Outreach 2017

Strategic plan

Last updated: Jul 18 2017

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Introduction

The outreach activities by the Effective Altruism Foundation (EAF) focus on expanding the effective altruism movement in the German-speaking area to equip us to meet current and future global challenges. Below is a summary of our plans and activities for 2017. We've taken a pragmatic approach to strategic planning and start with a relatively simple plan. We intend to review and update this plan on a regular basis.

The problem. Many current and future global challenges are causing a lot of expected suffering. We aim to help solve those challenges by directing resources (talent, money, and ideas) towards cooperative and effective strategies to reduce unnecessary suffering for all individuals.

Our vision. A global movement of people who rely on evidence and reason to improve the world in the long term.

Our mission. We are dedicated to cultivating a movement based on the [principles of effective altruism](#) to highly interested people in the German-speaking area, and providing them with high-quality content, contacts, mentoring, and organisational assistance.

Target groups. Our target group includes everyone who is exceptionally open-minded, altruistic, smart, and successful. Particularly important target audiences include: students of quantitative subjects, members of the Swiss and German [study](#) [foundations](#) and [scholarship foundations](#), and people with an interest in AI, poverty alleviation, and animal ethics.

Other stakeholders. Important stakeholders are the international EA community and the Center for Effective Altruism (CEA) in particular. As CEA and LEAN are running similar activities on the international level, it's very important to coordinate all our activities with them on a regular basis.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

We aim to implement two categories of activities:

- **Core activities** which are aimed at harvesting "low-hanging fruit"
- **Experiments** which help us to explore new ideas, refine our strategy, and potentially develop specific products.

We are committed to implementing our core activities but might reconsider experiments on short notice. We used the following criteria to prioritize our activities: importance, neglectedness, tractability, observability, and our comparative advantage.

Core Activities

- Local group support
    - Resources, such as materials (leaflets, local group guide, presentation slides, etc.), speakers, and 80,000 Hours workshops
    - Personal contact, such as the local group meetup, Skype meetings and mentoring, and potentially further events
- Media
    - Highest-value media opportunities (reduce effort to a minimum, maybe only give five interviews per year)
    - Social media, in particular responding to questions in the [German EA Facebook group](#)
    - German EA newsletter
- Conferences
    - EAGxBerlin (an annual, independently organized EA Global conference)
- German EA landing page ([effektiveraltruismus.de](#))
    - Introduction to EA
    - Tax-deductible donation regranting
- Poverty alleviation / international development
    - 1% initiative in Zurich
- EAS website

Experiments

- Targeted outreach
    - **Outreach to scholarship and study foundations: (1) organize events related to EA (esp. AI safety), (2) make sure scholarship members learn about EA via email**
    - Outreach to STEM students, science olympiads, etc. (also via local groups)
    - Curriculum for university-based EA colloquia
- Improving the movement (engagement, learning, teaching)
    - **Further opportunities for personal contact (events, and perhaps summer fellowships)**
    - **Creating high-quality content, content marketing**
    - AI workshops (MIRIx or similar)
- **Advisory board**

- - With academics, to boost reputability of the EA movement in the German-speaking area
- Research
  - Investigate existing research on movement building
  - Survey among highly dedicated effective altruists to find points of first contact, crucial steps, near misses, and best framings and arguments
- Local group support
  - Provide centralized help with event promotion, speakers and follow-ups to catalyze chapter growth
  - Facilitate further EAGx conferences
- Media
  - Sharing interesting and relevant articles about EA in large numbers of student Facebook groups

Focus

Until December 2017, we will focus on implementing all the core activities, plus:

1. Developing a German EA landing page (done)
2. Outreach to scholarship and study foundations
3. Maybe an academic advisory board
4. Maybe content marketing
5. Maybe fellowships or other opportunities for personal contact

Key Metrics

It's difficult to define key metrics at the current stage because we're not (yet) at the point where we have a coherently defined product. We might decide on a single key metric or multiple metrics in the future. For now, we outline a list of potentially useful metrics. Much of our thinking was influenced by CEA's recent updates from YCombinator.

- **Key metrics: Money and talent**
- **Talent**:
  - Impact-adjusted significant plan changes
    - Operationalization according to 80,000 Hours: A "normal" EA career plan change counts as 1, someone doing e.g. earning to give in trading counts as 10, someone who e.g. takes a slightly higher-paying job in the same field counts as 0.1.
    - This has the downside that getting talented people involved with EA without changing their plans will not count even though it might be very important. However, different operationalizations come with the

disadvantages of unclear counterfactuals and might disincentivize engaging and updating people further once they've reached a certain threshold, so we'll continue this as our current best guess for now.

- **Money**:
  - Number of pledges
    - Measured as Giving What We Can pledges or number of EAF network members.
  - Money moved to effective charities via EAF
    - Easy to measure, but less important than pledges. Ideally, we would also try to measure how much was counterfactually/newly fundraised by EAF. In practice, this will be fairly difficult, but we could try to do so.
- **Other metrics**:
  - Maybe it makes sense to measure the **number of AI safety researchers** separately, both to enable EAF to focus on it more strongly and to enable donors and other stakeholders to evaluate our impact according to their beliefs (which might value AI safety work a lot, or not that much).
  - One could also consider "**ideas**" a key metric, but this is more difficult to operationalize.
  - Metrics such as **website traffic**, **newsletter subscribers**, or the **number of monthly actively contributing EAs** might also be very useful.
- We will add further metrics in the future and will refine this.