

NEAR Digital Collective Fair Voting Policy

I. Preamble

The NEAR Digital Collective (“NDC”) is dedicated to creating a fair, transparent, and decentralized voting mechanism for its community. We believe in the power of our community, and we aim to transition governance in a way that values every voice and contribution. As part of our commitment, we have created this Fair Voting Policy (“Policy”), which outlines our principles and procedures. By casting your vote, you agree to adhere to and respect the terms and policies outlined in this document.

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that all voting processes within the NDC are carried out in a manner that respects democratic principles, promotes equal participation, and maintains transparency and accountability, in alignment with our goal to transition towards decentralized, community-driven governance.

This Policy applies to all eligible voters in the NDC and encompasses all voting processes, including but not limited to elections, nominations, general votes, veto votes and motions.

II. The Election Integrity Council

The Election Integrity Council is an independent body of individuals with a clear mandate to oversee the first ever NDC election. It is composed of sharp minded individuals who do not run for a position in the election and have shown great value to NEAR and its Ecosystem. Members will be appointed through both the OG SBT holder group and the NDC Legal Working Group. The Election Integrity Council will be responsible for the enforcement of this Policy, prevent and investigate electoral fraud and take action when breaches of this Policy have been detected.

III. Fair Voting Policy Principles

- a. **Community-Driven:** Our governance model is built on the principle of decentralization, empowering our community to actively participate in decision-making. The NDC is a communal platform where every voice counts.
- b. **Pragmatic Decentralization:** The transition of governance to the Community will take place with proper measures to ensure continued operation, resource conservation, and avoidance of gridlock. This approach ensures the robustness and sustainability of the NDC.
- c. **Evolving Governance Models:** The NDC recognizes that our decentralization journey is an iterative process. Governance models need to be adaptable and

open to change, with necessary safeguards to maintain the stability of the NDC.

d. **Collective Decision-Making:** The NDC is committed to implementing evolving on-chain voting mechanisms that align with the approved governance models.

e. **Transparency through Openness:** The NDC is committed to maintaining transparency in all its processes, including budgeting, decision-making, audits, reporting, and dispute resolution. Detailed records will be kept to track and disclose decision-making processes and their outcomes.

f. **Self-Governance:** The ultimate goal of the NDC is to achieve self-governance, wherein the community and ecosystem independently determine the direction and outcomes without the need for any central organizations or overseeing nodes.

g. **Equal Voting Rights:** Each member of the NDC shall have the possibility to vote

h. **Prohibition of Vote Buying or Selling:** Vote buying is the practice of a candidate giving direct monetary or material incentives to individuals in exchange for their vote during an election or a vote. Any intentional vote buying or selling is strictly prohibited. Disciplinary measures will be taken against any individuals engaging in such activities by the Election Integrity Council. Moreover, the use of mixers or obfuscated funds with bad faith and intent to circumvent this Policy is prohibited. Votes identified by the Election Integrity Council to have been bought or sold shall be considered null and void.

i. **Uniqueness of Vote:** Every vote cast in an election or vote holds a unique value, serving as a distinct representation of an individual voter's will and decision. Voting on behalf of others or exercising control of other voter accounts is strictly prohibited. Disciplinary measures will be taken against any individuals engaging in such activities by the Election Integrity Council. Votes identified by the Election Integrity Council to have been controlled or cast by others shall be considered null and void.

j. **Non-discrimination:** All members have an equal opportunity to participate in voting, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, age, economic status, or any other factor.

k. **Fair Access to Voting:** All eligible participants shall have fair access to participate in the voting process. The NDC is committed to making voting user-friendly and accessible to all members, and to assist those facing difficulties in accessing the voting process.

l. **Accurate and Secure Vote Counting:** The NDC is dedicated to ensuring the accuracy and security of all votes. Robust measures will be implemented to prevent unauthorized access, manipulation, or any form of vote tampering.

m. **Redress Mechanism:** An accessible redress mechanism will be established to resolve disputes or concerns about the voting process promptly and effectively by the Election Integrity Council

n. **Voter intimidation:** The NDC is dedicated to combat all forms of voter intimidation.

o. **Whistleblowing Program:** In pursuit of a fair and transparent voting process, the NDC will establish a Whistleblower Program. Key elements include:

- Bounty Incentive Program: Rewards, known as the Whistleblower Bounty, are provided to individuals giving substantiated reports of electoral fraud. Any incentive reward will be based on the severity and impact of the reported fraudulent activity.
- Procedure for Reporting: Individuals can report suspected fraud via a provided form, and a unique case number is issued for each report.
- Verification and Investigation: The Election Integrity Council, an autonomous body of distinguished OG Soul Bound Token holders, conducts an initial review and, if deemed credible, a full investigation.
- Protection of Whistleblowers: Measures are taken to protect the identity of whistleblowers and prevent retaliation against them.
- Bounty Distribution: Confirmed whistleblowers will receive their bounty in NEAR within 45 days, sent to a provided NEAR wallet address.
- Abuse of the Whistleblower Program: Misuse or abuse of the Whistleblower Program may result in punitive measures, including but not limited to disqualification from future bounties.

Program Review: Regular reviews ensure the effectiveness of the Whistleblower Program.

IV. Fair Campaigning Commitment

a. **Respectful Communication:** All candidates and their supporters must communicate respectfully and professionally. Defamation, hate speech, personal attacks, or any form of harassment are strictly prohibited.

b. **Truthful Representation:** Candidates must provide accurate information about their qualifications, experiences, and plans. Misrepresentation, exaggeration, or false information will not be tolerated.

c. **Fair Competition:** All candidates must respect the spirit of fair competition. Any attempts to gain an unfair advantage, such as vote buying, voter intimidation, account buying, controlled/scripted account voting, reward for voting or spreading false information about other candidates, are strictly prohibited.

d. **Campaign Finance Transparency:** If applicable, all candidates should disclose the sources of their campaign funds. Anonymous donations must be disclosed with transparency to the maximum extent possible.

V. Acceptance of Policy

By casting your vote, you agree to the terms and policies outlined in this document. This includes adherence to our guiding principles and participation in the Whistleblower Program where necessary. You acknowledge the importance of transparency, fairness, and collective decision-making in maintaining the integrity of our ecosystem.

VI. Vote Bonding

By casting your vote, you agree to bond NEAR as a form of assurance for your adherence to this Policy. This bond acts as a guarantee that voters and candidates will not engage in any prohibited practices under this Policy.

The Election Integrity Council shall have the authority to slash or forfeit the bonded NEAR if breaches under this Policy have been detected. The bonded NEAR shall be returned in full to voter accounts as soon as possible and upon request of the Election Integrity Council.

VII. Policy Review and Updates

The Fair Voting Policy will undergo regular reviews and updates to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. All changes will be communicated promptly via our official channels. By casting your vote, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agreed to abide by this Fair Voting Policy, supporting our collective work towards a more honest, fair, and democratic voting mechanism for the NEAR Digital Collective.