Abstract

This post looks to start a discussion regarding a possible Constitutional AIP that seeks to set a standardized guideline for non-security council elections ran by the DAO. The end goal is to get community input on how we can create a more consistent and fair election experience moving forward.

Motivation

Since inception, the DAO has held seven different Snapshot elections across three difference projects. Due to a lack of direction in the Arbitrum DAO Constitution, all three projects varied their Snapshot voting approach as noted below:

[

Arb voting 1

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](https://global.discourse-cdn.com/standard17/uploads/arbitrum1/original/2X/a/ae1a5c8c0a1cf69d6fded236c22cb8dd4ed12c72.png)

A basic standardized guideline for handling elections will be beneficial to the community. We are nearing the one-year anniversary of the DAO. Now is the perfect time to evaluate the elections held thus far and to think about how to handle elections in the future.

Rationale

The Arbitrum Community should strive to create an election process that is as fair as possible - ultimately the community wants to make sure in the event of an election the winner(s) represent the will of the voters. A consistent voting process is one of the keys to a fair election. It ensures all participants in the process can perform their duties to the best of their abilities, as well as helps prevent candidates from gaining an unfair advantage against each other. As the process stands today with no guidelines, the following issues can occur:

Issue #1:

Snapshot has multiple 'Voting Types', some of which are less effective than others.

Proposed Solution #1:

The DAO should provide a clear guideline on which voting type to use based on the number of winners to be elected. Due to the nature of Snapshot voting this should be broken into two categories:

1. In instances where only one candidate will win the election this would likely be done by either "Single Choice Voting", "Weighted Voting", or "Ranked Choice Voting". Ranked Choice Voting would be recommended. This will prevent 'wasted' votes that can occur with the other two methods. Voters who chose the least popular candidates do not lose their votes, but instead can have their votes upcycled to remaining candidates until the 50% mark is reached. I have added a poll to this topic to get a community feel for which of the options for a single winner election would be most popular.

2. Ranked Choice Voting

3. Single Choice Voting

4. Weighted Voting

5. Abstain

0

voters

1. In instances where two or more candidates will win the election this would likely be done by the "Weighted Voting" method. The Weighted Voting will maintains consistency in our elections by mirroring how the Security Council elections are ran. Approval Voting does not have safeguards in place to prevent voters from choose more candidates then electable. This was seen in the LTIPP vote where some delegates had to have their vote manually removed since they chose more candidates than the council allowed for. Other voting methods will not allow for multiple winners to be chosen.

Issue #2

Elections ran without the "Shutter" feature allow for voters to see election results before the election is over. Without hiding results until completion, delegates are incentivized to delay and / or change their votes up to the final minutes of voting. This unfairly benefits candidates who gain early support, as delegate voting behavior may change based on who is winning at

that moment and this can materially winner / loser results. It will also not give true indication of support for lesser candidates who then may not feel it's viable to run for future positions.

Proposed Solution #2

Mandate all elections must be run with the "Shutter" feature if on Snapshot (or equivalent if we ever more to another platform)

Issue #3

Variability in the application window can lead to a substandard application process. Applicants may feel rushed to apply, or miss the window all together due to scheduling conflicts.

Proposed Solution #3

Mandate a minimum application window period to ensure all possible candidates have a fair chance to apply. This can be combined with a minimum applicant count to ensure elections of varying sizes have a diverse pool to choose from. A discussion should be had on what a viable minimum application window looks like. Some factors to consider are:

- Length of Time: The period should be long enough to allow ample time to put together a quality application, but not so long it unnecessarily delays voting.

- Minimum Applicant Count: If a proposal does not garner enough interest to have more applicants than winning spots, the question becomes if the proposal was properly crafted.

- Flexibility: The design should keep in mind that all projects have varying goals and skill sets, as well as varying levels of urgency. Some flexibility should be built in with that in mind.

A possible application window could look as follows, where "N" stands for the number of candidates who can win the election. Please note — this is an example formula to give starting point for discussion, other formulas / ideas are welcome. Language can be added to note that this is the minimum voting window period and if proposals wish to extend the timeline or require more applicants that is acceptable.

1. Week 1: The number of applicants needs to be greater than or equal to the larger of [N+2] or [Nx1.70] (Rounded Down). If after 1 week neither threshold has been met, the application window can be extended for another 7 days.

2. Week 2: The number of applicants needs to be greater than or equal to the larger of [N+2] or [Nx1.70] (Rounded Down). If after the second week neither threshold has been met, the election does not go to vote.

Some reasoning behind the above proposed formula… If enough interest is showing within a 7-day window to meet the minimum, it can be concluded that ample time has been given for applicants to apply and an election can more forward at that time. However, an extension period is offered to give proposers some flexibility if the initial minimum is not met, as history has shown extensions often result in additional qualified applicants. The extension period includes a reduction in the candidate criteria. The logic is that a total of 14 days should be more than enough for any possible applicant who missed the initial 7 day window to apply. The lowered threshold can be an acceptable tradeoff to give leniency to projects who are willing to extend their application window to gather additional candidates.

The formula is broken into a larger of A or B methodology due to the formula not working well with 1 or 2 winner elections. Once 3+ winners are met, you will see the formula has a fairly consistent "winning percent" (percentage of applicants who will be elected to council) regardless of size. In the initial 7-day window, most elections will see roughly 3/5ths of applicants going on to win. With the additional 7-day extension, roughly 4/5ths of applicants now can win. However, at no point is an election 100% guaranteed victory.

Key Terms

More information on the specific voting terms in Snapshot's FAQs. For definitions of voting types, visit https://docs.snapshot.org/user-guides/proposals/voting-types. For more information on "Shielded" voting, visitSettings - snapshot.

Specifications & Steps to Implement

If enough interest is shown, I will put together an AIP that aims to update the Arbitrum Constitution to include language that defines a basic guidance for all Non-Security Council elections held by the DAO. The goal is to strike a balance between creating a consistent election process while maintaining some flexibility for proposers to fine-tune voting to fit their specific needs. The discussion above was based on current Snapshot voting, but Constitutional language will be done in a way that is platform agnostic in the case we ever move away from Snapshot voting. At a high-level, the language will highlight the following items, although all is open to changes as the RFC process goes along.

1. Define which voting type must be used for the scenarios defined in Issue # / Solution #1

above

1. Mandate that the election results are not visible until after the election is over

2. Mandate the minimum application window for a proposal based on size

Timeline

- RFC Period - 2 Weeks

- Take Feedback and Draft a Snapshot Vote - 1 to 2 Weeks

- Snapshot Vote - 1 Week

- On Chain Vote, if passing Snapshot - 2 Weeks

Timeline may change as need arises. I will also note that the Constitution has additional Governance Document mandated procedures, but I'm not 100% sure if those apply in this scenario since this does not affect contract information. If needed, additional time will be needed for:

- Phase 4 - L2 Waiting Period - 3 Days

- Phase 5 - Initiate and Finalize an L2 to L1 Message

- Phase 6 - L1 Waiting Period - 3 Days

- Phase 7 - Implementation

Overall Cost to Implement

There will be no cost to the DAO to implement.

And on a final note, thank you so much to[@JoJo](#) for his help with theory-crafting this discussion topic!