

Deep Adaptation Forum

DAF 101: Purpose, Platforms, Activities, Roles, Governance, and Finances

As of 31 December 2020

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1. Context and purpose of the Deep Adaptation Forum

It is time we considered the implications of it being too late to avert a global catastrophe in the lifetimes of people alive today. By July 2019, over half a million people had downloaded the [Deep Adaptation paper](#) on this subject, written by Professor Bendell (founder of the DAF and co-author of this proposal). As people from all walks of life awaken to this realisation, a sense of fear and unease is becoming more prevalent. As the effects of climate chaos continue to unfold, panic could bring about extreme forms of collective “othering,” even fascistic responses.

The overarching mission of the DAF is to embody and enable loving responses to our predicament, so that we reduce suffering while saving more of society and the natural world.

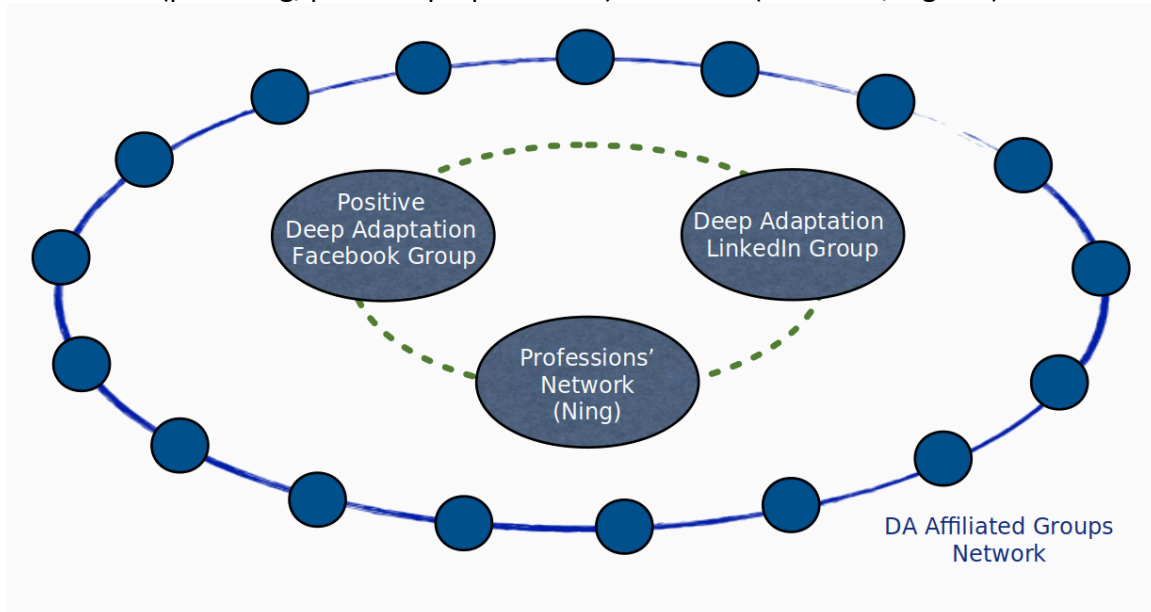
The DAF is an international space to connect people, online and in person, and in all spheres of life - to foster mutual support, collaboration, and professional development in the process of facing societal collapse.

In service of this mission, we aim to create spaces for constructive dialogue and support community-building, while fostering a spirit of equality, mutual support and care around the breakdown of societies. We are acting on all channels available to us: online and in person; with individuals, professional communities, and institutions; on blogs, social media, and mainstream media; and we are both exploring and explaining the "why" (why we need to take action), and the "how" (ways to do this purposefully and with joy, courage and compassion, regardless of what the future brings).

Given that the implication of societal breakdown or collapse is such an all-encompassing agenda, and not something that anyone can claim much experience or expertise on, we have not followed the typical route of identifying a specific professional or stakeholder group to serve. Instead, we are responding to the rapidly increasing concern about the risks of climate-induced societal breakdown and Deep Adaptation by channeling it into networks of peer support. This is leading to projects that we would not necessarily have imagined at the outset.

Almost a year after its launch, the associated social networks of the Deep Adaptation Forum convene as many as 15,000 participants, with six paid freelancers and over fifty volunteers, supporting a wide range of activities, located around the world.

The Facebook and LinkedIn groups provide spaces for mutual emotional support and professional outreach, from which people join the Professions' Network if they want to commit to collaborate with others to contribute to the creation of professional resources, such as new guides, databases, trainings, advisory services and so on. Affiliated Groups are in-person and online communities, aligned with the principles of the wider DA movement, with specific foci such as themes (parenting, practical preparedness) or locales (countries/regions).



The plan is for the DAF never to charge fees for participation, so its overheads need to be carefully considered. It is currently funded with small private donations, with sufficient resources to support the existing human and IT resources until July 2021.

Our approach to enabling emergence is informed by research into networks, and extensive experience amongst core team members and volunteers in leadership for sustainability, community building, participatory planning, as well as our attention to the values we wish to promote as we face likely breakdown or collapse of societies. We are seeking to enable connection, dialogue, and generative collaboration, rather than just information sharing. **We are supporting free-of-charge, open-minded, open-hearted, cross-disciplinary, multi-local, and personable (i.e. including video and in-person) interaction.** Our aim is not to build a large institution. Instead, we believe that within a few years each profession in each country could have their own groups and initiatives on aspects of promoting readiness for societal breakdown and Deep Adaptation. In addition, communities around the world will have their own initiatives to cope better with a breakdown in their normal way of life.

We have been working with the support of small grants and volunteers. Given more support, we have a chance to reach a critical mass, and make Deep Adaptation blossom into a genuine social movement with impacts reaching far and wide, beyond borders, cultures, and social classes. We have the opportunity to become a catalyst for peace and positive transformation in an increasingly fragmented world.

2. Organisational Aims

The activities outlined in this document all relate to our aims which for ease of reference are summarised here:

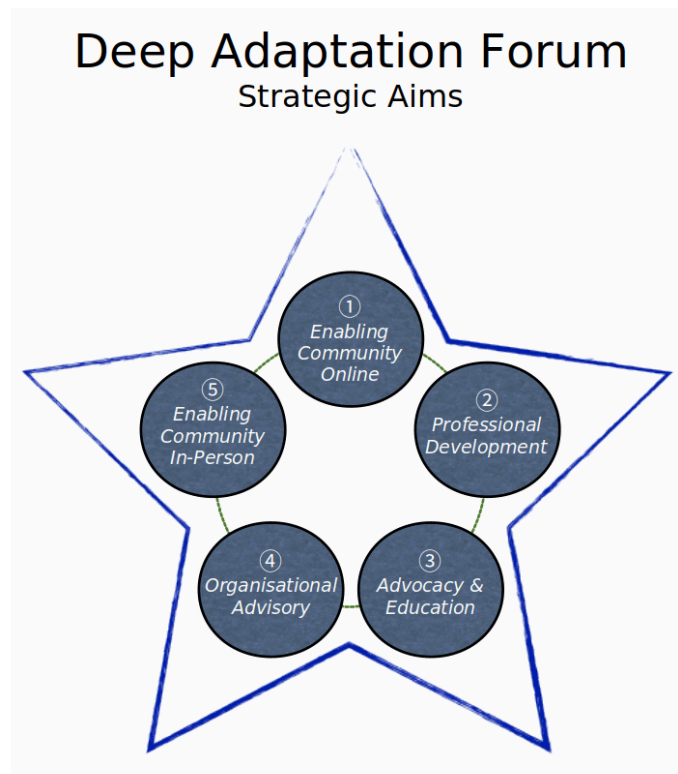
AIM 1: Information sharing, emotional support and dialogue via social networks, so that people who hitherto felt isolated in their views are more connected, informed and able to collaborate.

AIM 2: Enabling conversations within professional sectors to identify needs, produce knowledge resources and initiate projects, ahead of this topic becoming mainstream.

AIM 3: Providing advocacy on myriad aspects of this agenda via articles, speeches and interviews, to promote open-minded and open-hearted responses to the climate emergency.

AIM 4: Providing strategic advice to organisations that are changing the public discourse on the climate emergency, to help them contribute to public support for political leadership on Deep Adaptation.

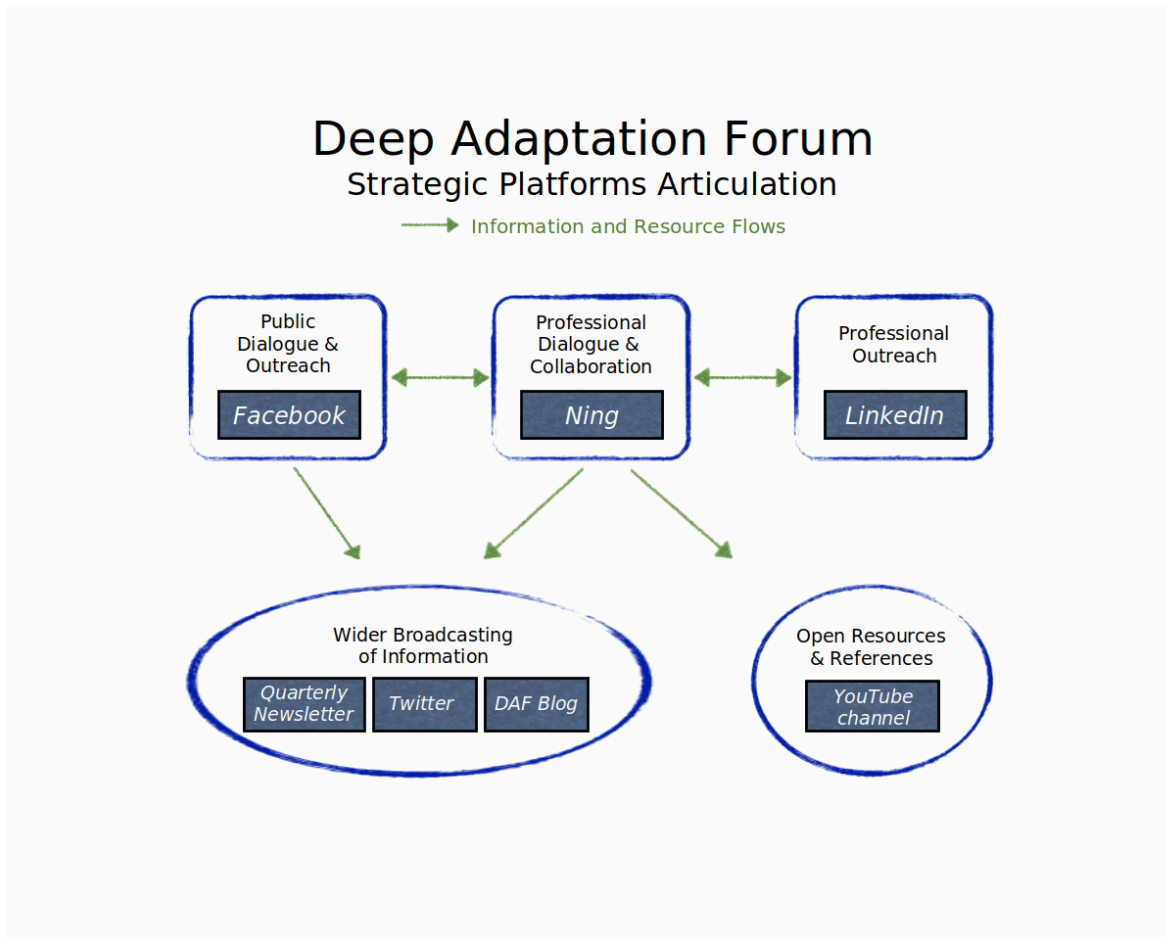
AIM 5: Promoting exploration of this agenda in-person in communities and professions, so people can bring this agenda from the online space into organisational and community life and everyday behaviours.



3. Key communication platforms & channels

Different platforms are used to serve different functions and reach different kinds of users. The overview below shows how these platforms work together to support these community groups.

These networks are growing fast. As an integrated whole, they pursue all five Strategic Aims.



Deep Adaptation (DA) Facebook Group

Since its launch by Prof Bendell at the beginning of March 2019, the [Deep Adaptation Facebook Group](#) has grown to over 12,000 participants, with about 70% of them active in posting, commenting or reacting to posts. There were nearly 20,000 such interactions in December 2020 alone. There have been over 10,500 individual posts since launch. Participation is predominantly Western / minority world, with a third from the USA. The cities most represented are London, United Kingdom (548 participants), Sydney, Australia (312), Melbourne, Australia (261), Berlin, Germany (185), New York, USA (151), Seattle, USA (136), Portland, USA (109), Brisbane, Australia (102), Los Angeles, USA (101), and Bristol, UK (98).

The Professions' Network

The [Professions' Network](#) is hosted on Ning. A year and a half after launch it involves over 3,000 people, who have all committed during sign-up to collaborate through the cocreation of resources, peer support and the initiation of relevant projects. There are over a dozen Discussion Groups, which focus on professional sectors or skill sets. Several groups have at least one volunteer group leader and supporting volunteers. Half of these groups have over 300 members, who meet via video conferences and initiating projects.

There are also 5 active [Task Groups](#) that have been launched thanks to the Professions' Network. Contrary to Discussion Groups, which focus on exchanges and sharing of information within a broad context, each TG exists for its members to actively work on a given task, and has a specific purpose and mission statement.

LinkedIn Group

Our group on [LinkedIn](#) is a simple way for professionals to discover and learn about DA and consider whether to join the Professions' Network on the Ning. Currently it has over 3,000 participants.

YouTube Channel

Jem Bendell's [Youtube channel](#) publishes his regular Q&A's with experts and leaders, such as Joanna Macy and Gail Bradbrook (co-founder of XR), as well as his public talks. Some of the Q&As have over 7,000 views within a month of publishing, and some of his talks now have over 170,000 views.

Twitter

The DA [Twitter account](#) is used mainly for general broadcasting purposes. It currently has over 3,100 followers.

Quarterly Newsletter

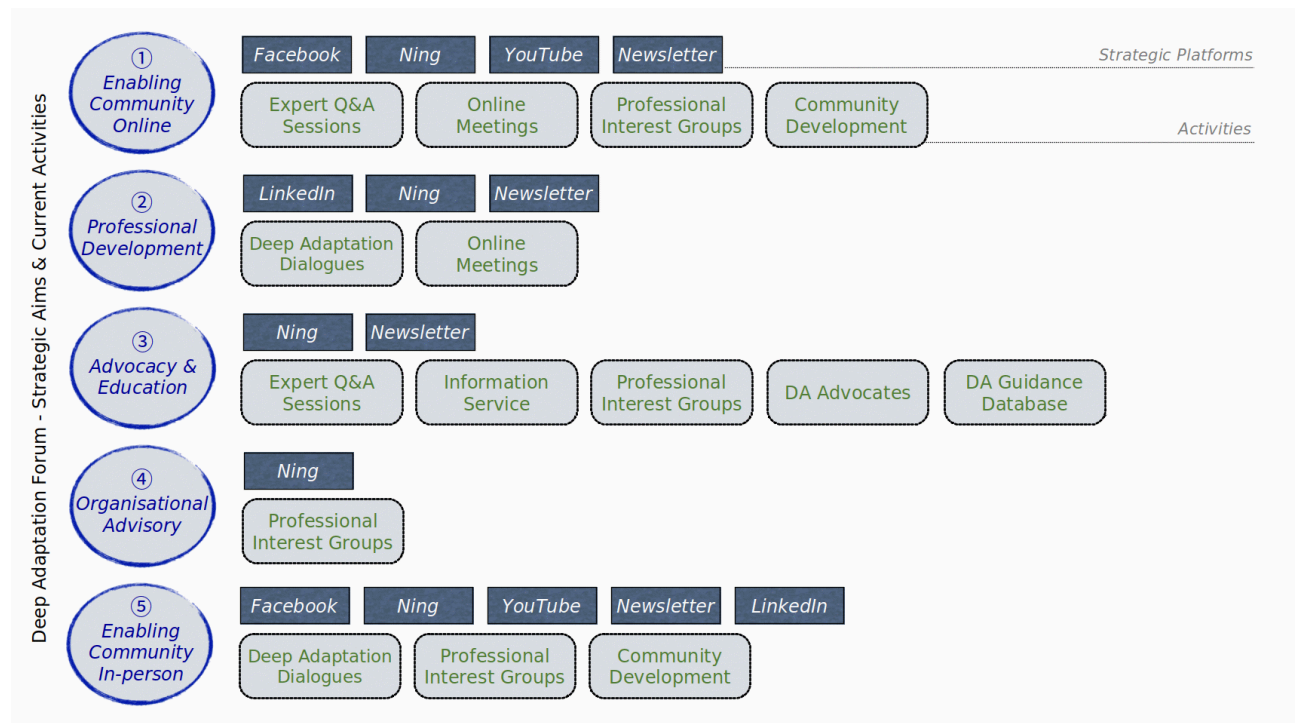
The first issue of the [Deep Adaptation Quarterly Newsletter](#) was sent in June 2019. Over 8,000 people receive its regular updates on climate adaptation news, and on activity happening on the various DAF platforms. The database for this Quarterly is mainly built through collaboration between the volunteers of the DA and affiliated Facebook groups, who advertise the quarterly to participants. DAF volunteers are also invited to recommend relevant content for the newsletter.

DAF Blog

In November 2020, a new [Deep Adaptation Forum Blog](#) was launched. The blog aims “to attract a variety of voices and perspectives to speak to how we are adapting to disruption and collapse.” Anyone can contribute new blog posts to the Editorial Team.

4. DAF Activities

In this section, we focus on the main outward-facing activities launched as part of the DAF, and enabled by the infrastructure listed previously. This will show how these activities contribute to pursuing our Strategic Aims. This is summarized in the diagram below.



Events

Expert Q&A online sessions

These were hosted each month by Jem Bendell (to December 2020), with guests including [Joanna Macy](#), [Gail Bradbrook](#), [Deb Ozarko](#), and [Charles Eisenstein](#). Up to 100 people can attend online and ask questions of the guests. The recordings of the Q&A are posted to the [DAF YouTube channel](#).

Deep Adaptation Dialogues

In 2019, the DAF [financially supported](#) day-long free Open Space dialogues (in USA, Ireland, UK and South Africa), with four small grants and guest video appearances by the Project Founder or colleagues, and support for marketing and dissemination of findings.

Services

Information Service

The Project Founder receives about a dozen unsolicited emails a day from people with a professional interest in DA. These range from journalists, to policymakers, to activists, to professionals of all sorts. Some people have significant professional roles (EU, NASA, Royal Navy, Labour Party, NGOs, UN etc). We respond to many, and often put them in touch with relevant people who can contribute, speak in public or on radio etc. This has led to other people we have promoted then appearing on BBC Radio 5, in newspapers, as well as a range of independent media. Responding usefully has been a significant activity for the General Assistant.

We also coordinate various offers of voluntary support, such as the [translation and re-publication](#) of the Deep Adaptation paper and other materials.

The DA Quarterly Newsletter (see above) is an important part of this information service.

Research and Advocacy

We have been undertaking research and analysis in areas related to climate change and impacts on society, such as the current state of food security research and policy. Background reports are prepared which then support individual blogs, articles, chapters (such as the one in the Extinction Rebellion handbook [This Is Not a Drill](#)), research papers and speeches (such as [that presented to the European Commission](#) by Prof Bendell). This research also supports the interviews we give and informs the advice we give to organisations like Extinction Rebellion, the European Commission and others. In addition, we research relevant modalities for organising on the DA agenda, in order to produce guidance for facilitators and local group organisers.

In November 2019, we released our first free Deep Adaptation discussion paper on [currency innovation for local resilience](#). Since then, members of the Core Team wrote [another article](#) (June 2020), on whether anticipating societal collapse motivates pro-social behaviours - including evidence from the Deep Adaptation Forum; and a discussion paper on [Facilitation for Deep Adaptation](#) (November 2020).

See also the latest posts on the [DAF Blog](#).

The Project Founder has given over a dozen talks about different aspects of Deep Adaptation, some of them filmed, in both professional or activist settings. The Project Founder has both

advised and given interviews to many independent journalists, broadcast journalists, print journalists, as well as written newspaper articles ([see here](#)).

UPDATE - September 22nd, 2020: Due to the Founder stepping down from the Core Team at the end of this month, Research and Advocacy services are being suspended for the time being.

Facilitating Online Meetings and Gatherings

Organising online video gatherings for a range of different people. These include:

- monthly meetings of volunteer facilitators or region-focused online meetings of participants of the Facebook group (and related follow-up support for peer mentoring).
- regular (weekly) online gatherings, available in different time zones, which provide a safe space for sharing and processing difficult emotional responses. These are hosted by volunteer facilitators, and offered to members of the DA Facebook group, members of the affiliated groups network, and members of the Professions' Network.
- monthly meetings organised by the volunteer facilitators of the interest groups on the Professions' Network (and related follow-up support for peer mentoring).
- monthly meetings of a network of trusted colleagues who provide support and guidance to each other and DAF convenors.

Promoting volunteer-led regional and subject-specific online meetings, including the development of [Task Groups](#).

Professional Interest Group Development

The Professions' Network Curator and Senior Facilitator provide support for the volunteer coordinators of the Interest Groups (and now Task Groups) on the Professions' Network. This helps them to organise video conferences and initiate projects as well as cultivate peer support and engagement (both practical and emotional). Many interest groups have over 300 people involved. For instance, members of the Holistic Approaches & Guidance Group have initiated the Deep Adaptation Guidance database, a project for participants to offer therapeutic support to people in active professional engagement in this field (see below).

Online Community Development

Curating a large, growing and extremely active Facebook group on such an emotionally-charged topic is a significant undertaking. The Platforms Assistant provides support to the DA Moderators, across time zones, in recruiting and training more fellow volunteers, as well as working with them in developing appropriate procedures.

The Platforms Assistant also liaises with emerging DA Affiliated Groups (see next section).

Strategic Advice

Our Project Founder and General Assistant have been providing advice to key activist group leaders and politicians since Autumn of 2018. In particular, inputting into Extinction Rebellion, the European Commission and the UK Labour Party.

UPDATE - September 22nd, 2020: Due to the Founder stepping down from the Core Team at the end of this month, Strategic Advice services are being suspended for the time being.

Deep Adaptation Guidance website

The [DA Guidance website](#) (DAG) hosts a global community of counselors and coaches dedicated to helping people who are seeking support in facing the emotional journey that comes when one becomes collapse-aware. This is a volunteer-led project which began as a [Task Group](#) on the Professions' Network, and which is funded by the Deep Adaptation Forum.

In addition to serving people on their journey, the website contains a growing [database of resources](#) for individuals and groups (faith communities, non-profit organizations, and others) to face collapse-awareness in ways that are aligned with the Deep Adaptation principles.

The site connects people in need with Guides who are offering services that are free, donation based or chargeable and as such serves a wide socio-economic demographic and their emotional needs. The website also features a [blog](#), with original thought leadership focused on how traditional counseling and coaching methods are having to "find a new edge" in order to meet people facing such an existential question as the one we're seeing in the world today.

Deep Adaptation Advocates

The DA Advocates roster was presented in September 2019. Located worldwide and able to give presentations, talks or workshops in several languages online and offline, Advocates are ready to share their expertise and experience with the public at large on DA-related topics.

4. DAF Extended Network: Affiliated Groups

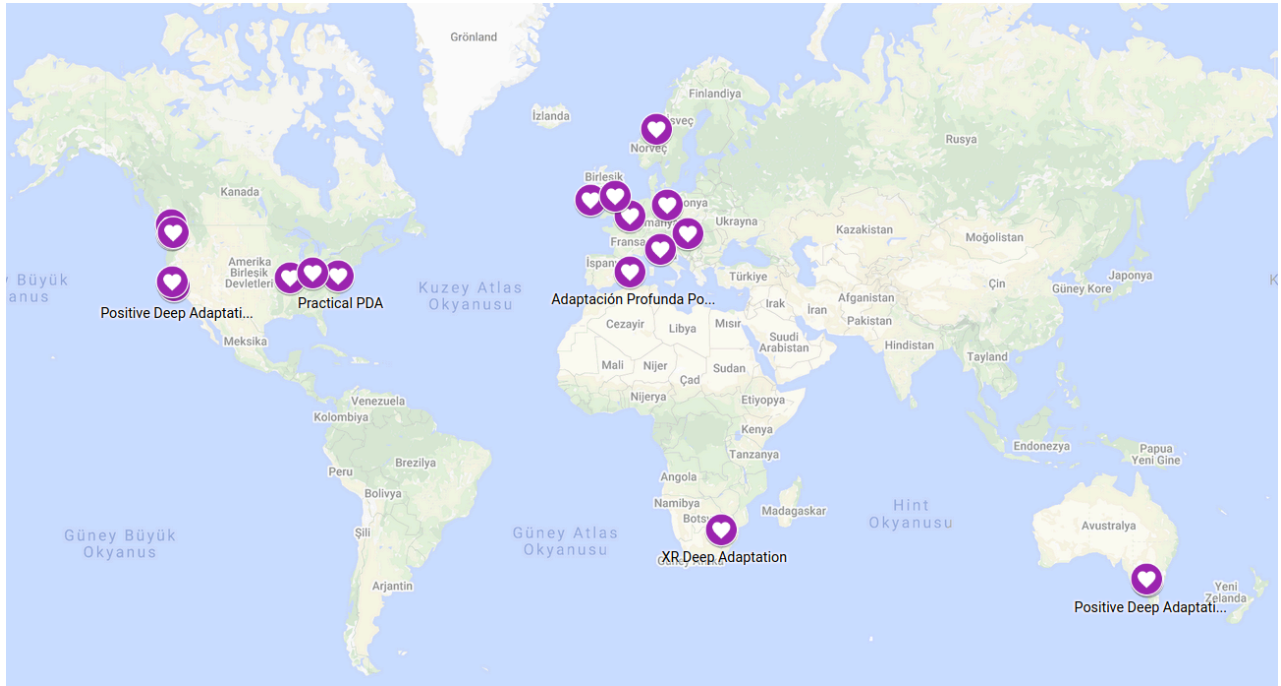
As the topics of Deep Adaptation and social collapse are spreading around the world, people are setting up many groups that are aligned with, and actively promoting, Deep Adaptation.

In order to inform the way such new groups operate, and to encourage alignment with the wider movement, we have launched an [Affiliated Groups Network](#). It gathers various groups with a strong connection with the Deep Adaptation movement, and each has a specific geographical, linguistic, or thematic focus.

After affiliation, initiators and volunteers of these local DA groups are provided with advice and mentoring, including peer-to-peer. The aim is to disseminate the philosophy and principles of

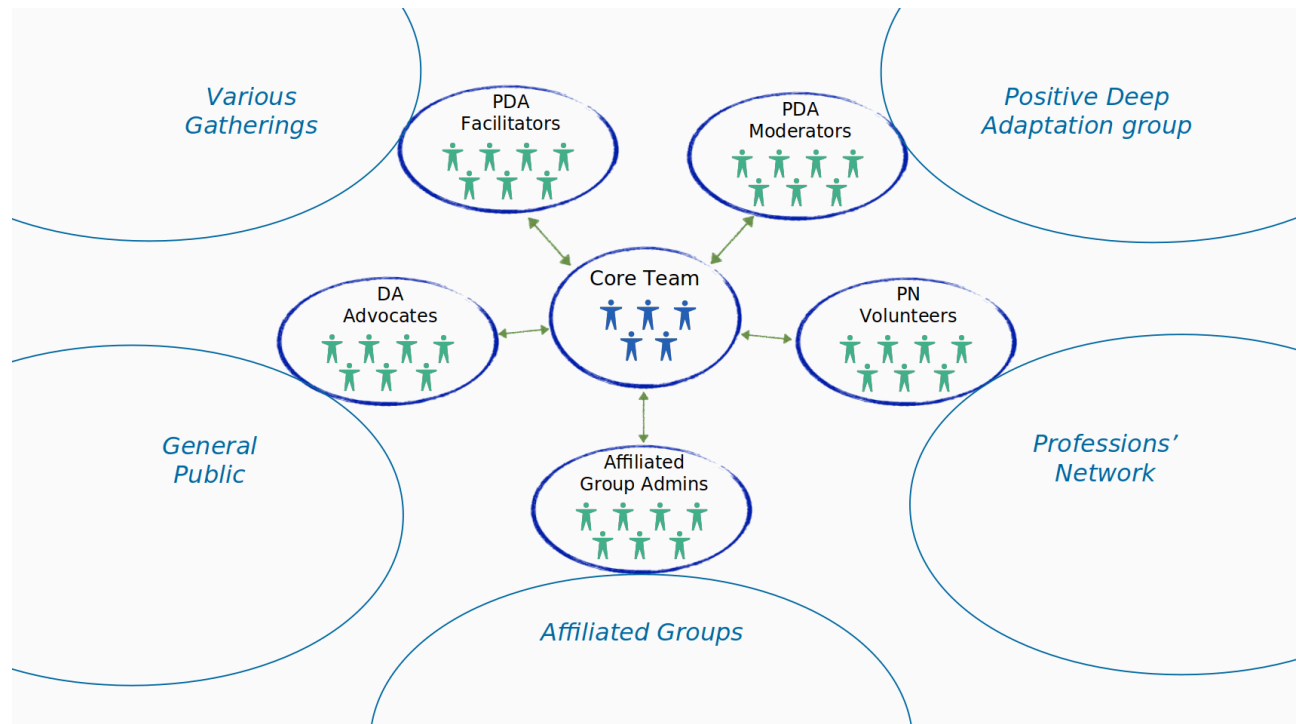
DA both online and in face-to-face interactions around these difficult topics. We seek to moderate an increasing dependence on Facebook, by asking affiliated groups to invite their participants, at sign up, to consider giving their email to register with the Deep Adaptation Quarterly.

Currently, there are 18 DA Affiliated Groups worldwide, from the Pacific Northwest to Australia, and from Norway to South Africa. Find the up-to-date list [here](#), with more details on each group.



Map of current DA Affiliated Groups

5. Core Team & Volunteers



At the heart of the DAF are the members of the Core Team and various groups of volunteers, coordinating their activities closely. These volunteers, in turn, are at the interface of many large groups of people, be it on DAF platforms (DA Facebook Group, Professions' Network), the DAF extended network (Affiliated Groups), or society as a whole. Although members of the Core Team also interact at times with these wider groups, volunteers play an essential role in energizing the forum and enabling it to function. Very little would be possible without them.

Volunteer Groups

Listed in alphabetical order.

Affiliated Group Administrators

The contact persons, founders, and/or administrators of DA Affiliated Groups. Having agreed to the [Affiliated Group Guidelines](#), they are free to manage their respective groups as they see fit.

Deep Adaptation Advocates

[DA Advocates](#) are a roster of people of many different kinds of experience and expertise, with something interesting to say on the Deep Adaptation Agenda. They are located around the world, and can give talks, interviews and workshops.

DA Facilitators

A group of volunteer facilitators who serve as a community of practice, “inquiring together into ways of resourcing ourselves to resource others as we face into a chaotic and unpredictable future.” They offer regular ‘Deep Listening’ and ‘Deep Relating’ spaces online for members of the Facebook group, and also support each other to develop, trial and then offer online and in-person spaces for supporting participants across the forum to connect and build emotional and spiritual resilience. The list of offers is growing steadily and there a strong culture of mutual support is developing in this group.

DA Moderators

Undertake moderation of group posts from community participants, in line with community guidelines; liaise with community participants to uphold guidelines; and coordinate their activities with the Platforms Assistant when guidance is required.

Professions’ Network Volunteers

Volunteer Group Leaders undertake moderation of posts within Interest Groups; organise regular online gatherings; uphold forum guidelines; report on their group activities to the rest of the forum; participate in monthly gatherings with the Senior Facilitator and the PN Curator; and curate the co-creation of useful resources.

Core Team Roles

Listed in alphabetical order.

Core Team Coordinator (currently: Kat Soares)

The Core Team Coordinator responsibilities include:

- Providing oversight and support for the work of each Core Team member.
- Understanding each of the activity areas of DAF to ensure effective, integrated working amongst Core Team members;
- ‘Horizon scanning’ to identify opportunities and challenges for DAF;
- Evolving DAF governance in collaboration with the Core Team and Holding Group as DAF grows;
- Developing new initiatives, including deciding , and allocating Core Team responsibilities and resources to ensure such initiatives have Core Team guidance and/or support;
- Hiring any new freelancers or service providers, or changing existing team hours or responsibilities, in consultation with the Core Team and Holding Group;
- Ensuring volunteer onboarding, support, and recognition is happening;
- Liaison with DAF fiscal sponsor (currently the Schumacher Institute) and any individual donors about activities and invoices;

- Financial planning and management, ensuring the DAF is financially sustainable in collaboration with the DAF fundraising coordinator and liaising with key donors where necessary;
- Liaison with the Holding Group.

Platforms Assistant (currently: Kat Soares)

Deep Adaptation groups administration, including:

- DA group administration and coordination of the team of volunteer moderators and content contributors;
- Liaising with DA Advocates. Matching DA speakers to incoming speaking opportunities, communicating with and enabling peer support and collaboration among advocates.

Network Weaver (currently: Dorian Cave)

Curating the DAF Professions' Network on a day-to-day basis (including discussion moderation, event creation, online space design, coordinating volunteer work on the platform, etc.); liaising with Interest Group and Task Group leaders, including managing the process of launching either; carrying out quickly-applicable research on how to design better collaborative work processes. Dorian is also involved in the DAF Governance Review Circle and the Diversity & Decolonising Circle, and liaises with members of the Affiliated Groups Network.

Senior Facilitator (currently: Igor Polskiy)

The Senior Facilitator convenes and hosts monthly online gatherings for volunteers of the Professions' Network; recruits and supports volunteer facilitators through the DA Facilitators' Facebook group; coordinates the hosting of regular 'Deep Listening' gatherings, hosted by volunteer facilitators, for members of the DA Facebook group; promotes the development of communities of practice in line with DA principles and values; secretary to the Holding Group, and generally, undertakes activities aiming towards the propagation of principles and communities of practices for the facilitation of spaces, online and offline, which support people to engage in more loving conversations about collapse.

Fundraising Coordinator (currently: Vacant)

The overarching aim of the Deep Adaptation Forum (DAF) Fundraising Coordinator (FC) is to seek diverse and ongoing funding streams to support DAF administration and activities through working with a team of volunteers with skills and expertise in the area of fundraising for DAF.

Communications Coordinator (currently: Cat Jenkins)

The overarching aim of the Deep Adaptation Forum (DAF) Communications Coordinator (CC) is to enable regular, accurate, diverse, and responsive communications on the wider DA agenda (but not on other issues) both within the DAF and to external audiences. At this time, the aim is to communicate in English.

6. DAF Governance

Ultimate supervision and accountability for the action and projects of the DAF has so far resided in its Founder, Prof. Bendell. In November 2019, day-to-day management and Core Team coordination tasks were handed over to the **Acting Coordinator**, a role that rotated amongst Core Team members till December 2020 when a **Core Team Coordinator** was appointed.

A new governance and advisory body was launched in March 2020: the [DAF Holding Group](#). The aim is for DAF to become more clearly managed and understood as a collective endeavour in support of kind and wise preparations for potential, and responses to actual, breakdowns in societies due to climate change.

A mechanism for intermittent guidance and ultimate accountability, the new Holding Group has the dual mandate of providing mission oversight (ensure that the DAF core team of paid freelancers or staff remain focused on the mission of the DAF), and responsive guidance (in response to requests from the DAF Core Team).

The DAF is not incorporated, but works in close partnership with its Fiscal Sponsor, the [Schumacher Institute](#), a registered UK charity. This charity manages all private donations that are funding the work of the DAF Core Team so far. Core Team members have the status of freelancers, who each manage their own administration.

Read more about DAF Governance [here](#).

7. DAF Financial Statement

As of December 31, 2020

In 2021 one private individual contributed GBP18K, another GBP 7,500. The latter for a specific project to develop the 'new DAF space'. In addition to these contributions we received a total of approximately GBP 19k in regular monthly contributions through our Open Collective Page and an additional GBP 5k through an end of year match campaign. This funding covered the cost of five independent freelancers who helped with research, writing and movement building and covered the costs of support for digital platforms, web maintenance and other small consultancies.

The five freelancers in the Core Team each invoice their fees to the registered charity and manage their own accounts and taxes. Their pay is set as a basic living allowance at GBP100 a day for a maximum of 6 or 8 days a month. The Schumacher Institute charges a commission for handling the donations and reports its accounts to the relevant regulators in the UK.

Since 2020 all money from these sources has been handled by the Schumacher Institute (i.e. the majority of funds) and is reported via our Open Collective Page.

The DAF depends on the many dozens of volunteers around the world who give their time freely. The paid freelancers focus on supporting those volunteers, and most months do much more than the days they are paid for.

At this time the DAF is not going to incorporate, as a predicted turnover of GBP50K does not warrant that and while its future is uncertain, being hosted by a well-governed charity is more efficient.

The new Holding Group may choose to release more information at the end of 2022, and recommend a change in governance.

ABOUT THE [SCHUMACHER INSTITUTE](#)

Company No: 6606284, Incorporated 31st May 2008

Registered Office: Create Centre, Smeaton Road BRISTOL, BS1 6XN

Registered charity number: 1144674 from 15th November 2011

Change of name and institute status: 22nd August 2014

Information Commissioner's Office Registration Number: Z2419674

Read the Schumacher Institute's privacy policy statement [here](#).

**One last important thing you can do to help these ideas, and others, to happen:
become one of our regular patrons, on Patreon.**

This would help us, in the Core Team,
to keep supporting more volunteer
efforts within our networks.

 **BECOME A PATRON**