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1 AssangeDAO Governance Transition Process (AIP-12) - Draft

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1.1 Summary

AssangeDAO has [fulfilled its purpose](#) of freeing Julian by whatever means necessary. This remarkable success raises the question: what is the future of AssangeDAO?

The authors of this proposal believe that to answer this question, the DAO must first address the question of AssangeDAO governance. We are proposing a multistep *Governance Transition Process* called AIP-12, which will be evaluated based on pre-established governance processes of the DAO (see [AIP-0001](#) and the [Snapshot settings](#)).

AIP-12’s goal is to provide a custom structure for AssangeDAO governance proposals to follow and to ensure proposals are evaluated in the most legitimate and community-driven way possible, while mitigating attack vectors and maintaining alignment with Assange.

1.2 Background

In spring 2024, BZ submitted a proposal to invigorate AssangeDAO, which included a motion for the DAO to buyback \$JUSTICE with 90% of the remaining treasury. At the time, Silke suggested that prior to moving ahead, the community should first consider fixing governance by adopting a new governance framework that would be less reliant on the multisig.

To recap, AssangeDAO governance currently relies on a forum, Snapshot and a multisig that must manually implement proposals. This governance structure was put in place in 2021, but is not an ideal design since it is centralized and does not allow \$JUSTICE holders direct control over the AssangeDAO treasury.

Silke proposed adopting an on-chain framework that would be more permissionless and aligned with the DAO’s ethos. The proposal was later discussed with Gabriel, Rose, Stella R. Magnet and other core contributors and taken up again for community discussion in June after Julian was freed.

The idea is to use the OpenZeppelin Governor framework in conjunction with the frontend Tally.xyz. (There are more details on the OpenZeppelin framework here: <https://docs.tally.xyz/education/governance-frameworks/openzeppelin-governor>)

Amir has since been testing the OpenZeppelin Governor framework, with the goal of giving the \$JUSTICE tokenholder more direct control over the AssangeDAO treasury.

Based on discussions, Amir initially understood that there was “rough consensus” on the governance upgrade. However after much deliberation and community feedback, it became apparent consensus has not been fully reached on this design.

There is a clear need for the Open Zeppelin governance upgrade to be formatted into a proposal to be evaluated by the community, and there is a team working on developing that proposal. Equally, there is a need for others in the community to field their own alternative AssangeDAO Governance Proposals.

Before moving ahead with any single proposal, the ways in which proposals are shared, evaluated, and opened to Snapshot vote should be agreed on by the community. We are calling this the *Governance Transition Process*. It will have two major steps:

- First, the community should decide on a “meta governance” proposal such as AIP-12 that defines the following: How are proposals presented to the community? How are these proposals evaluated?
- Second, if AIP-12 passes, use the process agreed in AIP-12 to decide on the specific governance changes.

Anyone who has alternate governance proposals (such as proposals to keep the existing governance framework, to update multisig signers, to liquidate the DAO and return the remaining funds to token holders, etc) are encouraged to start thinking about and developing them while AIP-12 is under discussion.

1.3 AIP-12 Proposal Details

1.3.1 Governance Transition Process

1. First, this metaproposal (AIP-12) must be ratified following the existing governance framework. Leveraging this existing governance framework includes forum deliberation and making changes as necessary based on feedback. We propose a forum discussion period of 10 days for this metaproposal. Then we will leverage existing Snapshot settings, where the voting period is 2 days, requiring a quorum of 5% and a basic majority for ratification.
2. If this metaproposal is ratified, people shall post their AssangeDAO Governance Proposals in the forum, following the template provided below. Forum deliberation takes place for a total of 4 weeks where all of the possible options are deliberated.
3. A temporary Governance Transition Unit (GTU) will be established of AssangeDAO community members with a contribution history to the DAO or its governance design and that also deeply understand Julian Assange’s values and struggles. They will analyze submitted proposals and provide feedback to proposal authors, ensuring that proposals mitigate attack vectors and are in alignment with Assange. Proposal authors must address feedback for the proposal to be considered valid. (Read the following “Governance Transition Unit” section of this proposal for more details on this).
4. After the eight week period, the GTU must come to a rough consensus to determine all of the valid AssangeDAO Governance Proposals. Proposals that are too weak against mitigating attacks or are not aligned with the values that AssangeDAO stands for will be disqualified. This analysis process will take 2 weeks, and justifications will be added to each forum proposal for options that were disqualified by the GTU.
5. The Governance Transition Vote (AIP-13), will be opened as a multi-option Snapshot vote, which includes all of the AssangeDAO Governance Proposals considered valid by the GTU. Since this is quite a transformative DAO action, the voting period for AIP-13 will be 14 days, instead of 2 days, and quorum will be increased to 10%, instead of 5%. Additionally, the [Shutter voting module](#) on Snapshot will be leveraged, which provides voter privacy during the voting period.
6. After the AIP-13 Snapshot vote concludes and assuming the quorum is met, the AssangeDAO Governance Proposal with the most votes wins. AssangeDAO multisig signers must follow through on the actions of the winning proposal, if the proposal requires multisig transactions to be executed.

1.4 Governance Transition Unit (GTU)

A temporary Governance Transition Unit (GTU) will be established of AssangeDAO community members with a contribution history to the DAO or its governance design, that also deeply understand Julian Assange’s values and struggles. The consensus unit will remain in place and work directly with the GTU.

The GTU is responsible for both:

- 1) Analyzing submitted AssangeDAO Governance Proposals, providing feedback to proposal authors, ensuring that proposals mitigate attack vectors and are in alignment with Assange. This must be done during the four week forum deliberation period.
- 2) At the end of this deliberation period, they will holistically evaluate all proposals and come to rough consensus, determining all of proposals that are considered valid to be included in the AIP-13 multi-option Snapshot vote.

We propose a five person Governance Transition Unit (GTU) including Silke Noa and Stella R. Magnet (authors of this proposal), in addition to Gabriel Shipton, BZ, and one more person nominated (or self-nominated) from the community. To protect from social engineering attacks, GTU nominees must be vouched for by at least two of the current defined GTU members.

Nominees or self-nominees must leverage the template and process described in the *AIP-12 Templates* section of this proposal.

1.5 Notes on Current Communication Channels

We are in the process of reestablishing the website and forum, so that everyone can better familiarise themselves with the pre-established Governance framework that is to be followed for the evaluation of AIP-12, and provide feedback to this proposal. (see [AIP-0001](#) and the [Snapshot settings](#))

At the moment, some of the community is using the Telegram https://t.me/Real_AssangeDAO for its chat. Other parts of the community continues to use Discord and several smaller AssangeDAO groups also exist on Signal. It is important to understand that every official chat or communication channel must be established and ratified by a DAO vote, including how moderators are set for these channels, as well as clear rules on content moderation to ensure fairness and that all voices in the community are heard. Without this, the DAO will be susceptible to social engineering attacks. Additionally, it is important to avoid censorship and bans on community members who have diverging opinions, while ensuring that discussions do not turn toxic.

Equally, relying on Telegram or Discord in governance is problematic since messages are ephemeral and are therefore hard to follow. Instead, all official community and governance discussions should take place on the forum once it is reactivated, as that was the previously established community governance channel for deliberation.

To simplify operations during this DAO phase transition, a new announcement-oriented Telegram has been created: <https://t.me/assangedaonews>. That channel, along with the [@AssangeDAO](#) X.com account will be the official channels used during the Governance Transition Process, to communicate announcements such as summaries of new proposals to review on the forum, or timelines and reminders for Snapshot votes.

Once the existing governance processes are reactivated, and independent of whether the proposed AIP-12 will pass, changes to communication processes, tools, and their content moderation policies should be voted on by the community. Accordingly, for AIP-12, we consider it a core provision that any qualifying AssangeDAO Governance Proposal must address proposed changes to communication processes, tools, and content moderation policies. See the *AssangeDAO Governance Proposal Template* at the end of this document.

1.6 AIP-12 Templates

1.6.1 Governance Transition Unit (GTU) Nomination Template

Please create a new topic on the forum and follow this template for nominating or self-nominating a GTU member.

Nominee

Who is the nominee? Do they have a Twitter?

Contribution History

Describe the contribution history of the nominee to the AssangeDAO. Note that this must be beyond financial contribution.

Vouching

Which of the current proposed GTU members has vouched for this nominee? Nominee must be vouched by at least 2 GTU members.

General Statement

Provide a statement of intent of why this nominee is best equipped to be a part of the GTU and examples that display how they understand Julian Assange's values and struggles.

1.6.2 AssangeDAO Governance Proposal Template

Once this proposal (AIP-12) is ratified, the community should leverage the finalized template for AssangeDAO Governance Proposals. Community members will create independent forum posts, following this template.

If you have any feedback or suggestions on this template, please share it in the forum post for AIP-12.

1.6.2.1 Summary Provide a simplified and layman-accessible summary of the proposal that is no more than 300 words.

1.6.2.2 Proposal Details Describe in full detail what the proposal entails. It should be detailed enough to allow for participants in the AssangeDAO to reason about it. If suggesting a new governance design, you must follow all of the headings below:

1.6.2.2.1 Technical Details and Implementation Provide full technical details on the governance upgrade, including links to test contracts to prove feasibility of the implementation, as well as potential costs. Indicate whether there is a history of the system being used in production that proves its security.

1.6.2.2.2 Governance Design Provide full details on governance design, including social process for ratifying a DAO proposal. You must take into consideration how attacks are mitigated and how the governance design will ensure that the actions of the DAO are aligned with Assange. Include details for both treasury actions and soft governance actions (such as how the governance process is upgraded, making website updates, etc.).

Mitigating Attacks

AssangeDAO has been susceptible to social engineering attacks in the past, and Assange has many adversaries. Please explain how this new governance upgrade proposal protects against attacks by adversarial parties or those who have a personal vendetta against Assange and his supporters.

Assange Alignment

Keep in mind that the current governance structure includes the Assange family Consensus Unit, which can veto proposals from progressing. This Consensus Unit is a part of the AssangeDAO as the DAO was created in Assange's name for the purpose of freeing Assange. It is assumed that the Assange family or Julian himself wishes to retain some say over governance and the direction of the DAO. Please describe how the governance design will ensure that the actions of the DAO are aligned with Assange.

1.6.2.2.3 Communication Tools Describe all communication tools and systems required to put this governance proposal into action, such as forums, chat systems, etc. Include the initial set of moderators for these tools, describing how they have been vetted and why they are best fit for the role. Additionally include content moderation policies that they will follow, which ensure that discussions remain civil and productive, while censorship is avoided and banning kept to the absolute minimum.