**DSA AGM 2026** **10 July, 2026, 1345-1445**

In person (O'Connor Centre for Learning, University College Dublin (UCD)) and online (Zoom)

**1. Welcome and Apologies (UK)**

UK gave an overview of the agenda for the AGM.

Thanks were given by Uma Kambhampati (UK):

- to NomadIT for the exceptional work done throughout the year, particularly in organising the conference. Winfred Nyokabi and James Howard, it was noted, were particularly integral to the latter and DSA is extremely grateful to them and to the whole NomadIT team, together with conference volunteers, for their hard work. It was noted that the institutional memory that NomadIT brings to the organization of DSA conferences is particularly invaluable.
- to conference volunteers, who have helped things run so smoothly.
- to Supriya Garikipati and Caitriona Dowd, the conference convenors, and University College Dublin (UCD) colleagues, for their leadership on the conference programme. The fantastic keynotes and agenda were highlighted in particular.
- to the conference sponsors – UCD, Irish Aid, Fáilte Ireland, *Journal of Development Studies*, *Oxford Development Studies*, *Journal of Development Studies*, and our publishing partners Oxford University Press. Thanks were particularly given to those who provided funding towards global South scholars/ attendance and participation.
- to the DSA President (outgoing), UK, DSA Treasurer (outgoing), Shailaja Fennell, DSA Secretary (outgoing), Jonathan Fisher, and Communications Officer, Rowena Harding.
- to outgoing Council members Emma Mawdsley, Zechariahs Benapugha Owutuamor, Annalisa Prizzon, Sheila Ronoh, and Peter Taylor. DSA is very fortunate to have had the benefit of their wisdom and industry in recent years.

Apologies were received from: Kamna Patel.

**2. Approval of Minutes from AGM 2025 (UK)**

Minutes of AGM 2025 (hybrid, University of Bath) were APPROVED following a show of hands in-person and an online poll for members attending remotely.

These have been available to members online on the DSA Website.

**3. Annual Trustees' Report and Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner**

Shailaja Fennell (SF) presented the accounts for the past financial year, which have previously been made available to members. SF offered thanks to NomadIT for their support in managing the Association's accounts.

Overall, DSA accounts and reserves are in a strong position. FY25/26 saw a notional net

income of £48.4k, though this is not precise owing to lag times in the accounting process. DSA accounts are created based on actual income received and payments made during the DSA FY (01/02/25-31/01/26); some significant 2025 expenses were only able to be paid in the early weeks of the current FY (post-Feb 2026) , including various costs associated with DSA2025 conference in Bath. Once deducted, the net income would drop to a deficit of c. £17k for the previous FY.

This fits with the DSA's ongoing strategy to try and spend down its reserves, particularly on areas Council and members feel are a priority such as study groups, the EDI work etc.

There were no questions.

The accounts were approved as presented, along with the appointment of Sterling Partners to prepare accounts for next year.

**4. President's Report (UK)**

Uma Kambhampati presented her report (see documents on DSA website)

<u>Objective 1: Advance Connections to Deepen Understanding of Development</u>

- 89 panels or workshops held at conference and 438 papers presented;
- Nearly all study groups active this year, and new convenors reactivating their groups. 8 study group meetings have been organised. UK offered thanks to Ibrahim Natil for his leadership in this area. Further work is planned around study groups in 2027.
- 3 new titles in the DSA-OUP book series have been published.
- An online discussion on large grant-funded research centres took place with the Decolonising Development group. It was underlined that members are encouraged to submit proposals for webinars, including institutional members.
- DSA2027 will take place at the University of Sussex, under the theme "Development between Hope and Critique".

<u>Objective 2: Raise Profile of the UK Development Studies Community and Provide a Platform for its Collective Voice</u>

- DSA newsletter has been sent to 3,000 plus people;
- Social media presence continues to be maintained (including sharing news through LinkedIn) but support from DSA members (including research leads and heads of centre) welcome in terms of online outreach;
- Outreach by Rowena Harding (RH) to Irish development community in lead-up to DSA2026 was acknowledged and applauded;
- Plan to reinvigorate DSA blogs put in place this year, has proven to be quite successful (12 blogs this past year)
- In 2026/27, we will look at how our news can be offered which meets members needs in both the Global North and Global South. We also hope to partner with organisations to offer online professional development events.

A participant asked how many people attend webinars: RH responded that DSA receives c. 400 registrations and aims for c.200 to attend. UK noted the significant attrition rate with online offerings but also noted gS representative to Council's insight that some gS members download audio and listen to webinars post-hoc.

Objective 3: Build the Institutional Strength of DSA

- This year has seen a further tightening-up of governance processes, including the rolling out of training for Council members and delineation of Terms of Reference for key council positions;
- Election processes for gS and student representatives to Council formalized and successfully held;
- Support has been set up for student members, including a clear student fund budget line;
- A key priority for comms in the next year will be deepening engagement of DSA to its institutional members.

Objective 4: Nurture the Future of Development Studies Through Support to Students, ECRs, and HE Teachers.

- Dedicated student fund initiated this year;
- Several student events organised, including an online event on academic blogging and hybrid events on grant writing and writing support;
- Dissertation and PhD prizes have continued;
- An open webinar held on publishing support for journals;
- For 26/27, a new workplan on teaching and undergraduate support will be taken forward, led by Claire Mcloughlin.

Objective 5: Promote Greater EDI within the Development Studies Community:

- The EDI and race audit project was completed this year and submitted to Academy of Social Sciences (who part-funded it). A video presentation of the project's findings, led by project co-lead Madhuri Kamtam (UEA), was shown to the AGM. Entitled *Advancing Racial Equity in Development Studies*, which can be viewed on the DSA website at this link. The link also includes a write-up of the project and the full report. A publication based on the work will be developed.
- Laura Camfield (project co-lead) spoke to the work and report, noting that the Development Studies sector is a more diverse HE sector than some others, but this diversity is reflected more at the early-career stage and less so mid- and (especially) senior levels. This is in part the result of initiatives existing but many not being meaningfully put into practice or realising significant change. The EDI work suggests a number of ways in which EDI can become, as it must become, part of Development Studies' DNA, and not just a series of activities.
- The Decolonising Development Database network held a LGRC event.

Overall Membership:

UK noted that membership numbers have stabilised in the last 24 months to around 1,250. Members from and based in the GS under the fee waiver category represent approx. 40-50% of the total membership. Institutional membership remains steady (critical for finances), and the highest number of student and individual members since 2018.

Conference statistics for DSA2026 (hybrid) were reported and compared to previous years (since 2019). DSA2026 saw 591 attendees across in-person (335) and online (256), slightly down from DSA2025 (625). Around half of these were concession member rates. 421 papers were presented across 89 panels.

28 delegates were funded to attend by DSA, IrishAid, or other sponsors. 65% of these participated in person and 35% online.

**6. PGT and PGR Prizes (UK)**

The Masters' dissertation prize was won by Richard Naughton from the Open University for their MA thesis entitled "Justice in transition: How community action groups shape a "just" coal phase-out in Australia's Hunter Valley". Elena Lovera (LSE)'s MA dissertation entitled "Educational assortative mating and within-household income inequality in Indonesia" was Highly Commended by the DSA Prizes Committee. Both attended DSA2026 and presented their work.

The PhD thesis prize was won by Rachel Tough (UEA) for her PhD entitled "Vietnam's war on Covid-19: An ethnography of pandemic in Ho Chi Minh City". Iris Ru-Yu Lin (IDS)'s PhD entitled "Solastalgia and transfiguration: Emotional and adaptive responses of the Monpa transhuman pastoralists to climate and environmental change of the Himalayan borderland in Western Arunachal Pradesh, India". Both attended DSA2026 and presented their work.

All were applauded.

**7. Nominations and Council Elections**

Elections were held to fill Council seats being vacated.

M Jahangir Alam Chowdhury has been re-elected for his second term through the gS representative election process held online in advance of DSA2026.

The two Student reps on Council are standing down after their 3- year terms (Sheila Ronoh and Zechariahs Benapugha Owutuamor), and two new student reps were elected via an online election open only to the DSA Student membership in advance of DSA2026. To ensure institutional memory in the role, the terms will be staggered with one rep standing for one year and the other for three years. The winners were: Roxanne Tiemann (University of Bath) elected for a one-year term, 2026-27 and Tegan Hadisi (University of Oxford) elected for a three-year term, 2026-29.

Five vacancies or term ends have arisen on Council and one nomination received for each vacancy/re-election. All DSA members received the bios and election information by email in advance of the AGM.

These elections to Council took place and the results were:

Council members:

Eyob Balcha Gebremariam (2nd term) – (re) elected by a majority in the room and online

Touseef Mir (2nd term) – (re) elected by a majority in the room and online

Pritish Behuria – elected by a majority in the room and online

Kate Pruce – elected by a majority in the room and online

Oliver Walton – elected by a majority in the room and online

Vacancies have arisen for all three Council officer positions, and one nomination was received for each vacancy. All members received the bios and election information by email in advance of the AGM.

These elections took place and the results were:

Officers of the Council:

For the role of president, one nomination was received (Mike Jennings, SOAS). Majority in-person and online were in favour.

For the role of treasurer, one nomination was received (Laura Camfield, KCL). Majority in-person and online were in favour.

For the role of secretary, one nomination was received (Kamna Patel, UCL). Majority in-person and online were in favour.

The new DSA Council was welcomed and applauded.

**8. Any Other Business**

Kristen Hope and Luqman Muraina thanked UK for her leadership as president. They also raised concerns about making future conferences more inclusive with regard to the cost of attendance and access (including visas). It was acknowledged that HE budget cuts have impacted this, and the visa situation in countries like the UK and Ireland have made this especially challenging. They also noted that DSA is one of the more diverse associations and expressed thanks to the Association for this.

UK thanked the representatives for their work on behalf of the association and acknowledged the challenges.

Susannah Pickering-Saqqa thanked DSA for being reflective in organising and running the conference on what it means to be a Development Studies scholar in an era of genocide. They noted that they had considered putting their name forward for election to DSA Council and would have appreciated more information on this process.

James Howard (NomadIT) clarified that this information is generally just sent to DSA members approximately three weeks in advance of the AGM, as non-members are ineligible to stand for Council and the deadline to receive nominations is lunchtime on the first day of the conference. Jonathan Fisher (outgoing Secretary), RH, and UK underscored that DSA Council is keen to secure the input and ideas of the wider Development Studies community, and this is welcomed not just through Council membership.

M Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (gS representative) seconded earlier points made around conference inclusion, particularly in relation to visas and finances. He suggested a need to restart the gS mentoring pilot scheme. He also noted that a gS conference is proposed to take place in Bangladesh in 2027, and asked that future DSA conferences consider the timing of the AGM vis-à-vis the parallel timing of Muslim Friday prayers.

Gurusaravanan Manoharan thanked DSA for the support they had received to attend the conference and encouraged DSA to continue to encourage development practitioners from minority backgrounds to attend and participate. They welcomed DSA's efforts to make these platforms even more inclusive.

Supriya Garikipati (UCD) thanked Caitriona Dowd (UCD) for her work in securing funding (eg from IrishAid) to support the attendance and participation of some gS scholars.

Bassem Abudagga wished to raise the significance of the Gaza genocide and concerns around initiatives emerging in a number of contexts aimed at rebuilding Gaza in a colonising, rather than developmental manner (eg Trump "Board of Peace", and involvement of figures such as Tony Blair).

UK and RH encouraged members to take up opportunities to raise their voices in this area via DSA initiatives. RH will recirculate highlights of engagement guidelines. Members should feel that they can put ideas and proposals to Council members to be raised also.

A participant asked if there were plans to produce a series of outputs from the conference, or resources available from previous conferences. UK clarified the diverse academic focus and purpose of the conference would not make this possible, but we encourage outputs from panels and study groups.

Catriona Dowd (UCD) closed this part of the AGM by thanking people for their participation, both those who travelled and those participating online.

**9. DSA2027 Conference** will be held 22-25 June 2027 at University of Sussex under the

theme “Development Between Hope and Critique”. Looking forward to seeing everyone there!

A vote of thanks to the DSA President at the end came from the audience.