

# DSA Business Plan 2019-2022

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Development Studies

Development studies is founded on a primary recognition of the historic injustice of global poverty and inequalities and a commitment to combat these through teaching, research and engagement in policy and practice. It involves the critical analysis of global, regional, national and local processes of change, how these interconnect to produce, sustain or overcome poverty, inequalities, environmental vulnerability and violence, and how a better future of environmental sustainability, social justice and wellbeing may be advanced. While historically the discipline focused on poorer countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, it now concerns the study of development issues wherever these arise, with a particular emphasis on the inter-relations between different spaces, scales and levels. Drawing on the theory and practice of anthropology, economics, sociology, politics, political economy, psychology, history and geography, development studies may be multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary, and may combine with other disciplines beyond the social sciences. Development researchers seek collaboration across national backgrounds, with those working in policy and practice and with the people most directly affected by social, economic, technological and environmental change. Such engagement is valued for generating both more insightful and creative theory and more sustainable and equitable practice.

### 1.2 The Development Studies Association

The Development Studies Association (DSA) is the UK's learned society for international development. It exists to promote and advance international development as a field of study, research and action, with a mission to *deepen understanding of how global poverty and inequalities are produced, sustained and may be overcome, and how a better future may be advanced*. The DSA is a membership organisation, with both individual and institutional members, and is wholly funded through its membership premiums and activities.

### 1.3 Commitments and Activities

In taking forward this mission and vision, the DSA is committed to:

#### 1. Advance connections between people that will extend and deepen understanding of development issues

##### *Current*

- Organise, in collaboration with a host institution, an annual DSA conference
- Support and promote study groups, including with communications support if desired
- Develop the DSA website and social media as key portals for information about development studies
- Maintain an accessible database of members' expertise
- Sponsor a book series at the cutting edge of development studies (DSA/OUP)
- Support the re-brand and launch of the Journal of International Development as the DSA's associated journal (with Wiley)
- Provide seed funding to support new research and networking initiatives, especially for PGR/ECR and Global South researchers
- Foster collaboration with sister associations (e.g. EADI, AcSS, GDN, BOND, other scholarly associations)
- Foster, in collaboration with centres of development studies and research, one off events or short seminar series to address pressing collective concerns

##### *Looking forward*

- Foster collaborations between academics and development organisations/development practice, e.g. through linking DSA members with annual meetings of DFID Advisers

## **2. Raise the profile of the UK development studies community and provide a platform for its collective voice**

### *Current*

- Organise an annual meeting of the Heads of development studies centres
- Design new structure and content for DSA website, maintain and update regularly
- Publicise centres' activities through a monthly Bulletin, website and social media
- Represent DSA members' interests with key institutions (e.g. re TEF, REF, UKRI, DFID)

### *Looking forward*

- Use DSA communications to mark and celebrate high profile engagements and recognition of DSA members (e.g. giving evidence to Parliamentary committees; external honours and awards)
- Promote the engagement of development studies researchers in public debates

## **3. Build the institutional strength of the DSA**

### *Current*

- Maintain the association in a secure financial position, in line with the principles of a not-for-profit organisation
- Maintain recent growth in DSA membership
- Increase and deepen members' engagement with the DSA

### *Looking forward*

- Deepen and extend existing members' engagement with the DSA, including through the representation of key constituencies on Council (e.g. PGRs, policy actors)
- Extend membership amongst practitioner-researchers

## **4. Nurture the future of development studies in the UK through support to students, early career researchers and Higher Education teachers**

### *Current*

- Organise special events for these groups in and around the DSA conference (e.g. ECR plenary, masterclasses, guidance re publishing)
- Award annual masters dissertation prize
- Provide discounted membership rates to students
- Increase profile of students' activities on council
- Strengthen the national community of students of development, through DSA student reps linking with student delegates within the centres
- Promote outreach to students through use of dedicated Facebook page, and dedicated page on DSA website
- Use DSA communications outlets to advertise PGR/ECR training events run by centres

### *Looking forward*

- Provide student placements/internships on an occasional basis

## **5. Promote greater inclusiveness, diversity and equity within the development studies community**

### *Current*

- Provide scholarships (from internal or external funds) for researchers from the Global South to attend DSA conference and/or other events
- Organise special events for Global South researchers in and around the DSA conference (e.g. masterclasses, support re publishing or grant application)
- Support study groups amongst researchers based in the Global South

### *Looking forward*

- Seek to strengthen engagement with regions that have historically been under-represented in development research, such as the Middle East
- Promote greater consciousness and better practice regarding ethical dimensions of development research, especially regarding international partnerships
- Move towards greater environmental responsibility in DSA operations
- Work to ensure that DSA Council reflects the diversity of its membership base

## 1.4 Governance, Management and Administration

Governance and direction is provided by the DSA Governing Council, whose members are selected and ratified by the DSA Membership. Individual members serve for a three year period (renewable once), and take on specific areas of responsibility. Members may also be co-opted to serve particular purposes. The Council is headed by a President, elected by the membership for a three year term (non-renewable). The Council meets three times yearly. The President takes particular responsibility for overseeing implementation of the decisions of the Council and of the business plan. S/he is assisted in this by:

- Other executive members of council, the Secretary and Treasurer
- Management and administrative support provided through an external service provider (ESP)
- Any staff who may be contracted on a fixed term basis (e.g. communications officer)
- Members of council who take on specific responsibilities

## 1.5 Financial Strategy

The DSA currently has reserves of £127,000. Our aim is to increase our activities and thus reduce our reserves to £90,000 by 2022.

### Current Budget (2019)

<i>Income (Regular):</i>	Individual membership	£17,000	
	Institutional membership	£45,000	
	Conference income	£2,000	
<i>Income (Variable):</i>	ESRC workshop grant	£56,350	
	<b>INCOME TOTAL</b>		<b>£120,350</b>
<i>Expenditure: (Regular)</i>	Admin (ESP)	£30,000	
	Banking & accountancy	£3,400	
	Council	£1,500	
	Affiliations (AcSS & EADI)	£750	
	Heads of Centres	£500	
	Study groups	£3,200	
	Dissertation prize	£1,000	
	<b>Regular Total</b>	<b>£40,350</b>	
<i>Expenditure: (Variable)</i>	Conference grants	£5,000	
	Workshop series (DSA)	£12,000	
	Workshop series (ESRC)	£56,350	
	Communications Officer	£24,000	
	Website re-design etc	£7,500	
	Seed fund for research	£7,000	
	<b>Variable Total</b>	<b>£111,850</b>	
	<b>EXPENDITURE TOTAL</b>		<b>£152,200</b>

**Overall budget 2019: Current budget deficit: £31,850; Reserve at close of 2019: £95,150.**

## Projected budget (2020)

<i>Income</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£64,000</b>
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Our budgets for 2020 and 2021 maintain income at its current level. There is little scope to increase our institutional membership and we aim to maintain our current raised levels of individual membership. In the slightly longer term we aim to draw in more researchers based in other kinds of institutions, which ultimately we anticipate should result in some increase in individual membership income, but not we have not included this within our budget plans.

### *Expenditure:*

In 2020 there will be no workshop series and the Communications Officer post comes to an end in October. We will, however, increase our grants to support Global South and ECR participation, and we anticipate some rise to regular expenditure with inflation.

Regular expenditure (admin to dissertation on 2019 list)	£42,000	(2019 £40,000)
Conference grants	£10,000	
Communications officer	£12,000	
Communications activities	£1,000	
Seed fund for research	£7,000	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£72,000</b>	

*Overall budget 2020:* Current budget deficit: £8,000; Reserve at close of 2020: £87,150.

## Projected budget (2021)

<i>Income</i>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£64,000</b>
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<i>Expenditure</i>	Regular	£44,000
	Conference grants	£10,000
	Seed fund for research	£7,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£61,000</b>

*Overall budget 2021:* Current budget credit: £3,000; Reserve at close of 2021: £90,150.

## 1.6 Plan of Activities

Activity	Responsible	Indicator
<b>1. Advance connections between people that will extend and deepen understanding of development issues</b>		
Annual DSA conference	Scientific committee of host institution president, previous conference organiser ESP Communications officer	Host for DSA conference agreed for coming two years High levels of participation at conference, including from the global south Conferences make a profit or at least break even Evaluation forms show conference a success
Promote study groups	Study group convenor DSA members	Study groups active Outcomes shared more widely
Develop DSA website and social media as key portals for information about development studies	Communications officer ESP President Communications Working Group External consultants Members	New DSA branding developed New website designed and operationalized Website is visually attractive and easily navigable on diverse devices Website hosts lively and thought-provoking content Website provides accessible links to information on development studies research in UK Website provides accessible links to information on development studies teaching in UK Increased traffic to website Facebook page look and content complements website Twitter followers grow (figures?)
Maintain an accessible database of members' expertise	ESP Communications officer	Directory of members' expertise made visually more attractive Mechanism developed to prompt members to update information in directory Database is used by members and non-members
DSA/centre collaboration on other events	Host institutions Communications officer President	DSA/ESRC interdisciplinary series 2018/19 completed within budget Communications outputs from series produced Tracking shows uptake/use of communication outputs
Book series	Editors OUP Council members	New editors recruited OUP book series continues and is well read and reviewed
Journal	JID council rep Council Wiley	JID re-launched (possibly re-named) New JID becomes well regarded journal DSA gains benefits from association with new JID, both materially and for membership e.g. free access to scholars in the global south, a supportive place for publication for ECRs and global south scholars
Fund for new research	Dedicated council sub-group	Fund established and publicised Good quality applications received, timely reviews, awards made

		Reports on outcomes received
Collaboration with sister associations	President, council ethics officer, EADI Council South Asia reps, BASAS Secretary, Communications officer	Research ethics guide produced in collaboration with EADI Joint study group launched with BASAS Rep from BOND or another NGO joins Council
<b>2. Raise the profile of the UK development studies community and provide a platform for its collective voice</b>		
Annual meeting of HoCs	President, secretary ESP	Meetings held Comments show attendees found meetings useful
Publicise centres' activities	Communications officer ESP	Centres' activities published in bulletin, website and social media Tracking shows traffic to centre sites via DSA Centre comms officers see DSA as useful outlet
Represent DSA externally	President and council members	Exec/council members attend and report back on meetings
Design and maintain new website	Communications officer ESP Communications working group External consultant	New website up and running by DSA 2019 Website well maintained and regularly updated Website use increases (figures)
Celebrate members' achievements	Communications officer ESP	Members inform DSA of activities/honours High profile activities/honours featured on website and in bulletin
<b>3. Build the institutional strength of the DSA</b>		
Manage finances appropriately	Treasurer ESP President Business plan working group	Reduce reserves to appropriate level Maintain income from membership and other activities Increase expenditure in line with expanded activities
Maintain DSA membership	Secretary ESP	Membership levels are maintained
AGM effective and engaging	Secretary ESP President	Election of council members/officers is managed efficiently Information is presented in accessible and interesting way
Increase members' engagement	Communications officer ESP All	Members more proactive in posting on website More members involved in DSA initiatives New activities spin off from DSA initiatives
<b>4. Nurture DS Future</b>		
ECR etc events at DSA conferences	Scientific committee ESP	ECR plenary, masterclasses, guidance re publishing etc at/before conferences Full attendance, and evaluations show these appreciated by participants
Masters dissertation prize	Dissertation committee	Centres submit best dissertations for award

	HoCs Council	Dissertations reviewed and awards made
Discounted membership for students	Treasurer ESP	Rates for students continue at current discount or fall further Numbers of student and ECR members increase (figures)
Students' activities increased profile on council	Student reps Secretary	Students' issues standing item on council agenda with activities agreed
Strengthen the national community of DS students	Student reps HoCs student delegates	Student delegates identified in majority of centres Active engagement between delegates and DSA student reps
Student webpage and facebook	Student reps Communications officer	Student webpage established on new DSA website Active use and maintenance of webpage Active use and maintenance of student facebook page
DSA publicise ECR/PGR events	Student reps Communications officer ESP	Events published through DSA comms channels Tracking of attendance at events shows take up through DSA
<i>Placements/internships</i>	<i>Council ESP</i>	<i>Student placements/internships offered Placements/internships successfully completed (DSA and student view)</i>
<b>5. Increase equity and diversity</b>		
Scholarships for GS researchers for conferences and other events	Scientific committee ESP	Scholarships awarded Evaluation shows success
Special events at DSA conferences	Scientific committee ESP	Events held Evaluations show participants found them valuable
Support GS based study groups	Study group convenor	Africa SG continues and is active Other regionally based study groups developed
Ethics and research	President Communications officer EADI All	Research ethics guide produced in collaboration with EADI Guide begins to be used Advocacy/action on collective issues that arose in producing guide takes place Advocacy/action leads to desired change
Improve sustainable practice	Environmental officer on Council ESP All	DSA conferences continue to adopt sustainable practices DSA environmental guide published and followed