

EA Survey 2019: Cause Prioritization Analysis Details

Details on Regression models

For the ordered model, we took the full set of observations and used a five-point scale (ranging from (1) 'I do not think any resources should be devoted to this cause', to (5) 'This cause should be the top priority'), for each cause. As measures of engagement in discussions, we included whether respondents were members of the following groups: LessWrong, EA Forum, EA Facebook, EA local group. As broader measures of engagement we looked at whether respondents had done 80,000 Hours career coaching, and their own self reported level of engagement.

We also included a number of routes through which individuals became involved in EA (dummy variables for Personal Contact, Local EA Group, TLYCS, SSC, GWWC, 80,000 Hours). We used a binary diet measure of "vegan/vegetarian" versus "eats meat/reduced meat/pescatarian". As measures of demographics we looked at gender, race, political affiliation, and age (a continuous variable not included in the public dataset due to anonymization concerns). Due to the small number of non-binary persons in the sample, it was not appropriate to infer based on results. Therefore, we used a simple binary-gender where an EA stated Male or Female.

We used the same strategy for the multinomial model but using the forced choice cause area data as the outcome and setting Long Term Future as the base given it was the most popular category. Thus, coefficients in the table below should be considered relative to that base.

Regression Tables

Indicators of being highly engaged in EA online discussions, such as membership the EA Forum and LessWrong are associated with placing Global Poverty and Climate

Change in lower categories. LessWrong members tend to prioritize AI Risk and Improving Rationality, while EA forum members tend to prioritize Cause prioritization, Meta Charities and Biosecurity. Getting into EA through The Life You Can Save (TLYCS) and Giving What We Can (GWWC) are associated with placing Global Poverty higher on the scale. This also seems fairly intuitive, given the historical focus of TLYCS and GWWC on Global Poverty. Membership of the EA Facebook page is associated with a narrower set of causes than in 2018; increased ratings of Animal Welfare and Cause Prioritization, and lower ratings of Biosecurity.

Self-reported higher levels of engagement in EA are also associated with greater prioritization of AI, Cause prioritization, Animal Welfare, Meta charities and other typical LTF causes, and lower ratings of Global Poverty and Climate Change.

Receiving 80,000 Hours coaching seems to be associated with rating Global Poverty and Animal Welfare lower on the scale and prioritising AI and Biosecurity more highly. In addition, Getting into EA via 80,000 Hours is associated with a lower rating of Global Poverty and higher ratings of AI, Cause Prioritization, Biosecurity, Improving Rationality/Decision Making, Nuclear Security and Other X-Risk.

Ordered regression of full scale cause priority, EA Survey 2019

VARIABLES	Global Poverty.	AI.	Climate Change.	Cause Prioritisation.	Animal Welfare.	Biosecurity.	Improving Rationality.	Meta	Other Xrisk.	Nuclear Security.	Mental Health.
EA Facebook	0.0716 (0.123)	0.147 (0.124)	0.0519 (0.125)	0.275** (0.131)	0.379*** (0.127)	-0.318** (0.130)	-0.0125 (0.121)	0.215* (0.127)	-0.0605 (0.133)	0.0685 (0.132)	0.239* (0.129)
EA Forum	-0.687*** (0.147)	0.0652 (0.144)	-0.459*** (0.150)	0.343** (0.146)	0.0946 (0.143)	0.331** (0.145)	-0.0709 (0.138)	0.447*** (0.143)	0.133 (0.146)	0.0602 (0.143)	0.0498 (0.146)
LessWrong	-0.714*** (0.156)	0.910*** (0.162)	-0.501*** (0.170)	0.136 (0.161)	-0.347** (0.166)	0.0981 (0.159)	0.458*** (0.148)	-0.236 (0.152)	0.176 (0.162)	-0.129 (0.153)	-0.152 (0.163)
Local EA Group	0.185 (0.129)	-0.0489 (0.129)	-0.368*** (0.130)	0.228* (0.126)	-0.166 (0.126)	-0.0284 (0.135)	0.152 (0.129)	0.0752 (0.134)	0.100 (0.133)	-0.236* (0.135)	0.0173 (0.137)
80,000 Hours coached	-0.382** (0.171)	0.334** (0.165)	-0.248 (0.154)	0.345* (0.184)	-0.394** (0.168)	0.438** (0.183)	0.0785 (0.158)	-0.0560 (0.176)	0.0640 (0.170)	0.157 (0.157)	-0.110 (0.160)
Engaged in EA	-0.298*** (0.0733)	0.439*** (0.0756)	-0.412*** (0.0749)	0.260*** (0.0765)	0.190*** (0.0723)	0.250*** (0.0731)	0.00873 (0.0781)	0.340*** (0.0763)	0.322*** (0.0769)	0.180** (0.0715)	-0.0735 (0.0776)
Involved via GWWC	0.315*** (0.117)	-0.165 (0.123)	0.0269 (0.116)	0.236** (0.119)	-0.0924 (0.113)	-0.109 (0.121)	-0.0964 (0.121)	0.282** (0.127)	0.0355 (0.127)	-0.318*** (0.121)	-0.169 (0.123)
Involved via TLYCS	0.838*** (0.197)	-0.321* (0.194)	0.143 (0.176)	-0.0262 (0.201)	0.800*** (0.190)	-0.0201 (0.254)	-0.242 (0.217)	0.188 (0.210)	-0.295 (0.199)	0.524** (0.226)	0.154 (0.213)
Involved via Local Group	-0.00313 (0.140)	0.233* (0.136)	0.0608 (0.135)	0.117 (0.132)	-0.0625 (0.134)	0.189 (0.138)	0.0203 (0.140)	0.0869 (0.137)	0.0432 (0.139)	0.186 (0.131)	0.170 (0.139)
Involved via Slate Star Codex	0.131 (0.160)	0.128 (0.154)	-0.452*** (0.151)	-0.299** (0.141)	0.0505 (0.154)	0.126 (0.169)	-0.487*** (0.148)	-0.0894 (0.171)	-0.0195 (0.153)	0.141 (0.157)	-0.437*** (0.149)
Involved via Personal Contact	-0.108 (0.119)	-0.00997 (0.114)	-0.136 (0.121)	-0.157 (0.124)	-0.116 (0.119)	-0.250** (0.127)	0.162 (0.119)	0.0109 (0.118)	0.154 (0.120)	0.0415 (0.116)	-0.0151 (0.122)
Involved via 80,000 Hours	-0.355*** (0.112)	0.636*** (0.115)	0.00587 (0.110)	0.371*** (0.114)	0.209* (0.109)	0.515*** (0.116)	0.300*** (0.112)	0.178 (0.118)	0.429*** (0.117)	0.426*** (0.111)	0.0758 (0.114)
Veg*n	-0.530*** (0.115)	-0.0870 (0.123)	-0.0790 (0.115)	-0.134 (0.119)	1.956*** (0.128)	-0.0240 (0.120)	-0.178 (0.117)	0.0663 (0.121)	-0.0768 (0.120)	-0.0416 (0.118)	-0.0935 (0.116)
Age	0.00367 (0.00642)	-0.0221*** (0.00775)	0.0240** (0.00705)	0.00780 (0.00742)	0.00274 (0.00756)	-0.00464 (0.00726)	0.0342*** (0.00739)	0.00546 (0.00764)	0.000400 (0.00740)	0.00614 (0.00792)	0.0223*** (0.00781)
Male	-0.212* (0.125)	0.267** (0.121)	-0.654*** (0.120)	-0.0990 (0.124)	-0.0432 (0.123)	-0.0707 (0.127)	-0.246* (0.126)	-0.151 (0.128)	0.378*** (0.126)	0.103 (0.116)	-0.506*** (0.131)
Student	-0.0254 (0.130)	-0.0119 (0.129)	0.207 (0.132)	0.105 (0.131)	-0.0921 (0.128)	0.252* (0.138)	0.269** (0.129)	-0.0281 (0.132)	0.0214 (0.134)	0.333** (0.132)	0.130 (0.135)
Years in EA	0.0106 (0.0244)	-0.0245 (0.0248)	-0.107*** (0.0247)	-0.0552** (0.0276)	-0.0296 (0.0256)	-0.00485 (0.0265)	-0.0870*** (0.0257)	-0.0252 (0.0280)	-0.0258 (0.0265)	-0.0468* (0.0256)	-0.0707** (0.0279)
Non-Left	-0.307*** (0.142)	-0.256* (0.137)	-1.037*** (0.142)	0.0532 (0.135)	-0.250* (0.135)	-0.351*** (0.140)	0.0282 (0.130)	0.105 (0.138)	0.115 (0.138)	-0.186 (0.143)	-0.247* (0.148)
White	0.125 (0.161)	-0.0945 (0.157)	-0.144 (0.142)	0.0372 (0.170)	0.0805 (0.146)	-0.0888 (0.171)	-0.0621 (0.154)	-0.208 (0.160)	0.0509 (0.171)	0.0823 (0.156)	-0.128 (0.157)
Constant cut1	-16.65 (10.26)	40.85*** (10.82)	-50.66*** (10.18)	32.14*** (10.76)	15.77 (10.85)	13.06 (11.07)	2.780 (10.58)	25.93** (10.82)	17.44 (10.84)	19.74** (10.03)	-6.234 (10.35)
Constant cut2	-14.25 (10.25)	42.76*** (10.81)	-48.47*** (10.16)	34.46*** (10.76)	17.85 (10.86)	15.52 (11.07)	4.956 (10.58)	28.67*** (10.82)	19.65* (10.84)	21.74** (10.03)	-3.947 (10.34)
Constant cut3	-12.59 (10.24)	44.16*** (10.81)	-47.04*** (10.15)	36.19*** (10.76)	19.69* (10.87)	17.43 (11.08)	6.454 (10.59)	30.54*** (10.83)	21.15* (10.84)	23.41** (10.04)	-2.114 (10.35)
Constant cut4	-10.67 (10.24)	46.13*** (10.82)	-45.29*** (10.15)	38.00*** (10.77)	21.66** (10.87)	20.57* (11.09)	8.234 (10.59)	32.86*** (10.84)	23.55** (10.84)	26.16*** (10.07)	0.186 (10.35)
Observations	1,289	1,262	1,285	1,201	1,281	1,229	1,263	1,195	1,209	1,227	1,221
Pseudo R2	0.0804	0.0803	0.109	0.0419	0.109	0.0361	0.0225	0.0399	0.0308	0.0190	0.0255

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Multinomial Regression: Long Term Future as the base

VARIABLES	Animal Welfare.	Global Poverty.	Meta.	Other.
EA Facebook	0.368 (0.252)	0.191 (0.170)	0.233 (0.238)	0.180 (0.368)
EA Forum	0.181 (0.263)	-0.840*** (0.215)	0.255 (0.241)	0.685 (0.451)
LessWrong	-0.653** (0.322)	-1.255*** (0.242)	-0.585** (0.267)	-0.662 (0.529)
Local EA Group	-0.0670 (0.238)	0.113 (0.178)	0.394* (0.225)	-0.311 (0.423)
Engaged in EA	-0.0953 (0.141)	-0.353*** (0.0989)	0.0896 (0.126)	-0.470** (0.227)
80,000 Hours coached	-1.233*** (0.357)	-0.523* (0.272)	-0.471* (0.270)	-1.438* (0.783)
Involved via GWWC	-0.224 (0.249)	0.654*** (0.169)	0.674*** (0.212)	0.414 (0.363)
Involved via TLYCS	0.714** (0.354)	0.840*** (0.290)	-0.963* (0.558)	-0.449 (0.806)
Involved via Local Group	-0.438* (0.249)	-0.355* (0.203)	-0.0843 (0.225)	0.355 (0.422)
Involved via Slate Star Codex	0.0815 (0.339)	-0.0664 (0.199)	-0.180 (0.292)	-1.023* (0.601)
Involved via Personal Contact	-0.0946 (0.218)	-0.139 (0.169)	0.168 (0.199)	-0.184 (0.372)
Involved via 80,000 Hours	-0.204 (0.209)	-0.856*** (0.152)	-0.0564 (0.212)	-0.447 (0.304)
Veg*n	3.640*** (0.480)	-0.285* (0.162)	0.297 (0.214)	0.0594 (0.338)
Age	0.0205 (0.0142)	-0.00537 (0.00979)	0.0106 (0.0122)	0.00982 (0.0150)
Male	-0.0885 (0.226)	-0.222 (0.168)	-0.416* (0.214)	-0.499 (0.340)
Student	-0.584** (0.274)	-0.220 (0.181)	0.0362 (0.229)	-0.379 (0.413)
Years in EA	0.0483 (0.0467)	0.0693** (0.0337)	0.107** (0.0456)	0.0106 (0.0707)
Non-Left	0.0412 (0.271)	0.0176 (0.182)	0.403* (0.226)	0.435 (0.383)
White	-0.476* (0.270)	-0.374* (0.217)	-0.285 (0.264)	0.0428 (0.488)
Constant	16.58 (21.71)	52.71*** (15.26)	6.502 (21.10)	46.90 (38.33)
Observations	1,313	1,313	1,313	1,313
Pseudo R2	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.154

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1