

[Working Group Charter - Marketing & Communications](#)

- The Marketing and Communications Working Group's Mandate is to: "Create a consistent and compelling brand strategy and identity for the ApeCoin DAO, develop and implement comprehensive marketing and communications strategies, and establish a strong presence through effective global communication efforts in order to onboard more users into the DAO."

Authors:

Working Group Zero Stewards - [@adventurousape](#), [@Amplify](#), [@badteeth](#), [@Halina.eth](#), [@Lost](#), [@Vulkan](#), [@Waabam](#)

Reflection Period

Reflection Period

Three months after each election cycle, DAO members will have the opportunity to purposefully reflect on the effectiveness of this structure and propose meaningful changes, including addressing the effectiveness of elections for Stewards of Working Groups.

During Reflection Periods, Stewards will publish proposed changes to the Working Group structure and a set of governance proposals aimed at addressing the feedback received in the previous cycle if needed.

Any point after three months from passing, any community member may also propose changes to the Working Group structure through our AIP process.

Motivation

This proposal lays the framework which will allow the DAO to make progress in addressing our members' concerns, including: supporting builders and creators in our ecosystem; creating, maintaining, and communicating a clear brand strategy; direct support for DAO members; program development and exploring systems to generate value to the DAO through the community-directed creation of additional Working Groups.

The desire to further decentralize operations of the DAO was brought forward when the DAO voted against renewal and expansion for our previous Cayman Islands Administrator's services in December of 2022. That desire spawned [AIP-196: B.O.R.E.D. AIP](#), and upon approval by the DAO, created Working Group Zero (WG0) which successfully transitioned administrator services to new providers and assumed facilitation of the AIP process via Discourse operations. Following the transition, WG0 has allowed for the existing DAO-approved governance operations to continue virtually uninterrupted and to become improved overall. This AIP is the next phase in decentralizing the operations of the DAO into a well-researched and community-created organizational structure.

Rationale

The Working Group structure proposed within will engage a wider range of community members in the governance process, promote stability, and encourage long-term planning of DAO operations. In addition, the creation of a Governance Working group including core Initiatives: the Ape Assembly; and the DAO Secretary; will enable a governing body to facilitate Working Group operations, conduct Steward & Special Council elections, and provide increased transparency for all inter-DAO operations. Taking these actions will further enable our collective responsibility.

Key Terms

- Ape Assembly

: A governing body of highly active governance participants within the ApeCoin Ecosystem. The Ape Assembly is an Initiative to be established within the scope of the Governance Working Group.

- DAO Secretary

: Acts as an oversight and accountability role to enhance inter-DAO communications amongst Working Groups, the Special Council, and with the DAO as a whole. The DAO Secretary role is an Initiative to be established within the scope of the Governance Working Group.

- Funding Window

: The final 15 days of February and August each calendar year in which Working Group Leads will propose Working Group Budget Proposals. Working Group budgets will be proposed twice annually for DAO-wide approval.

- Initiative

: Projects within the scope of a Working Group. This includes any individual(s) performing work for the DAO within the scope of a Working Group, using a budget ratified by that Working Group.

- OKR (Objectives and Key Results)

: A means of measuring milestones or success.

- Steward

: Community members elected to serve the ApeCoin DAO within Working Groups. They have an obligation to facilitate the will of the DAO.

- Working Group Budget Proposal

: A budget proposal submitted to the DAO by the Lead of any Working Group in order to fund the execution of their charter or larger initiatives.

- Working Group Leads

: Will be selected by the Stewards of each Working Group to serve as the primary point of contact for inter-DAO operations and project management.

- Working Groups

: Community led infrastructure, allowing for the execution of specific DAO-approved mandates.

- Working Group Charter

: An AIP which outlines a Working Group's mandate and scope, OKRs, Initiatives, Reporting Requirements, Stewards, and

Budget.

- Working Group Zero (or “WG0”)

: WG0 is an interim Working Group tasked with decentralizing and operationalizing the DAO. Along with the specific administrative tasks detailed in AIP-196, WG0 was tasked with proposing Official ApeCoin DAO Working Groups that will assume the responsibilities of WG0 upon the expiration of its mandate.

Specification (A detailed breakdown of the platforms and technologies that will be used.)

- [Gnosis Safe MultiSig](#) - To be used for facilitating the use of DAO approved budgets.
- [Discourse](#) - The forum where our DAO facilitates DAO approved processes.

Introduction to Working Groups

Working Groups are intentional community led infrastructure, which allow for the execution of DAO-approved mandates. Working Group Charters outline a mandate for a Working Group, which must align with the vision, and values of the ApeCoin DAO.

Vision

“Culture has found new expression in web3 through art, gaming, entertainment, and events. The possibilities for blockchain’s impact on culture are so endless that they can’t possibly all be predicted yet. APE is a token made to support what’s next, controlled and built on by the community. It will serve as a decentralized protocol layer for community-led initiatives that drive culture forward into the metaverse.” - APE Foundation

“The goal of the APE Foundation is to steward the growth and development of the APE ecosystem in a fair and inclusive way.” - APE Foundation

Values

- Boldness: We don’t shy away from the weird, the hard, or the new.
- Equality: One APE equals one APE.
- Transparency: Processes and decisions are shared openly with the community.
- Collective Responsibility: We leave everything better than we found it.
- Persistence: Success is an ouroboros, not a straight line.

Working Group Basics

- Using these tenets as our guide, any DAO member can propose a Working Group Charter to create a new Working Group.
- Based on Working Group Charters, any DAO member can identify improvements to current Initiatives or propose ideas on how to better meet the mandates in those charters. If approved, it would be up to the Working Group Stewards to implement these ideas.
- If an idea is not acted on by a Working Group, any DAO member can propose that idea, with the necessary budget, as an Initiative in an AIP to be voted on by the DAO. If the DAO approves the AIP, the Working Group will be obligated to incorporate the Initiative into their operations using the budget approved by the DAO.

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Working Group Structure Inspiration

The ApeCoin DAO Working Group structure within this proposal closely resembles the ENS Working Group model combined with elements from Gnosis’ SAFE DAO.

Working Group Guidelines & Process

1. Creation of Additional Working Groups
2. To create a new Working Group, a Process Proposal, [as defined in AIP-1 Proposing the DAO \('Process Proposal'\)](#), must be approved by the DAO. This takes the form of a Working Group Charter.
3. A Process Proposal to create a new Working Group must demonstrate that the new Working Group is needed.
4. The proposal must demonstrate clearly why their mandate or scope can't be reasonably executed inside an existing Working Group and how this new Working Group will fit into the overall structure of the DAO.
5. A Working Group Charter consists of:
 6. Mandate and Scope - What does this group do?
 7. OKRs, if any - How is progress measured against budget proposals?
 8. Initiatives, if any - Which specific tasks or teams does this group need?
 9. Reporting Requirements - How often will this group report to the DAO?
 10. Stewards, if any - Who will maintain this group until the next election?
 11. Budget - How much will this cost until the next Funding Window? (Can be \$0)
 12. Mandate and Scope - What does this group do?
 13. OKRs, if any - How is progress measured against budget proposals?
 14. Initiatives, if any - Which specific tasks or teams does this group need?
 15. Reporting Requirements - How often will this group report to the DAO?
 16. Stewards, if any - Who will maintain this group until the next election?
 17. Budget - How much will this cost until the next Funding Window? (Can be \$0)
18. Dissolution of Working Groups
19. A Working Group can be dissolved or removed by passing a Process Proposal requesting the dissolution or removal of a Working Group.
20. Upon the dissolution of a Working Group, any and all unspent Working Group funds from that Working Group, at the time of dissolution, must be immediately returned to the DAO.
21. Working Group Stewards
22. Each Working Group shall be managed by three Stewards, elected to serve within Working Groups for a set period of time (hereafter known as a 'Term' or 'Terms').
23. Stewards of the Governance Working Group will be elected by the DAO, following the AIP process.
24. Stewards of future Working Groups will be considered elected by the DAO if they are personally named in a proposed Working Group Charter which passes our governance process via a DAO-wide vote.
25. If no Stewards are personally named in a Working Group Charter which passes our governance process via a DAO-wide vote, the Ape Assembly will run an election to determine the Stewards of the new Working Group.
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27. Stewards are responsible for supervising the operations of their Working Group.
28. Eligible members of the ApeCoin DAO may not hold either a Steward role, Special Council Role, or DAO Secretary role concurrently.
29. The responsibilities of Stewards include, but are not limited to:
 30. Managing their Working Group multisig.
 31. Operational tasks related to the administration and reporting requirements of their Working Group.
 32. Maintaining relevant documents and their Working Group Charter.

33. Organizing and approving Initiatives within a Working Group.
34. Communicating and coordinating with the APE Foundation Administrators, Special Council and the DAO Secretary.
35. Approving budgets for Initiatives and contributors.
36. Executing their Working Group Charters.
37. Managing their Working Group multisig.
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56. Communicating and coordinating with the APE Foundation Administrators, Special Council and the DAO Secretary.
57. Approving budgets for Initiatives and contributors.
58. Executing their Working Group Charters.

Steward Responsibility to the DAO

Stewards are responsible for facilitating the will of the DAO. Stewards of Working Groups can be mandated to perform tasks, set objectives and goals, sign documents and enter into agreements pending the outcome of our governance process, or an AIP. They are also responsible for their Working Group's multi-sig wallet.

1. Working Group Leads
2. The Stewards of each Working Group must appoint a Working Group Lead.
3. Only current elected Stewards of the Working Group are eligible to serve as a Lead within that given Working Group.
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5. Leads may be appointed or removed from that role at any time by a vote among the Stewards of a Working Group, with the outcome of that vote communicated in the ApeCoin DAO governance forum.
6. In the event that a Lead steps down from the position or is removed, a new Lead must be appointed within five calendar days.
7. A Steward who is appointed to serve as a Lead of a Working Group will remain in that position from the date of appointment until the end of their term limit, or they are removed or replaced.

8. The responsibilities of Leads include, but are not limited to:
9. Acting as a project manager within the Working Group;
10. Managing meetings schedules and workshops;
11. Managing resource requests from other Working Groups, Initiatives, and contributors within a Working Group;
12. Participating in strategy calls with the Secretary and other Leads, which will be scheduled every two weeks for better alignment and broad DAO strategy.
13. Consult with DAO members on Working Group performance and milestone progress;
14. Provide reports of Working Group spending in the ApeCoin DAO governance forum; and
15. Maintain open communications with DAO participants in the ApeCoin DAO governance forum.
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17. Managing meetings schedules and workshops;
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20. Consult with DAO members on Working Group performance and milestone progress;
21. Provide reports of Working Group spending in the ApeCoin DAO governance forum; and
22. Maintain open communications with DAO participants in the ApeCoin DAO governance forum.
23. Removal and Replacement of Working Group Stewards
24. A Steward will be removed if a Process Proposal requesting the removal of a Steward is passed, or they have reached their Term limit.
25. Stewards may step down from their position at any time by communicating their intention to step down in the ApeCoin DAO governance forum.
26. In the event that a Steward is removed, steps down, or is unable to continue as a Steward, for whatever reason, their multi-sig ownership will be revoked and the multi-sig will be operated by the two remaining Stewards along with the DAO Secretary until such a time as a new Steward is elected.
27. In the event that a Steward is removed, steps down, or is unable to continue as a Steward, for whatever reason, any temporary vacant positions will be filled by a contributor selected by the Ape Assembly, until an election to assign a new Steward to that Working Group has been completed.
28. Working Group Budgets
29. To request Working Group funds, Leads of each Working Group will submit Ecosystem Fund Allocation Proposals [as defined in AIP-1 Proposing the DAO \('Ecosystem Fund Allocation Proposal'\)](#) in the form of a Working Group Budget Proposal within the final 15 days (inclusive) of the months of, February and August each calendar year (each a 'Funding Window').
30. In the case of an emergency, where Working Group funds are needed by a Working Group outside of a Funding Window, an Ecosystem Fund allocation proposal may be submitted at any time by the Lead of a Working Group to request funds from the DAO.
31. Each Working Group multi-sig must have four keyholders, made up of the three current elected Stewards for that Working Group and the Secretary of the DAO.
32. Working Group funds may be disbursed from Working Group multi-sigs with three-of-four keyholder signing.
33. Stewards of a Working Group shall have the discretion to allocate their own Working Group funds where appropriate and where it is not illegal or in conflict with any AIPs or other rules.
34. All requests for Steward compensation must be detailed in a Working Group Budget Proposal or Working Group Charter.
35. Stewards may not receive compensation for their role as a Steward outside of that compensation expressly provided for in this AIP, or a Working Group Budget Proposal.

Governance Working Group Charter

*This Charter can serve as a general “template” for any DAO member to propose future Working Groups.

1. Governance Working Group Mandate and Scope:

This group is responsible for providing neutral and objective governance oversight and support for the operations of the ApeCoin DAO. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Providing operational support and project management support for the Foundation.
- Coordinating the team of moderators, administrators, and lead in Discourse.
- Assisting with transitioning of Foundation service providers.
- Creating and maintaining policies and procedures as they relate to governance.
- Maintaining operations and supporting governance Initiatives like the Ape Assembly and the DAO Secretary.
- Assisting with facilitating the Special Council Election Process as outlined in [AIP-137: The Special Council Nomination Process](#), and [AIP-138: The Special Council Election Process](#).
- OKRs to complete before August 2023 Funding Window:
- Ratify the formation of the Ape Assembly.
- Publish and maintain a DAO handbook which explains in detail how the DAO is currently structured.
- Assist with facilitating Cycle Two of the Special Council Election Process starting in May.
- Assist with facilitating Cycle Two of the Governance Working Group Election Process starting in May.
- Governance Working Group Initiatives:
- Discourse Administration

With Discourse being the platform in which our DAO facilitates the governance process, or [AIP-1](#), the Governance Working Group would oversee the administration and project management included in facilitating Discourse operations as outlined and budgeted in the [Community Discourse Facilitators](#) proposal authored by [@Waabam](#) (4/5/23) and would continue to:

- Provide operational support and project management support for the Foundation.
- Act as the team of moderators and administrators in Discourse.
- Act as the team of reviewers to prepare reports and any other supporting documentation necessary.
- The Ape Assembly

The Ape Assembly is an electorate of the most highly active governance participants within the ApeCoin ecosystem. The Ape Assembly is an Initiative to be established within the scope of the Governance Working Group, which will be tasked with facilitating elections for Working Group Stewards. Voting within the Ape Assembly will be on a one vote per person basis with required proof of personhood.

The Ape Assembly can be thought of as a legislative shrewdness of ApeCoin token holders who meet regularly to discuss DAO-wide issues and collectively write AIPs to address them. This group primarily focuses on governance, coordination and transparency within the DAO.

To ensure participants in the Ape Assembly have the necessary prior experience with ApeCoin governance, we propose that members of the Ape Assembly should maintain the same DAO approved eligibility criteria in Working Group Zero from [AIP-196: BORED AIP](#), including proof of personhood:

1. \$APE holders who have achieved Trust Level Status 2 (Member) or higher on the ApeCoin DAO Discourse; or
2. \$APE holders who have voted on at least 50% of the AIPs that have gone to Snapshot; or
3. \$APE holders with 50,000 APE or more in voting power and have voted on at least one AIP.

At present, this criteria represents ~500 \$APE holders, or wallets. After proof of personhood criteria we expect this number to be lower.

As an Initiative within the scope of the Governance Working Group, the Ape Assembly would be compelled to request a budget and any potential for compensation from the Governance Working Group. The Ape Assembly may approve budgets for several committees, which are expected to form within the DAO.

1. The ApeCoin DAO Secretary

The ApeCoin DAO Secretary is considered an Initiative within the scope of the Governance Working Group. The Secretary acts as an oversight and accountability role to enhance inter-DAO communications amongst Working Groups, the Special Council, and with the DAO as a whole.

- The Ape Assembly shall convene to elect an individual who will serve as the Secretary of the DAO.
- The Secretary is subject to the same Removal and Replacement rules ratified above.
- The Secretary would have term limits subject to the discretion of the Ape Assembly.
- As an Initiative within the scope of the Governance Working Group, the DAO Secretary would be compelled to request a budget and compensation from the Governance Working Group.
- Eligible members of the ApeCoin DAO may not hold either a Steward role, Special Council Role, or DAO Secretary role concurrently.

The responsibilities of the Secretary include, but are not limited to:

1. Managing a DAO-wide calendar;
2. Managing a DAO-wide organization chart;
3. Publishing a monthly ApeCoin DAO Transparency Report;
4. Publishing an annual ApeCoin DAO Progress Report;
5. Attending Working Group meetings where possible and ensuring meeting summaries are posted in the APE governance forum;
6. The Secretary will attend at least one meeting weekly with each Working Group where possible;
7. Assisting Stewards with coordination challenges within Working Groups;
8. Participating in a bi-weekly coordination call, held with the Leads from each Working Group, to align broader DAO strategy.
9. Acting as a multi-sig signer for Working Groups.

As one of the elected Working Group Zero Stewards and a champion of this proposal, [@Vulkan](#) is proposed as the DAO Secretary subject to the term limits set by the Ape Assembly upon inception.

1. Governance Working Group Reporting Requirements:

The Governance Working Group will publish budget and progress reports to the DAO on a quarterly basis. These reports will include Governance Initiative progress reports and budget expenditures, as well as a summary of the activities within the Governance Working Group for a given quarter.

1. Governance Working Group Stewards & Elections:
2. This AIP will mimic the timing, election cycles, process, and eligibility criteria outlined in [AIP-137: The Special Council Nomination Process](#), and [AIP-138: The Special Council Election Process](#). Specifically, elections for the Governance Working Group Stewards will begin in "Cycle Two" and will take place on Discourse in the "Working Group Steward Elections" Category. These specifications are briefly outlined below:
3. Election Cycles:
4. Timing and cadence of elections: Elections shall occur every six months.
5. Nomination and election to occur over November & December; elected Steward(s) to start in January ("Cycle One").
6. Nomination and election to occur over May & June; elected Steward(s) to start in July ("Cycle Two").
7. The following seats will be up for election at these times:
8. Cycle One: Seat One
9. Cycle Two: Seats Two, & Three
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16. Cycle One: Seat One
17. Cycle Two: Seats Two, & Three
18. Cycle One: Seat One
19. Cycle Two: Seats Two, & Three
20. Election Terms and Limits:
21. Term: Each seat is for a one-year term.
22. Term limit: An existing Governance Steward may nominate themselves for re-election and be elected to the Governance Working Group up to two terms in a row.
23. Following the term limit, the former Governance Steward must wait at least one election cycle prior to being able to nominate themselves for the Governance Working Group Steward position. In other words, if the term limit ended on Cycle One, the Steward may nominate themselves for the next Cycle Two election six months later.
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As the lead author and one of the many champions of this proposal, [@Amplify](#) is a proposed Steward for this Working Group to ensure continuity. The other two Stewards will be elected by the DAO following the election cycle ratified above.

- [@Amplify](#) will fill "Seat One" up for election in November / December 2023.
- Seat 2, up for election in June/July 2023, will be elected by the DAO.
- Seat 3, up for election in June/July 2023, will be elected by the DAO.
- Governance Working Group Budget until August 2023 Funding Window:

This AIP is requesting up to \$180,000 USD in \$APE using the price of APE when the grant is issued in order to fund the operations of the Governance Working Group.

- Stewards will be compensated \$9,000 USD each month in \$APE using the price of APE when the grant is issued.
- The DAO Secretary will be compensated \$7,000 USD each month in \$APE using the price of APE when the grant is issued.
- The Governance Working Group will have an Operations Fund of \$10,000 USD monthly.
- The Ape Assembly will have a budget of \$10,000 USD each month for community led committees.

–End of Charter–

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Steps To Implement

This Ape Improvement Proposal requests the relevant parties responsible for Discourse to create a new forum category titled: "Working Group Steward Elections".

There will be a DAO Handbook published to Discourse and housed in the Help and Resources category which will illustrate the relationships between all of the actors and groups in our DAO and how they interact and work together after the passing of this AIP, published by the Governance Working Group Steward(s).

It is expected that Working Groups will set up their own independent entities, separate from each other, and the APE Foundation.

Application, Verification, and Elections for Governance Working Group Stewards

Applicants will be invited to nominate themselves as Stewards for the Governance Working Group. In the nomination announcement within the "Working Group Steward Elections" category on Discourse, a link to a form will be provided for Applicants to submit the same information requested from applicants during the Special Council nominations and elections processes outlined in [AIP-137](#).

Timeline

The timeline for the implementation of this proposal is as follows:

- The Governance Working Group multisig will be deployed before the Steward Elections in May/June 2023.
- Election of two other Stewards begins in May/June 2023 following the same cadence as the Special Council.
- The Ape Assembly will be ratified and empowered with their budget following the elections for Governance Working Group Stewards in May/June.
- Reflection Period: Beginning October 1st, 2023.

Within 45 days of the Stewards onboarding: Governance Working Group begins operations.

Overall Cost

This AIP is requesting up to \$180,000 USD in \$APE using the price of APE when the grant is issued in order to fund the operations of the Governance Working Group.

The Governance Working Group will invoice the Foundation as needed against this budget until the Governance Working Group Multisig is deployed with four signers including the DAO Secretary. The Governance Working Group will then take custody of the budget.

Budget Notes

- Stewards will be compensated \$9,000 USD each month in \$APE using the price of APE when the grant is issued.
- The DAO Secretary will be compensated \$7,000 USD each month in \$APE using the price of APE when the grant is issued.
- The Governance Working Group will have an Operations Fund of \$10,000 USD monthly.
- The Ape Assembly will have a budget of \$10,000 USD each month for community led committees.
- May and June expenses include one Governance Working Group Steward.
- July and August expenses include three Governance Working Group Stewards.