

Proposed Global EA Slack Infrastructure

By Vaidehi Agarwalla (Pineapple Operations). Some content and suggestions from David Reinstein, David Nash, Dion Tan & Alex Bereznoi.

Status: In-progress. Phase 1 complete.

Proposal

Consolidate various EA slack workspaces into a few core, paid slack workspaces - with EA Anywhere serving as the global home for ea discussions, EA Groups for community builders and the Ops slack for ea professionals. As groups grow, they can start their own workspaces if needed - but by default we should aim to consolidate conversations to prevent siloing.

Groups that are not full subsets of EA (e.g. cause groups) and local / national / regional workspaces can remain separate for now (or if people from those regions want to merge regionally they can if they want, but it's out of scope for this project).

Why consolidate?

EA Slacks / infrastructure is:

1. Overwhelming & confusing: There's so many Slacks & Slack notifications are bad. This results in low activity - People don't have the time / inclination / energy to check multiple slacks. New members looking for specific connections may join and then not receive these. With fewer slacks, there is more density of people and hopefully more discussion in groups that hit the critical mass.
2. Information is both overlapping and slipping through the cracks and many people don't know which Slacks are relevant to them. There are duplicate announcements for big events and job postings. With fewer slacks people will pay more attention to notifications and posters will be more likely to post in all the right places.
3. Loses historical information and exchanges: Some workspaces are on free plans and lose historical information. With migrations we can important historical data.
4. Overlapping membership: I expect between a 10-60% overlap between Slack workspaces, so combining would make a better user experience for people who are members of multiple slacks.

Why Slack?

Slack isn't the perfect platform - it's expensive, clunky and sometimes frustrating UX. But, Slack is more professional than e.g. Discord, it's the industry standard for workplaces, and

most EAs use it for professional work. Groups like [Work on Climate](#) seem to have been very successful at using Slack to build community, so it seems like it is possible.

Why not the Forum? I think discourse on the Forum is too formal to really allow for creating a community or having more informal / relaxed conversations.

Why not Facebook? (potentially) too informal, no threading, hard to find message history, not everyone has Facebook.

Is this project worth the time?

I'm not sure - I think someone should do it, I have the connections, and it seems like it should have happened years ago. I think it might improve conversations a little bit by increasing consolidation, but I expect more senior EAs to be most active in gated slacks (e.g. coworking slacks etc.) rather than in more public ones.

Proposal

1. One mega slack (the EA Anywhere slack, which is paid) with:
 - a. Professional channels e.g. #role-product-managers, #role-lawyers
 - b. Cause area channels, e.g., #ca-AI-gov, #ca-GHD...
 - c. Housing channel
 - d. Location channels for smaller groups
 - e. Private channels for EA branded fellowship, program groups etc.
2. **Slacks for every conference/retreat/event**
 - a. EAG(x) channels in local slacks to help grow the community, EAGxVirtual in EAA
 - b. Consider a new practice of 'shutting down' conference slacks and pushing everyone somewhere after ~2-4 weeks after a conference. **(Action item: Talk to CEA Events)**
3. EA Groups - encouraging them not to create channels that overlap the EA anywhere channels (cause area, fellowships, etc.), and to link out/suggest to those prominently
 - a. ~~High school outreach - Zak Ulhaq - migration complete~~
 - b. PR / Comms & Social Media Slack - EA Italy - luca parodi/luca stocco
4. **Ops Slack** (1000 people, regularly used)
 - a. *In progress:*
 - i. HITE is considering based on strategy and will get back to me
 - ii. Have mods propose a policy for people wanting to start ops-related adjacent workspaces to instead make single-channel guest channels
 - b. *Completed:* PAs for EA & EA Coworking Spaces
5. Cause specific workspaces: If the cause is basically just "EA [cause name]" and is completely EA branded, let's consolidate. If the cause is like Animal Advocacy or IIDM where there are people potentially with no interest in EA, then they should stay separate.
6. Larger local/regional slacks

Old Slacks Status Tracking

Bold means they confirmed some version of collaborating / joining.

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***Bold means they want to close their slack workspace.**

~~Strikethrough~~ means the migration has been completed

Old Slack Workspaces that will become 1 or more channels. These are the channel names:

- ~~Data Science/ML/AI~~ - 266 members, Messaged Stefania, seems unlikely they want to merge. There is also a Data for Good / SEADs that they are trying to consolidate
- History - 14 people - (could delete if we choose not to pursue academia slack)
- **Engineers** - - *HI Engineers* - (would be open to a joint channel)
- Medicine - EA Medicine - can't access it, but plausibly standalone if it's for HI-Med
- EA mental health / High impact psychology / Rethink wellbeing
 - They will wait for Phase 1 migration to be complete and then decide whether to migrate
 - Seems like a cause-specific slack, but also has mental health for EAs - so it's basically anything to do with mental health - pinging Inga Grossman, she seemed potentially interested but just waiting for final response.
 - Lots of history on it + pretty used, 500 members
- Psychology - 180+ people - Lucius not interested in merging rn
- ~~*Product in EA~~ - only 40+ people and pretty inactive pending Amanda to send the list of users:
- ~~(private) Economics Grad Student~~. Contact person for Econ in general: Brian Jabarian or EA Econ (hello@eaecon.org) - not relevant
- ~~*EA Entrepreneurs~~ (800 people) - ready to consolidate
 - Wants a nonprofit vs for profit entrepreneurship arm. Will just let people join either.
- ~~EA Philosophy~~ link was broken, not sure it still exists - archiving for now
- ~~EA Generalists~~ - 80 people, inactive, pending CSV from Vaishnav today hopefully
- ~~Supply chain Management~~, pending reply from Alex Barnes
- ~~*Effective Environmentalism~~ (goal is eventually not EA branded, it's p low activity right now, so I (Vaidehi) would be down to consolidate it somewhere until we are ready to invest more time in it)
- ~~EA Global Discussions~~ - David nash has confirmed he is open to archiving and defaulting to EA Anywhere
- ~~* Housing Slack~~ - Thomas W is open to consolidating, following up with him on email
- ~~*Creatives & Communicators~~ - Jeroen Willems (700 people) and active. It covers Marketing, Design, Video, Podcasting, Creative Writing. Channels:
 - ~~Communications & Marketing~~ (includes PR, science comms etc.)
 - ~~Design~~ (including graphic, UX/UI + interior)
 - ~~Film / Video / Podcasts / Creative Writing~~ - (channel needs a better name)
 - ~~*** LEAVE FOR LATER*** Journalism~~ (plans to create a separate, new slack with different branding - Cillian from TFG)
- ~~(potentially too small, just add people without channel) *Project Managers~~
 - ~~(link, owned by Quinn McHugh, 27 people, inactive)~~ - could also be part of the professionals slack
 - ~~Move to ops channel~~
- ~~Software Engineers~~

- ~~*EA Tech network~~ is interested (200 people, could be a #software-engineers channel in addition to product & data science) COMPLETED
 - ~~Interested, considering keeping it for new people~~
- ~~Public Interest Tech Evelyn proposed it herself when she saw the EATN merge!~~
- Nicole Janeway runs the FB ([Software, Data, and Tech Effective Altruism](#)) and Discord [Software Engineers in EA](#) Discord server with 300-400 people.
- ~~EA Math and Physics~~ 180 people, seems active ish, Mart is considering merging COMPLETED
- ~~EA Amazon Workplace group~~

Propose to archive (+ invite to join EAA)

- [EA Crypto](#) - no response, but only 6 members. So I would stop linking it from places
- Discord (EA Jobhunting Community)

Stay Independent

- EA Virtual Programs
- Cause or field-building Slacks - *potentially joint channel with EAA?*
 - Animal Advocacy Slack (Cameron King)
 - [IIDM Slack](#) - building an adjacent community
 - EA Forecasting and Epistemics (run by QURI, invite-only) - stay independent
 - AI Alignment Slack (run by AISS/related)
 - Progress Studies (very separate)
 - Affinity groups - e.g. EA for Christians (<https://www.eaforchristians.org/>)
 - Local or Language-specific groups - e.g. [Spanish-speaking EA community](#)
- [Thinking in Systems Reading Group](#) (Cross-community (not just EA) group, very small)
- [Low impact tech angst](#) - low activity

Some Challenges we will need to address

1. Get overwhelmed with irrelevant opportunities - in a single slack you only see opportunities relevant to that slack's professional field. Raised by Jeroen and Alex.
 - a. How big a problem is this? - e.g. what % of jobs are posted on 3 or more profession channels?
 - b. Are there solutions that work without creating a job channel for every profession?
 - c. E.g. cross-post from #opportunities to 1 profession channels, or have a couple channels e.g. #psych and #psych-opportunities.
 - i. I (Vaidehi) lean towards the former to start, and only create additional channels as needed
2. Smaller spaces where you know most of the members (e.g. via professional virtual meetups) increase trust. It's easier for a person to request help or support in an environment with a higher level of trust compared to a Slack channel with thousands of members.

- a. Raised by Alex
 - b. We can assign community managers to each channel
 - c. They can still run events for their groups
3. ~~Organizers might be hesitant to consolidate with bigger Slack workspaces because they want to arrange things differently, and customize apps, channels, bots, etc. They lose autonomy over a project in some sense because they need to negotiate with the workspace owners on these decisions.~~
- ~~a. Raised by Alex~~
 - ~~b. My plan is just to ask people and see what concerns pop up, and then solve for those issues~~
4. Once we do an initial clean-up, making sure people know best practices and actually continue to add to existing slacks, rather than creating new ones again
- a. I think at most this would be a couple per year, since the clean-up is of all the slacks in the last 5-10 years. Plus, we'd be in contact with all the current organizers, who would hopefully pass on the message.

Phase 1 - Migration To-do's

Primary goals

- Properly onboard people
- Increase activity

Action Items - goal by March 13 for EA Global Discussions

- Revisit the slack structure and create the necessary channels - Alex to start
- Set up the welcome messages, welcome channels - Alex
- Message on the workspace - Vaidehi with final review from David
- Import emails into the database - Alex
- Draft the email
- **Onboarding people from 1 slack to the other**
 - Message in the old slack
 - #welcome channel
 - Email them about the migration
 - Greetbot - but it goes to the bottom

Proposed EAA Slack structure

* Still in discussions

** very uncertain but could do if we wanted

^ is a joint channel

- Default channels:
 - **announcements** (read-only)
 - **general**
 - **introductions**
 - **all-questions-welcome**
 - **celebrating-progress** (aka “achievements”; updates on small and big steps people made towards their goals)
 - **random**
 - **resources** (e.g. linking to interesting things you've read recently)
 - **events** (reminds everyone “@here” about the upcoming events from EA Anywhere calendar)
- Roles / Professions
 - role-entrepreneurs
 - role-operations
 - role-generalists
 - role-designers
 - role-creators
 - role-marcomms
 - role-software-engineers
 - *role-data-science
 - **role-consultants
 - **^role-engineers

- ****^**medicine
- Cause-area channels:
 - ca-ai-safety
 - ca-animal-welfare
 - ca-biosecurity
 - ca-climate-change
 - ca-earning-to-give
 - ca-global-health-and-development
 - ca-mental-health
 - ca-global-priorities-research
 - ca-nuclear-security
- Other relevant topics:
 - forecasting
 - rationality
 - philosophy
 - math-and-physics
 - ******psychology
 - ***ea**-mental-health
- Other:
 - book-club (for monthly book club participants)
 - study-buddy (connected to EA VP Slack; a place to find accountability buddies or study buddies)
 - virtual-coffee (biweekly matching)
 - ea-digital-nomads
 - memes
 - ea-gather-town
 - ea-africa
 - ea-asia-pacific (merged EA SG / EA Asia)
 - housing-and-nomads
 - ****^**spanish-speaking-eas

Comms

Welcome Message

Welcome to EA Anywhere! We're so glad you're here. Feel free to share your background and interests (EA or not!) in [#introductions](#).

✨ ✨ **Workspace structure** ✨ ✨

Use the "All channels" button on the left to explore the full list of channels and use the "Join" button to subscribe to the ones you are interested in. Some channels of note:

Main channels (you're in them already!)

[#announcements](#) - will help you to stay up-to-date with the group,
[#general](#) - for discussions of all kinds

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[#all-questions-welcome](#) - for asking any questions about EA
[#celebrating-progress](#) - to celebrate small and big steps step you take toward your goals
[#opportunities](#) - for job, internship, fellowship, and other career opportunities
[#resources](#) - for linking interesting things you've read recently
[#events](#) - for event announcements and reminders
[#book-club](#) - for our monthly book club
[#random](#) - for anything that doesn't belong anywhere else

Interest groups

#ca- prefixed channels are for cause areas ([#ca-global-health-and-development](#), [#ca-animal-welfare](#), [#ca-climate-change](#), [#ca-earning-to-give](#), [#ca-ai-safety](#), [#ca-nuclear-security](#), [#ca-biosecurity](#), [#ca-mental-health](#))
#role- prefixed channels are for profession groups ([#role-entrepreneurs](#), [#role-creators](#), [#role-designers](#), [#role-generalists](#), [#role-operations](#), [#role-software-engineers](#), [#role-marcomms](#))

Social

[#study-buddy](#) - a place to find accountability buddies or study buddies
[#virtual-coffee](#) - for virtual meetings with other participants
[#ea-digital-nomads](#) - for those who travel and work remotely
[#housing](#) - for staying with EAs all over the world
[#ea-gather-town](#) - an always-on virtual place for coworking
[#fun-and-memes](#) - you know what it all about



Our events



View all EA Anywhere events on [our calendar](#):

Weekly meetups: every Sunday at 6pm UTC. We generally alternate between discussion meetups and social events.

Book club: meets every month. Join [#book-club](#) the channel to vote for a book for next month and engage in the discussion.

Office Hours: Every Thursday we host Office Hours with organizers. Drop in and ask us questions about EA, EA Anywhere, or just say hi!



Meeting others in the community



Join [#virtual-coffee](#) to get randomly matched with EAs from all over the world every few weeks. Note: please make sure to [turn your notifications on](#) so your matches don't get ghosted.

If you'd like to learn about EA Anywhere, EA in general, or get advice on career or donation decisions, you can always [schedule a call with Alex Berezhnoi](#), our Community Director.



Keeping in touch



Slack is one of the best ways to keep in touch, but we also have a [mailing list](#), [Facebook group](#), and many of our events are listed on the [EA Forum Events](#) page.

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Welcome to the EA Anywhere Slack!

Use this channel is a starting point for navigating EA online & remember to say 🙌 in #introductions !

We don't moderate this Slack very heavily, so please be nice. We'd like to encourage similar norms to those of the EA Forum (see also this post). If you need help with the community, reach out to the mods in the #workspace-help channel

GENERAL (you've been added already)



#general - for discussions of all kinds



#events - for event announcements



#opportunities - for job, internship, fellowship, and other career opportunities!



#announcements - for important community announcements (read only)

INTEREST GROUPS



#role- prefixed channels are for profession groups (#role-designers, #role-swe, #role-lawyers)



#aca- prefixed channels are for academia (#aca-philosophy, #aca-psychology, #aca-maths-and-physics)



#ca- prefixed channels are for cause areas (#ca-animals, #ca-ghd, #ca-ai-safety etc.)

SOCIAL



#social is for coordinating social events!



#housing - for seeking short- and long-term housing! (see also the East Bay housing board)

Old EA Global Discussion Workspace Announcement

Hi everyone!

A quick announcement regarding this workspace - we will be merging this workspace with the EA Anywhere Slack. We plan to complete the migration of users by March 15th, and to shut down the Slack completely on March 31st 2023.

The [EA Anywhere](#) Slack provides a discussion and networking space for the global EA community, in addition to providing community for EAs without local groups.

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This is part of a project to consolidate the EA Slack infrastructure (led by Pineapple Operations). Over the next few weeks, we will be merging 7-10 other Slacks into EA Anywhere to increase discussions and connections that are made online in Slack. With fewer slacks, there is more density of people and hopefully more discussion in groups that hit the critical mass. With fewer slacks people will find it easier to keep up to date with discussions, announcements etc. Further, this Slack has low activity right now and is on a free account, so older messages (private or public) will not be accessible, where as EA Anywhere is an active and paid slack.

If you have any issues with the migration, please message in-thread or contact info@pineappleoperations.org.

Thanks,
Vaidehi (Pineapple Operations)

Migration Emails

Title: **EA Global Discussion Slack** is merging with EA Anywhere

Hi {{first_name}},

This is a one-off email to let you know that we are merging the **EA Global Discussions** workspace (which you are a member of) with the EA Anywhere Slack. The **EA Global Discussions Slack** will be shut down on March 31st 2023.

The [EA Anywhere](#) Slack provides a discussion and networking space for the global EA community, in addition to providing community for EAs without local groups.

This is part of a larger project to consolidate the EA Slack infrastructure. Over the next few months, we will be merging several other Slacks with EA Anywhere. We hope this will increase usage of the Slacks, reduce silo'ing and improve communications.

You will receive an invite link to this email address, if you'd prefer to use another [here is the invite link](#). If you're already a member, you can access the [slack here](#).

Thanks,

Vaidehi Agarwalla
Pineapple Operations

Phase 2 - To-do's

- Joint channel with HI-Eng
- Phase 2 - cause & event-specific slack joint channel integration / suggestion to the ones in the "don't merge" list

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- Forum post announcing migration
- Put an announcement to EA Groups Newsletter
- Update descriptions for every channel
- Channel managers
 - Invite managers for role-specific channels
 - Create a private #channel-managers channel. List all the support we can provide (events promotion, onboarding, Zapier integrations)
- Get Ops Slack to be in on hosting ops slacks going forward
 - Post on ops slack in events channel about using EA Anywhere
- Future slacks
 - Do 1-1 outreach to CEA Events & CB's (see list below) with suggestions for Slack infra moving forward
 - Suggest they shut down old slacks and give people the option to join EA Anywhere. We can create private channels for those groups if they would like to stay in touch with folks
 - Offer to get on calls and talk through options
 - CB's : CEA Groups team, city/national groups, HIP, GCP (?),

Forum post announcing Slack migration (500 words)

- Also share on all the main slacks
- Main facebook groups (EA Hangout, etc)

Share with CEA Forum / Groups teams, CB's and workspace owners.

Join the EA Anywhere Slack! (A project to consolidate of EA Slack workspaces)

Date: right after the last slack is added

In collaboration with Alex Berezhnoi (EA Anywhere)

<summary: there's one main slack, tell us your experiences with other slacks CTA for survey>

<why consolidate slack - reasons from above but shortened to 3-4 concise points max.>

<What we've done / brief overview of the new slack landscape>

Since March, Pineapple Operations has been actively identifying and contacting owners of the various workspaces to better understand the EA Slack landscape.

<proposed norms going forward>

- By default, don't create a new Slack
 - Prior to this effort, there were dozens of Slacks with low membership counts (most with <200 people), limited facilitation and low activity (a few messages day).

- For community/field/movement building projects and activities, use EA groups.
- For Ops, use Ops Slack (contact Amrit & Sawyer here)
- For anything else, use EA Anywhere
- How to create a channel in EA Anywhere slack
 - Our recommendation on critical mass - 100 members, active facilitation
 - REad Alex's post here (applies to channels as well as workspaces), and ask him if you have questions
- When does it make sense to spin off into an independent Slack?
 - If your community is large (>300 people), active, has active facilitation (e.g. part- or full-time community builders), has members who are not EAs (and thus would benefit from independent branding, slightly different culture), or is for a very region or locale (e.g. language or region-specific slacks).
 - More reasons here:
https://forum.effectivealtruism.org/posts/fJb52uWaFKydFQKR7/how-to-make-slack-workspaces-welcoming-and-valuable#Reasons_why_you_shouldn_t_create_a_separate_workspace
 - Adding new members
 - You can add users by copy-pasting their emails directly to the relevant channel.
 - Invite link: Right now, we do not think it's possible to create normal invite links directly to a Channel that anyone can join, but you can invite people using a Slack Connect link (the other person will need a paid Slack account).
 - If you aren't sure whether you should start a Slack, feel free to comment here or reach out to us on the EA Anywhere Slack!
- Creating private channels
 - You can also create spaces for private groups and teams in the slack.
- How to merge an existing slack
 - Do you have a slack you'd like to merge with the EA Anywhere slack ? Reach out here!

<to add later: suggestions for event-specific slacks, cause slacks depending on what we ask them to do>

- Baseline activity in the EA Anywhere slack is XX
 - Compared to average from 10 other slacks
 - Comparatively professional slacks that are work oriented like EA Groups and EA Operations have XX activity
 - We don't expect a more social / networking Slack to be that active, so we expect something like XX increase in activity
- We will use Slack analytics to observe this & follow-up 6 month user survey in Sep 2023. **Please fill out our pre-survey here.**

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This is a project of Pineapple Operations.