

Non-Western EAs' perception of cross cultural interactions they had with Western EAs

Summary

I investigated non-Western EAs' perception of cross cultural interactions (CCIs) they had with Westerners, specifically:

1. Whether or not non-Westerners experienced CCI issues, and how often;
2. How their CCIs compare between EA and non-EA settings;
3. What kinds of [subtle acts of exclusion \(SAEs\)](#) they had experienced.

I interviewed 21 non-Western EAs (selected from an EA conference's Swapcard and a few from my own personal network) and discovered:

- An overwhelming number of interviewees (19 out of 21) thought their cross-cultural interactions in EA settings were almost all neutral or positive.
- However, among the same 19 interviewees who found their CCIs to be mostly neutral or positive, they've also reported the following:
 - 43% (9 out of 19) reported at least one general negative CCI
 - 48% (10 out of 19) reported at least one SAE caused by Western EAs
 - 19% (4 out of 19) reported at least one SAE caused by other non-Western EAs (or themselves)
 - 81% (17 out of 19) reported:
 - At least one general negative CCI, or
 - At least one SAE caused by Western EAs, or
 - At least one SAE caused by other non-Western EAs (or themselves), or
 - A mix or all of the above.
- When asked to compare CCIs between EA settings and non-EA settings,
 - 7 out of 14 thought CCIs in EA settings are about the same when compared to non-EA settings.
 - 5 out of 14 thought CCIs in EA settings are better for them.
 - 2 out of 14 thought CCIs in EA Settings are worse for them.
- Here are the most reported experiences:
 - General negative CCIs
 - Non-Western EAs found the act of connecting with Western EAs challenging. (4x)
 - Non-Western EAs felt suspicious about the lack of representation. (3x)
 - Non-Western EAs found the English language barrier challenging to overcome. (3x)
 - SAEs caused by Western EAs
 - Western EAs treating non-Western EAs in a way that's demeaning. (4x)

- Western EAs were coming across as paternalistic towards non-Western EAs. (2x)
 - SAEs caused by non-Western EAs
 - Non-Western EAs changing their accent or communication style to be more Western. (2x)
- For a better understanding of Western and non-Western CCIs, I highly recommend reading the [highlighted negative vignettes](#) and [highlighted positive vignettes](#).

Methodology

I thought a more hands-on qualitative approach, like doing interviews, would be a better choice compared to a survey, because it offered me:

1. More flexibility to pivot the type of questions I ask or the things I want to say;
2. More information about a person's emotional state;
3. A way to potentially express empathy to those who might need it.

I've also received feedback that interviewing people seems like the next best option too.

Hence, I decided to interview people online who would identify themselves as EA or EA adjacent, and are predominantly non-Western. In these interviews, I asked:

1. How much cross cultural interactions in EA have you had?
2. How are the cross cultural interactions in EA settings that you've experienced?
3. Have you encountered any kinds of subtle acts of exclusion from others in EA settings?
4. Have you encountered acts of exclusion that are done by oppressed groups or minorities onto themselves in EA settings?
5. How do your cross-cultural experiences compare between EA and non-EA settings?
6. Are there other experiences you'd like to share? Or questions you'd like me to ask but I didn't?

I did two things with the qualitative data I got from the interviews:

1. I collected their experiences, paraphrased them, and compiled them under the appendix below. For those I found to be resonant in some hard-to-describe way, I included them in the "highlighted negative/positive vignettes" sections.
2. I did some basic qualitative research coding and analysis to figure out how often similar experiences occur. You can find these in the "results" section.

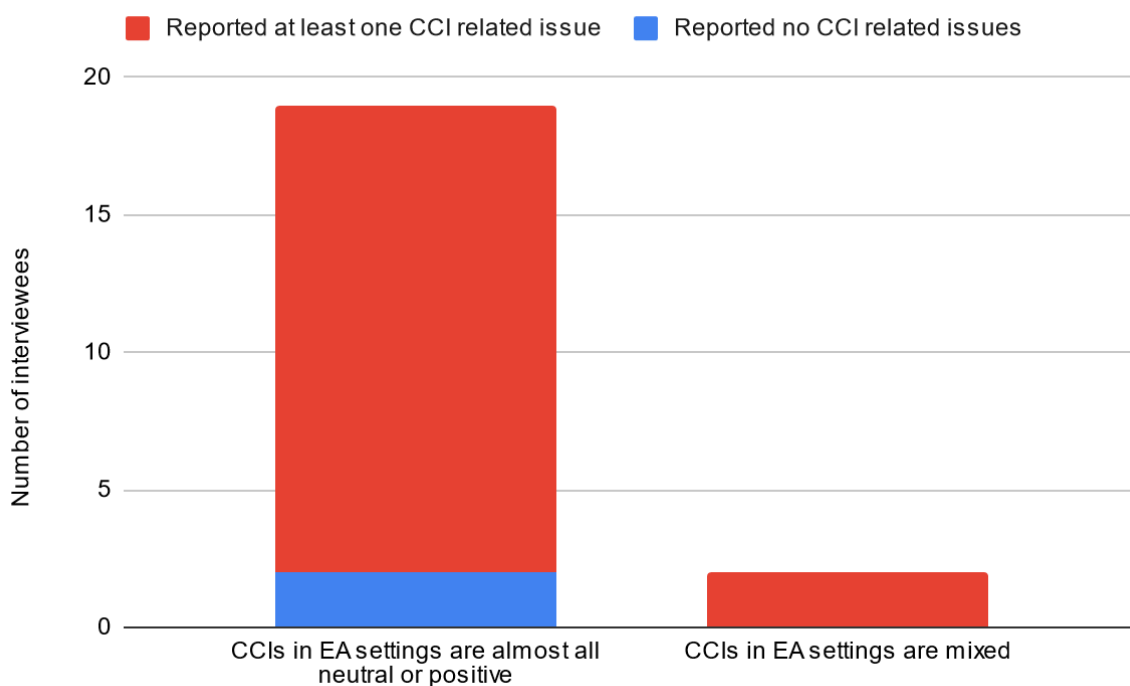
To find the people I interviewed, I did the following:

1. I selected 73 profiles from an EA conference's Swapcard. I found them on meetups that non-Westerners generally attend, and on the attendees list (using the "country" filter).
2. Then, I selected 43 out of 73 profiles to reach out to. These are the people who I had identified as having studied in, worked in, and lived in a non-Western country for the majority of their lives. I made some guesswork here by reading through their LinkedIn profiles.

3. Of the 43 people, 21 of them did a 30-minute interview with me. Furthermore, I interviewed three additional people outside of the pool of EA conference attendees, for a total of 24 people.
4. 3 interviewees did not review my paraphrases and did not give me consent to publish, so the final number of vignettes is 21.

Results

1. Do non-Westerners experience CCI issues? And how many?

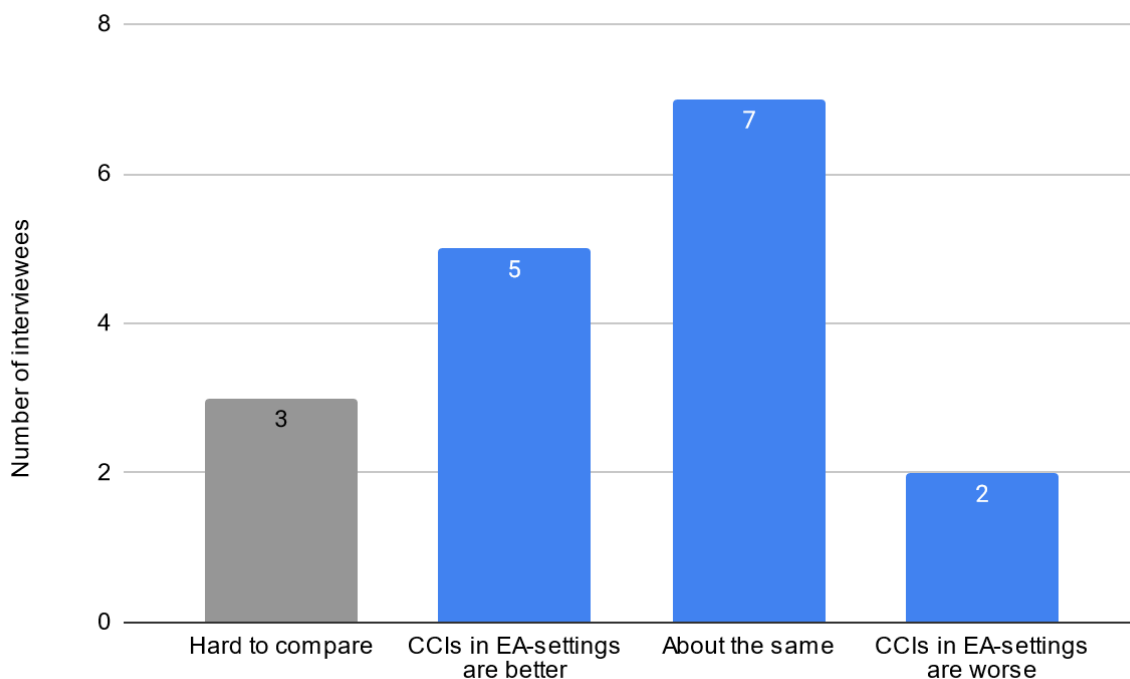


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However, among the same 19 interviewees who found their CCIs to be mostly neutral or positive, they've also reported the following:

- 43% (9 out of 19) reported at least one general negative CCI
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 - At least one general negative CCI, or
 - At least one SAE caused by Western EAs, or
 - At least one SAE caused by other non-Western EAs (or themselves), or
 - A mix or all of the above.

2. How do CCI's compare between EA and non-EA settings?



When asked to compared CCI's between EA settings and non-EA settings,

- 7 out of 14 thought CCI's in EA settings are about the same when compared to non-EA settings.
- 5 out of 14 thought CCI's in EA settings are better for them.
- 2 out of 14 thought CCI's in EA Settings are worse for them.

3. What kinds of SAEs do interviewees experience?

Highlighted negative vignettes

I thought it would be great to highlight some vignettes that felt resonant to me. I wanted to include more, but I felt like readers would appreciate a more condensed writing. If you have the time, you can [read more of these vignettes in the Appendix](#).

Note: I used random English alphabets to anonymise the interviewees' names.

1. In a workshop related to an EA related cause area, Western and non-Western folks sat at separate tables, probably unintentionally. Someone B knows who attended a similar workshop at a different time had a similar experience.
2. In one of the afterparties during an EA conference, K had two potentially negative CCI's:
 - a. When they went in the wrong direction, someone yelled the right direction to them in a way that felt infantilising and demeaning.
 - b. When they were inside the afterparty space, no one seemed interested in engaging with them, so they left early.

3. L had a call with an EA grantmaker. The purpose of the call was to receive feedback about a grant application they were rejected from. L thought that the delivery of the feedback was callous and the grantmaker's body language was giving off a "I don't want to be here" vibe. The already-supposed-to-be-short call also ended much earlier than expected. L felt uncertain about what factors contributed to that dynamic, but they suspected the difference in culture may play a part.
4. Although there were a few Africans in an EA conference in Europe, L still felt a little suspicious that they didn't see any African Europeans.

Personal notes from Yi-Yang: I think the message L is trying to convey here is that it's weird that they did not see any African Europeans in an EA conference in Europe, when they expect there to be more African Europeans than (Continental) Africans. I suspect L might be worried that African Europeans found EA circles in Europe to be unwelcoming.

5. In conversations with Western EAs in EA conferences, M sometimes feels like they're treated like a lower-status implementer or information source instead of an equal-status collaborator.

Personal notes from Yi-Yang: Concretely, this might look like:

- *Assuming a person is ignorant and not asking whether they know something.*
 - *Giving off a body language that the person they're speaking to is not competent enough.*
6. In a separate discussion, M noticed that their opinions were repeatedly criticised by another Western EA, which prompted them to stop engaging in the discussion. This felt abnormal even by EA's higher truth-seeking norms and this made them feel suspicious that there are other factors at play here (namely their ethnicity/culture and gender).
 7. R noticed at least one discussion around how remuneration should be calculated between different countries had overtones of "the cost of living is too high in higher income countries", which failed to "capture trade-offs around infrastructure, pollution, and social trust" in low-to-middle-income countries. They think discussions around fair remuneration for talent should not only consider the cost of living in a city and purchasing power parity, but also other factors too.
 8. S observed that a Western EA expressed their intention to help some non-Western non-EA locals with an issue but assumed that the locals lacked the appropriate concern or knowledge to tackle said issue. S felt (low-to-medium confidence) that this person was quite patronising and arrogant towards the locals.

Personal notes from Yi-Yang: Imagine a highly educated person from a high income country going to a low-to-middle-income country. They noticed some potential problems and wanted to help the locals, but assumed they were ignorant about the problem.

9. Despite not being a native English speaker themselves, T would sometimes unconsciously desire less interactions with folks with poor English language skills. T suspects that they remind them of themselves when they had a poor grasp on English, which they associate with their feelings of inferiority at the time, and which they project onto the subjects.
10. V attended an AI safety event where the organiser mentioned how the global south isn't that important for AI safety. V thought that what the organiser said could be a reasonable stance, but the way it was phrased felt quite icky to them. It also didn't help that the organiser's attempt at sugarcoating their stance made it more icky.

Personal notes from Yi-Yang: I'm not sure how they were exactly sugarcoating their stance, but it might look like: "there are other EA cause areas that are more important in the global south."

Highlighted positive vignettes

1. K had two positive CCIs during an EA conference:
 - a. A Western EA invited them unprompted for a drink.
 - b. In a group house, they found themselves being included in conversations more often.
2. R thinks that the CCIs they had experienced were mostly positive.
 - a. In fact, they wished EAs were less worried about offending them.
 - b. They also had helpful meta-conversations to deconfuse certain non-verbal cues.
 - c. R also liked that there's much less pressure to drink alcohol in EA settings.
3. W thought the socioeconomic diversity meetup [in an EA conference] got them to meet similar folks and made them feel more welcomed.
4. X remembered a positive experience where two Westerners recognised that they were dominating a discussion and then decided to speak less so that X could be included.
5. Despite cultural barriers, Z thought that their CCIs are generally respectful. They especially like how diverse their team is in an EA aligned organisation.

If you have the time, you can [read more of these vignettes in the Appendix](#).

Highlighted neutral vignettes

1. R has a bigger preference for bonding with people who are culturally similar to them. The side-effect of excluding those who are culturally dissimilar seems like the right trade-off at times, because hanging out with people who are similar is more comforting and freeing.

CCIs interviewees reported and their frequency

A. General negative CCIs

CCIs interviewees reported	Number of interviewees who reported this
Non-Western EAs found the act of connecting with Western EAs challenging.	4
Non-Western EAs felt suspicious about the lack of representation.	3
Non-Western EAs found the English language barrier challenging to overcome.	3
Non-Westerner EAs found the application process for EA-related programmes based in Western countries to be daunting.	2
Western EAs did not weigh the cheaper costs of living in low-to-middle-income countries (LMICs) with the less tangible costs of living in LMICs (e.g., poor infrastructure, pollution, etc) when thinking about remuneration.	1
Western EAs paid less attention to or ignored non-Western EAs due to language barriers or accent.	1
Western EAs were persuading folks to adopt non-EA-but-common-among-EAs norms (like polyamory) in EA spaces a little too excessively.	1
Non-Western EAs did not engage in EA conferences in Western settings because they felt uncomfortable and overwhelmed.	1
Non-Western EAs felt stressed about sounding smart and competent when talking to Western EAs.	1

B. SAEs caused by Western EAs

CCIs interviewees reported	Number of interviewees who reported this
Western EAs treating non-Western EAs in a way that's demeaning.	4
Western EAs were coming across as paternalistic towards non-Western EAs.	2
Western EAs mentioned that the global south isn't important for AI safety in a way that's demeaning.	1

CCIs interviewees reported	Number of interviewees who reported this
Western EAs did not include non-Western EAs in discussions or conversations when in predominantly Western settings.	1
Western AI Safety (AIS) researchers believed that the primary intention of Chinese AIS researchers is to gain status and not to improve AIS.	1
Western EAs treat non-Western EAs as if they're lower status.	1
Western EAs initially changed their behaviour to accommodate non-Western EAs, but after a while, reverted to prior behaviour that's less accommodating.	1
Discussions with Western EAs about the intersection of their country and AI were a little too antagonistic or epistemically poor.	1
English is the primary language used in their local group when they prefer their own native language.	1
A non-Western cuisine in an EA event was introduced with the wrong country of origin.	1

C. SAEs caused by non-Western EAs

CCIs interviewees reported	Number of interviewees who reported this
Non-Western EAs changing their accent or communication style to be more Western.	2
Non-Western EAs unconsciously desired less interactions with non-Western EAs with poor English language skills.	1
Non-Western EAs avoided food from where they're from.	1
Non-Western EAs pushed back against Western EAs less, but pushed back against non-Western EAs more.	1

Demographics of interviewees

Gender

I did not ask my interviewees what gender they identify with. However, just from my engagement with them, I suspect there are 10 female-identifying interviewees and 11 male-identifying interviewees.

Locale

I did not ask my interviewees where they are from and where they are living now. I mostly inferred this information from their LinkedIn profiles and from a bit of small talk during the interview.

Geographical subregion according to UN geoscheme / Continent	Mostly lived in	Now living in
Eastern Asia	5	3
South-eastern Asia	9	5
Southern Asia	4	1
Africa*	2	1
South America	1	1
Northern America	0	1
Northern Europe	0	8

** It might be easy to identify the interviewees if I specified the African subregions they are from, so I chose to put them all in one continent.*

Limitations

1. There are too many variables to control for (e.g., social status differences, personality, social skills, my own interview skills, etc), and I expect the qualitative data I collected to be noisy.
2. There's probably some selection bias--most of my interviewees are also attendees from an EA conference, and I wasn't being extremely systematic with who I selected.
3. The "Western" and "non-Western" categorisation can be somewhat arbitrary--there may be folks who are somewhere in the middle that were not selected for.
4. Without even considering how memory retrieval can sometimes be a hit-or-miss, SAEs are already hard to detect.
 - a. I expect there to be misinterpretations of what actually happened by my interviewees (e.g., some people could just be rude to everyone and it had nothing to do with differences in culture). And I don't think I did a good job of

- steering interviewees towards giving me empirical observation of what happened.
- b. Giving more examples of SAEs during interviews would stretch the time limit. And I noticed my interviewee's scope of what SAEs can be were limited to the examples I gave. So I expect some under-reporting going on.
 5. I sometimes nudged my interviewees to think about other possible interpretations. Probably because I have a (possibly mistaken) worry that readers might think that my interviewees are not thoughtful enough and hence their vignettes should be dismissed as unreliable. This might have caused my interviewees to think that only experiences above a certain threshold should be shared, and hence made them less likely to share more.
 6. I was too focused on negative CCIs and forgot to include questions around positive CCIs.
 7. Some of the vignettes can come across as lacking concrete details, but I did that to protect my interviewees' anonymity.
 8. I'm a Chinese from South-eastern Asia and I noticed a bias towards interviewing more folks from Southeast Asia and East Asia, which isn't very representative of actual demographics in the EA community.

Appendix

Definition of subtle acts of exclusion

- Subtle: actions that are hard to observe or identify as exclusionary in ways that are prejudicial or unjust.
- Exclusion: actions that signal to someone that they don't belong in the a group
- Prejudicial, unjust, or both: some acts of exclusion can be good, but the acts of exclusion I'm looking for are done with preconceived false opinions of others, or in ways that are morally bad, or both.

Other notes:

1. SAE can be done by someone else unto the victim, or done by the victim unto the victim themselves.
2. SAE can happen either intentionally or unintentionally; and consciously or unconsciously
3. The term "subtle acts of exclusion" came from [Jana and Baran's book of the same title](#), and I've made one major modification to the term.

Vignettes

B

- Most of B's EA-related CCIs are done in conferences, workshops, and calls with an EA-related organisation that they're working with.
- B thinks that EAs are generally welcoming, but there were a few interactions that they found to be negative:

- In a workshop related to an EA related cause area, Western and non-Western folks sat at separate tables, probably unintentionally. Someone they know who attended a similar workshop at a different time had a similar experience.
- In a programme related to an EA related cause area, they noticed that there's a lack of representation from non-Westerners. They suspect that this is due to:
 - Higher costs of getting non-Westerners to join a programme (e.g., visas, flights, etc)
 - A bigger preference for Westerners because they're from places that have better education, health systems, economy, etc
 - Non-Westerners needing to send costlier signals of competency
- They've noticed that their non-Western EA friends have tried to include more EA related jargon in their conversations in ways that didn't feel genuine.
 - They've also observed their friends changing their accents or writing style to be more Western.
- B thinks that CCIs in EA settings are better.

C

- C has very frequent EA-related CCIs.
- C thought their CCIs were mostly positive, but their experiences may be heavily confounded by the fact they're very culturally westernised now.
 - However, C has found it hard occasionally to mix with Westerners and would feel excluded.
- C finds comparing both EA and non-EA settings challenging, but thinks EA settings are probably more welcoming. However, C interfaces with more public facing EAs which are plausibly less socially and culturally insular.

D

- D had interacted with the AI safety (AIS) community online about once a week.
- Their CCIs were generally neutral. However, they suspect that Western AIS researchers have an impression that Chinese AIS researchers are doing AIS research to get more publications and not to actually improve AIS (mostly from subtle cues coming from their language and body language).
- D thinks that there is not much of a difference in CCIs between EA and non-EA settings.

F

- Besides their partner who is a Western EA, F had few CCIs within EA settings. In fact, an EA conference that happened in the recent past was their first and most concentrated exposure to Western EAs.
- Most of F's CCIs have been positive. They've never felt any form of exclusion from folks in EA settings.

G

- G has a moderate amount of CCIs, mostly through EA-related programmes that they were part of.
- G never felt discriminated against in EA settings. They think most CCI-related frictions came from differences in culture and language.
- G also never experienced subtle acts of exclusions before.
- G felt both EA settings and non-EA settings are pretty similar--they didn't experience any discrimination.

H

- H has been having daily CCIs with EAs for the past few years. H also noted that they had spent a considerable amount of time studying in a British Colony (H's hometown), which may make their CCIs with Western EAs less cross-cultural.
- H thought that most of their CCIs were positive.
- H notices that their English gets better when speaking with a Westerner, but it takes more mental energy.
- H found EA settings to be easier to deal with compared to non-EA academic-related settings, where there is a heavier emphasis on non-impact-related egoistical desires.
 - Hence, non-EA settings feel more "cross-cultural" than EA settings for H.

J

- J usually has a few CCIs each year, but they're seeing an increase recently.
- J finds CCIs mostly positive and welcoming, except when:
 - They couldn't connect with EAs in an EA hub. They observed that the EAs there are already in tight cliques. They also couldn't relate to the games or activities the EAs there organise.
 - An EA conference they've attended was less diverse than they expected.
 - A group house they lived in was also less diverse than they expected.
 - They found themselves adjusting their accent so others could better understand them.

K

- K has a lot of CCIs both online and in-person.
- For K, CCIs in conference and professional settings were neutral or positive, but CCIs in social settings were more mixed.
 - They had two positive CCIs during an EA conference:
 - A Western EA invited them unprompted for a drink.
 - In a group house, they found themselves being included in conversations more often.
 - In one of the afterparties at an EA conference, they had two potentially negative CCIs:
 - When they went in the wrong direction, someone yelled the right direction to them in a way that felt infantilising and demeaning.
 - When they were inside the afterparty space, no one seemed interested in engaging with them, so they left early.

- When comparing CCI experiences between EA and non-EA settings, K thought that:
 - With moderate-to-high credence,
 - They had quite similar CCI experiences in both EA and non-EA settings. This makes it hard to tell which of the two settings have the higher average (or better average CCI experience).
 - With low-to-moderate credence,
 - They had more frequent “peak” positive experiences in EA settings.
 - They had similarly “trough” negative experiences in both settings.
 - Non-Western folks in both settings included them in group interactions more often than Western folks.

L

- L has a few online CCIs with EAs each week.
- Generally, their CCIs have been neutral. There were a few really positive ones.
- There were also a few negative ones:
 - L had a call with an EA grantmaker. The purpose of the call was to receive feedback about a grant application they were rejected from. L thought that the delivery of the feedback was callous and the grantmaker's body language was giving off a "I don't want to be here" vibe. The already-supposed-to-be-short call also ended much earlier than expected. L felt uncertain about what factors contributed to that dynamic, but they suspected the difference in culture may play a part.
 - In an EA conference in Europe,
 - Although there were a few Africans in the conference, L still felt a little suspicious that they didn't see any African Europeans.
 - L felt it was tough to connect with Western EAs, probably due to their unfamiliarity of Western nerd culture. They're also unsure whether there are cross cultural differences within nerd culture too.
 - L noticed that they (themselves) are less likely to push back against or engage in discussions more honestly with Westerners as compared to non-Westerners, when it should be more equal.

M

- M has frequent CCIs both within their own local group (online or in-person), and in a few EA conferences.
- M seemed to have mixed CCI experiences.
 - M wishes that their native language is used more often in their local group instead of English. They also felt a lot of pressure to utilise AI tools so that they could use fancier English words or grammar.
 - In conversations with Western EAs in EA conferences, they sometimes feel like they're treated like a lower-status implementer or information source instead of an equal-status collaborator.
 - In a separate discussion, they noticed that their opinions were repeatedly criticised by another Western EA, which prompted them to stop engaging in the discussion. This felt abnormal even by EA's higher truth-seeking norms

and this made them feel suspicious that there are other factors at play here (namely their ethnicity/culture and gender).

- In another separate discussion with Western EAs, a non-English-native speaker requested the English-native speakers to speak louder and slower. M observed that they did comply at first but they eventually went back to their prior speaking quality.
- M has conflicting feelings about wanting to be accepted to more EA-related programmes but not wanting to be tokenised.
- M found that their CCI's were less stressful in non-EA settings.

N

- N has daily CCI's with EAs in a work setting.
- N finds their CCI's to be overwhelmingly good, except for when they found it extremely tough to fit in in an EA hub. Possibly due to a large cultural gap, amplified by the niche EA subculture.
- N thought EA and non-EA settings are pretty similar.

P

- P has some CCI's with other EAs, usually online and in a work setting.
- P thought that >95% of their CCI's have been positive. There were a few that were negative:
 - They noticed someone talking about polyamory in a way that feels more like "people should do this", and less like "this is a personal thing that I enjoy". They felt worried that such interactions could alienate newcomers.
 - Applying for international EA-related programmes can feel daunting. Alongside language barriers, this can put-off a lot of people. But it's understandable that English is pretty much the lingua franca in EA or in research.
- P notices that CCI's in non-EA settings tend to be lower-stakes. Especially in Spanish-speaking non-EA settings, it's easier to be casual and relax.
 - On the other hand, P tends to have more in common with EAs.

Q

- Q joined the EA community for about a year now and most of their CCI's are online.
- Q thought that all their CCI's were neutral or positive.
- Q found CCI's are better in EA conferences compared to non-EA settings.

R

- R has a small but significant proportion of interactions with EA that are cross-cultural.
- R thinks that the CCI's they had experienced were mostly positive.
 - In fact, they wished EAs were less worried about offending them.
 - They also had helpful meta-conversations to deconfuse certain non-verbal cues.
 - R also liked that there's much less pressure to drink alcohol in EA settings.

- R noticed at least one discussion around how remuneration should be calculated between different countries had overtones of “the cost of living is too high in higher income countries”, which failed to “capture trade-offs around infrastructure, pollution, and social trust” in low-to-middle-income countries.
 - They think discussions around fair remuneration for talent should not only consider the cost of living in a city and purchasing power parity, but also other factors too.
- R has a bigger preference for bonding with people who are culturally similar to them. The side-effect of excluding those who are culturally dissimilar seems like the right trade-off at times, because hanging out with people who are similar is more comforting and freeing.

S

- S had a few in-person CCIs with EAs in various parts of the world before. Currently, they also have monthly CCIs in their group.
- S thought that most of their CCIs have been positive and welcoming, except for this following instance:
 - S observed that a Western EA expressed their intention to help some non-Western non-EA locals with an issue but assumed that the locals lacked the appropriate concern or knowledge to tackle said issue. S felt (low-to-medium confidence) that this person was quite patronising and arrogant towards the locals.
- S found it hard to compare CCIs between EA and non-EA settings.

T

- T has somewhat frequent CCIs in a mid-sized EA hub. They’re also pretty active with other EAs in online spaces.
- T thinks that their CCIs have been pretty smooth, but has shared a few mildly negative experiences:
 - Despite not being a native English speaker themselves, T would sometimes unconsciously desire less interactions with folks with poor English language skills. T suspects that they remind them of themselves when they had a poor grasp on English, which they associate with their feelings of inferiority at the time, and which they project onto the subjects.
 - T would sometimes avoid food from where they’re from, because some folks made fun of their food before. However, in EA settings, this avoidance is lesser (but not completely gone).
- The above point gels well with the fact that T also finds EA settings significantly more comfortable than the wider (Western) academia setting that they’re in (which they also like).

V

- V meets EAs about once a month in a city that is also an EA hub.
- Generally, V thinks that their CCIs have been fine and organic. They never gave their CCIs a second thought until now.
- But there were a few negative interactions:

- V attended an AI safety event where the organiser mentioned how the global south isn't that important for AI safety. V thought that what the organiser said could be a reasonable stance, but the way it was phrased felt quite icky to them. It also didn't help that the organiser's attempt at sugarcoating their stance made it more icky.
- In a separate event, V witnessed people visibly ignoring a person presenting, then gave more attention to the second person paraphrasing the first person. V thought that the first person speaking made good points, but their communication may be hampered by their language or social skills. The least charitable interpretation is that their accent affected people's willingness to listen.
- V noticed in at least one instance during an EA conference that a Western folk was coming across as paternalistic towards non-Western folks. The vibe can be described as "let me help you poor vulnerable person." But V understands that sometimes it's hard to mesh egalitarian ideals with the act of offering support regardless of context (e.g., even helping a friend in need can sometimes imply a difference in status or power).

W

- W has some CCIs in a large EA hub and an EA-related organisation they work in.
- W thought their CCIs have been really good, except for a few cases:
 - In an EA meetup related to socioeconomic diversity, someone mentioned to a person of colour that the city (from the Western hemisphere) they live in didn't sound "low income enough". One interpretation of what happened is that this person lacked social skills (because not long after, they said again to a White person that they didn't sound "low income enough".)
 - However, W thought the socioeconomic diversity meetup got them to meet similar folks and made them feel more welcomed.
- W also thought their CCIs were pretty similar in both EA and non-EA settings.

X

- X has a few CCIs every month.
- X thought that their CCIs were mostly positive. They also think 20% of CCIs were challenging (not necessarily negative).
 - They remembered a positive experience where two Westerners recognised that they were dominating a discussion and then decided to speak less so that X could be included.
 - On the other hand, they noticed some pressure to sound smart and competent in front of Western EAs.
- X thought that CCIs in both EA and non-EA settings were pretty similar.

Y

- Y usually has online CCIs twice a month, and the occasional in-person CCIs during conferences.

- Y thought that their CCIs were mostly positive. However, they noticed that some non-Westerners found EA conferences in the Western hemisphere uncomfortable and overwhelming, and would sometimes opt to not engage as much.

Personal notes from Yi-Yang: I suspect a combination of language barriers and cultural barriers made the usual overwhelmingness of a conference, even more overwhelming.

- Y felt that their CCIs in both EA and non-EA settings were about the same.

Z

- Z has CCIs with Western EAs almost everyday.
- Despite cultural barriers, Z thought that their CCIs are generally respectful. They especially like how diverse their team is in an EA aligned organisation.
- However, there were a few mildly negative interactions for Z:
 - Z occasionally finds discussions with Western EAs about the intersection of their country and AI a little too antagonistic or epistemically poor.
 - Z noticed a non-Western cuisine in an EA event was introduced with the wrong country of origin.
- Z finds it hard to compare EA settings with non-EA settings since they did not have a ready reference class for such a comparison. But if they had to guess, they think EA settings are likely to be more welcoming and respectful.