SF Bay Chapter Member Handbook
Introduction

Congratulations on taking the next step on your journey to be the most effective possible advocate for animals. This handbook holds key information you'll need as you familiarize yourself with what being a chapter member is all about. By understanding DxE's mission, history, culture, values, and vision, you’ll be empowered to work with your fellow activists towards a future where every animal can be happy, safe, and free.

Growing as an activist means growing as a person. The process can be fun, stressful, fulfilling, and exhilarating- and will push you out of your comfort zone in the best possible way. Navigating conflict, self-care in the face of exposure to the atrocities of animal exploitation, and many other challenges will most likely be encountered along the way. What gets us through the hard times? Our support for each other, celebrating our victories, and knowing that we can achieve revolutionary change for animals.
Who We Are

We have a bold vision: we will achieve revolutionary social and political change for animals in one generation.

Direct Action Everywhere (DxE) is a global network of activists committed to ending the exploitation and killing of animals. DxE was founded in the SF Bay Area in 2013 by a small group of activists who believed that community building and nonviolent direct action would be
required to create massive change in the way humans treat other animals. The SF Bay Area chapter, headquartered in Berkeley, is DxE’s first and largest chapter.

Since its founding, DxE’s accomplishments include:

- Mobilizing thousands of activists around the world
- Demonstrations in hundreds of cities and dozens of nations
- Rescues of hundreds of animals from industrial farms, slaughterhouses, and laboratories
- Coverage in leading publications, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, and ABC Nightline, including a viral expose of the FBI coverup of factory farms by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Glenn Greenwald
- Opening the first community center for animal rights in the USA (Berkeley Animal Rights Center)
- Achieving historic pro-animal legislative victories, such as banning fur in San Francisco and Berkeley
- Starting the Animal Liberation Conference, which has grown since 2014 to be the second largest animal rights conference in North America (and the largest grassroots one) with 1,200+ registrants
What We Believe

Animal rights is a social movement- a question of what is right, rather than merely what is kind. There is a long tradition of organized efforts to end the oppression of marginalized and exploited groups, such as the women's suffrage, civil rights, and marriage equality movements. Species equality’s agenda is a world where animals are accepted as having fundamental rights and are viewed and treated with respect as individuals.

Our Values
**We are fiercely nonviolent**
We directly challenge systems of oppression with the power of nonviolence. We have empathy for the individuals caught up in violent systems; we seek to bring them to the side of truth and justice. We accept our own suffering without retaliation. Even when tested, we respond nonviolently in act, word, and tone.

**We build purposeful communities**
We foster inclusive communities that empower, support, and build up fellow activists. We treat each person in our community with warmth and respect. We assume good faith, don’t gossip, and call each other in, not out. Our community is the foundation on which the movement grows. We encourage ordinary people to become the best activists they can be through training, mentorship, and support.

**We do our homework**
We draw on the best available evidence, from academia and beyond, to inform our work. We seek diverse perspectives and also look outside the animal rights movement for lessons and inspiration. We measure our results and we’re eager to adapt and shift course based on outcomes. We’re willing to innovate, experiment, take calculated risks, fail, and learn from failure.

**We lead by serving**
We create power for the movement by empowering the people around us. Our leadership team is first in line when a sacrifice is necessary. Ultimately, we are all serving the animals and the movement.

**We do exceptional work for animals**
Our actions reflect the seriousness and urgency of our cause. We set clear goals and develop plans to achieve them. We are absurdly dependable, hold each other accountable, and get things done on time and to the best of our ability. We constantly seek feedback, commit to continuous learning, and respond to criticism with humility and grace. We believe in the duty to disagree, but we maintain compassion even when we disagree.
How We’ll Achieve Animal Liberation: DxE’s Theory of Change

A “theory of change” is a description of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It explains why we believe that our strategy will result in us reaching our goal. Our understanding is built on evidence-based science, interviews with top scholars and activists, and best practices in effective social movements from the past 200 years. You'll learn more about our theory of change when you attend the introductory workshop, “How to Change the World in One Generation.” These four steps, each of which builds on the step before, are critical to achieving our mission.

1. Setting Out a Bold Vision

40 Year Strategic Roadmap

Best practices suggest that the more complex the change we seek to achieve, the more important it is to set clear milestones in a long term plan. The idea behind this roadmap is simple: to motivate our work and provide guidance on whether we are making real progress, we need to set goals over an extended period of time. The full roadmap can be found here, but here are some of the key milestones:
**Roadmap to Animal Liberation**

- **2020**
  - An animal rights hub develops in Berkeley; a global network is formed

- **2025**
  - "Meat" is banned in Berkeley; open rescues occur across the world

- **2030**
  - Former Heads of State publicly support open rescue, more protections for many species

- **2035**
  - More city and regional level animal protection laws are passed and enforced

- **2040**
  - A state or province passes a statute for animal liberation with robust enforcement

- **2045**
  - One or more national governments fund a network of sanctuaries as reparations

- **2050**
  - Species equality goes before the Supreme Court of one or more countries

- **2055**
  - Constitutional Bill of Animal Rights passes in one or more states or countries
2. Building a Community Around that Vision

The Power of Concentrated Activism

Research into what makes social change movements effective has led us to understand that while there is much value in geographically diverse communities of activists, a dense concentration of activists in one place matters. In essence, we need to hit “critical mass.” Concentration allows for shared resources, knowledge, and commitment. Large numbers of animal rights supporters and activists in one city creates political opportunities that are out of reach for a dispersed movement, because the activists have proportionately more political sway than if they were spread out through a large area. The more we inhabit shared spaces,
the more our movement will grow and the stronger we will be. For this reason, activists from all over the world have moved to the Bay Area to be involved with the SF Bay DxE Chapter. A historically progressive city, Berkeley presents a prime opportunity to create a national and global “snowball effect” because of its cultural influence. When we change the laws in Berkeley, other cities and States- and eventually, the world- will follow suit.

Getting Involved

In any given week, there are multiple ways for you to help animals, collaborate with other activists, and learn. Check our Facebook page for
a full listing of upcoming events, but here are some things we regularly gather as a community for:

Meetups. Every Saturday from 11 am - 12:30 pm, we gather to hear the latest in animal rights, learn about key topics, and enjoy a delicious vegan brunch (by donation). This is our community’s main weekly gathering.

Chapter Meeting. On the first Sunday of each month, from 11:30 am - 2:30 pm, chapter members gather to discuss important issues in our community and our activism.

Circles. Every Chapter Member needs a “home” -- a place where everyone knows their face and name. The Circles program connects you with a small group near you to meet on a weekly basis. Every Circle group is different- you might find yourself in a book discussion, making art, eating tasty food, rescuing pigeons, or disrupting a supermarket!

Actions and Events. Throughout the month, the community holds protests, marches, demonstrations, volunteer days, and other activities that everyone is encouraged to attend. There is strength in numbers, and when we take action together we spread our message and show the world that people are committed to the long-term fight for animal rights.

3. Developing Leadership

Below are the levels of involvement in our chapter, as well as some of the requirements and rights obtained at each level. The four levels of engagement in the DxE SF Bay Area chapter are:

- SUPPORTER: Supporters attend events organized by the chapter.
- CHAPTER MEMBER: Chapter members are committed to being part of a community for change.
• **ORGANIZER:** Organizers take ownership over achieving the chapter’s objectives.

• **SENIOR ORGANIZER:** Senior organizers develop organizing capacity in others and manage complex projects to achieve the chapter’s objectives.

**SUPPORTER:** Supporters attend events organized by the chapter.

How does being a supporter create change for animals? Numbers matter. Your presence at an event, your share of a video, and your signature on a petition demonstrates that this movement is growing.

How to become a supporter
• Sign up to our mailing list at dxe.io/signup
• Attend any event

Benefits of becoming a supporter
• Information on upcoming events and actions where you can be a part of changing the world for animals

Expectations of supporters
• Uphold our code of conduct and values

**CHAPTER MEMBER:** Chapter members are committed to being a part of a community for change.

How does being a chapter member create change for animals? Attending one protest is great, but what really makes social movements succeed is *sustained* participation. Research tells us that every movement that mobilized 3.5% of the population in sustained action was successful.
We also know that sustained participation is more likely when activists are embedded in a strong, supportive community. When you commit to attend both a community event and an action each month, you become part of the 3.5%!

How to become a chapter member

- Apply at dxe.io/apply
- Attend DxE’s introductory workshop (held monthly) to learn about our community and theory of change
- Take the Movement Power Pledge (commit to attending one community event and one action each month)
- Examples of community events: Meetups, potlucks, Circle gatherings, chapter meetings
- Examples of actions: Sanctuary workdays, protests, outreach, lobbying, marches
Why Take the Movement Power Pledge?

Decades of research show there are two keys to creating social change: action and community. Harvard scholars found that each protester influences about 10 people in future elections. Sociologists have found that vibrant communities are necessary to sustaining protest. By pledging to come to an action and a community event every month, you are adding power to the animal rights movement.

Success requires focusing on impact. DxE’s theory of change revolves around the power of numbers -- building a large, diverse grassroots movement -- and we need a way to measure that regularly and monitor our progress over time. Measuring the number of activists who come to one protest and one community event a month is a good indicator of sustained commitment to the movement. The person has not only taken action but is also contributing to the community through regular engagement.

Benefits of becoming a chapter member

- Voting rights for community decisions (such as whether to have alcohol at chapter events)
- Access to chapter member mailing lists, WhatsApp chats, and Facebook groups
- Invites to special events and opportunities
- Add your photo and vision to the wall at the Berkeley Animal Rights Center

Expectations of chapter members

- Uphold our code of conduct and values
- Understand DxE’s mission, values, and theory of change
- Attend one community event and one action every month

ORGANIZER: Organizers take ownership over achieving the chapter’s objectives.

How does being an organizer create change for animals? Organizers make our chapter function by organizing community events, editing
videos, leading protests, raising money, writing press releases, and more. By becoming an organizer, you become a primary driver of the chapter’s objectives.

How to become an organizer
- Be a chapter member in good standing
- Join a working group or become a Circle host¹
- Uphold DxE’s values in all online and offline interactions²
- Complete an interview with a member of the Development Committee to demonstrate knowledge of DxE’s mission and values and to help set personal objectives³
- Commit to attending future organizer trainings⁴
- Sign NDA and organizer’s agreement

Benefits of becoming an organizer
- Voting rights in elections and for community, strategic, and budget decisions
- Coaching from a connector/mentor
- Access to organizer mailing lists, WhatsApp chats, and Facebook groups
- Organizer t-shirt (after training requirements are met)

Expectations of organizers
- Uphold our code of conduct and values
- Be ambassadors for DxE’s mission, values, and theory of change

¹ Circles must have and work towards a mission/purpose statement in order for hosts to be eligible to become organizers or senior organizers. Applicants must be approved by their working group point person (for working group members) or Community Committee (for circle hosts). This requires meeting the working group’s self-determined standards, typically attending at least three meetings in a row and completing action items for working groups or hosting three circles for Circle hosts.
² Includes approval from Core and Report teams as well as review of social media profiles.
³ Applicant will also be given feedback solicited from their working group members or Circle members.
⁴ The number, content and format of required organizer trainings are currently being revised. It is anticipated that organizers will be able to meet this training requirement through online trainings and/or quizzes if attending in person is not feasible.
- Consistently attend working group meetings and take on action items or consistently host a Circle
- Attend one community event and one action every month

**SENIOR ORGANIZER:** Senior organizers develop organizing capacity in others and manage complex projects to achieve the chapter’s objectives.

In order to exponentially increase our impact, we need coaches and mentors who develop others. When you support and share your expertise with others, you build the next generation of high-impact activists. When Senior Organizers see an opportunity or problem - regardless of whether they are personally responsible - they move forward to address the issue. Complex or risky projects, like investigations, planning conferences, or legal support require experienced activists. By becoming a Senior Organizer, you make this work possible.

How to become a Senior Organizer
- Be an Organizer in good standing for 6 months
- Receive feedback through the Senior Organizer Assessment form
- Attend the Senior Organizer training
- Successfully manage a [major project](#)
Commit to consistently coaching three organizers or chapter members
Core approval

Benefits of becoming a Senior Organizer
- DxE email address
- Invites to strategy retreats and other exclusive events
- Access to senior organizer mailing lists and WhatsApp chats

Expectations of Senior Organizers
- Uphold our code of conduct and values
- Highest understanding of DxE’s mission, values and theory of change
- Consistently attend working group meetings and take on action items or consistently host a Circle
- Consistently coach three organizers or chapter members
- Attend one community event and one action every month

Committees and Working Groups

DxE has 5 committees, each of which report to the SF Bay Core, which are responsible for executing key aspects of our strategic plan. Most committees, in turn, have working groups under them.

Working groups carry out much of the work of the chapter, and are managed by the Development Committee. Attending a Working Group meeting is a great way to see if the Working Group is a good fit for your interests and skills. Learn more about Working Groups here. We also look for motivated activists interested in fulfilling specific roles on Working Groups that the chapter has designated as high priority. You can learn more and find a volunteer application form here.

Community Committee: Recruits and sustains activist participation, manages Animal Care, Outreach, Meetups, Circles, Pop-ups, and all
other community events.

Working Groups:

- Outreach
- Sustain
- Animal Care

**Direct Action Committee:** Develops campaigns and provides strategic coordination between the chapter, protests, legislative work and legal cases.
Working Groups:

- Protest
- Rose’s Law
- Legal
- Compassionate Bay

**Communications Committee:** Oversees DxE's press, social media, and email campaigns with the goal of telling positive and mission-aligned stories that get the issue of animal rights into public discourse.

Working Groups:

- Press
- Social Media
- Tech
- Creative

**Development Committee:** Increases the capacity of the chapter to create change for animals by (1) providing opportunities, support, inspiration, and training for individuals and teams to level up their activism and (2) identifying and recruiting people with key skills.
Finance Committee: Plans and executes fundraising strategies to support activists doing groundbreaking work exposing violence and creating historic change.

Sahar’s Story

“In April 2018, I went to my first DxE Day of Action and right then I knew I was beginning a new life as an activist. I attended the Animal Liberation Conference the following month and I was blown away. I felt so incredibly emboldened to fight for animal rights. I knew I wanted to do whatever I could to be a part of and contribute to the movement. I’ve been on DxE’s Finance team for more than a year, and have grown immensely during that time. DxE has pushed me to think outside the box and has given me the skills and guidance I need to effectively advocate for the animals.”

4. Harnessing Leadership and Community in Nonviolent Direct Action

Protests, Marches, and other Demonstrations

DxE takes to the streets to raise awareness of animals’ rights to live happy, safe, and free lives. Some demonstrations are small, such as a protest outside a grocery store claiming to sell “humane” animal products, and some are large, such as marches that take place at the
annual Animal Liberation Conference with as many as 1000 people participating. There are many opportunities to take direct action with DxE that stay within the confines of the law, ensuring that only those who choose to take on legal risk do so.

Civil Disobedience

“Civil disobedience” is the choice to break a law you believe is unjust, with the goal of influencing social or political change. You do so openly, taking on whatever consequences that may bring. Nonviolence means

Nonviolent Civil Disobedience

Nonviolent civil disobedience has been around for centuries, but one example of this strategy in action will be familiar to most Americans: the Civil Rights movement of the 1960’s. In the face of political and social disenfranchisement and virulent racism, a coalition of groups led by Martin Luther King Jr. was able to defy oppressive power structures and violent repression to make sure black Americans could use the rights they were entitled to under the Constitution.

Civil rights protesters challenged segregation and voter suppression by taking actions such as sit-ins, where protesters refused to leave sections of restaurants where black people were not allowed to sit, refusing (in the case of Rosa Parks) to give up their seats on buses to whites, and staging marches in defiance of orders from powerful politicians. Activists were jailed, beaten by the police, and even killed by white supremacists, but their courageous and peaceful efforts drew national attention and support, leading to the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

making a decision to not use violence- physical, verbal, or emotional- to achieve your aims, or to retaliate against systems or individuals that treat
you unjustly as you seek to bring about transformation in society. Nonviolent resistance is directed against systems, forces, oppressive policies, and unjust acts, but not against persons.

Investigations and Open Rescue

DxE uses the power of transparency and storytelling to bring attention to the suffering of animals in facilities such as factory farms and research laboratories. In an investigation, activists enter these establishments and document conditions inside with photos and videos, which are shared with the world. In some cases, an animal or animals are rescued from the facility so they can receive medical attention and have the lives they deserve. This is called an open rescue, because the
people who take action don’t conceal their identities; the rescue is a transparent process and we proceed with the highest integrity.

**Investigations & Open Rescue**

Main body text: In 2017, DxE investigators went into one of the United States’ largest breeders of dogs for experimentation and found thousands of dogs living in horrific conditions. One of those dogs was Julie: a blind beagle puppy in a bare metal cage where she was turning in endless circles, forced to live alone since being taken from her mother. She was terrified of everything around her, and the team knew they couldn’t leave her behind. They documented the severe and routine cruelty around them, and took Julie to get the care she needed.

Today, Julie has found a loving family with Diana, a local DxE Organizer. Julie still suffers from post-traumatic stress and faces daily challenges. But her transformation has been unbelievable. She’s learned to play with toys, climb stairs, and trust humans for the first time. DxE told Julie’s story to the world, along with the stories of the many dogs they had to leave behind. Public outcry led to a historic ballot initiative to ban experimentation on dogs in Julie’s home county.
Legislation and Compassionate Bay

Compassionate Bay is DxE’s “sister group” and focuses on passing animal-friendly legislation. They mobilize people to take action by lobbying their elected representatives and develop relationships with lawmakers to influence them to be advocates for animals. Small but mighty, this team was instrumental in the battle to pass a CA statewide ban on fur sales.

Policies and Procedures

The DxE SF Bay Area Chapter is an unincorporated association that operates according to these bylaws. Funding for most of the chapter's...
activities comes from the non-profit Direct Action Everywhere. *The Bylaws, including governance, are currently being revised due to Wayne Hsiung being replaced by Almira Tanner as Lead Organizer.*

## Transparency

DxE believes in transparency. While some of our projects are not discussed publicly due to security culture and confidentiality, the majority of our meetings are open, though we generally require you to email the point person for each meeting at least 24 hours before. Some working groups, e.g. legal, have closed meetings because they discuss personal information we are not entitled to disclose to third parties. Other working groups may have closed sessions when particularly sensitive subjects are discussed. Contact the point person of each working group to determine the meeting logistics for each team.

## Funding for Actions

Sometimes DxE will provide some funding for legal fees. We cannot guarantee funding, but these standards offer guidance as to when DxE may assist with legal fees.

- **Pre-approval.** Where DxE has prior knowledge of and involvement of action. Only funds previously allocated with express written consent are guaranteed to be supplied.

- **DxE Values.** Where an action is nonviolent and otherwise maintains DxE’s basic values.

- **Financial Need.** Where the activists at issue demonstrate financial need.

- **Investment in DxE Efforts.** Where the activists at issue have significantly committed resources and efforts into collaborating with and assisting others in the DxE network.
Leadership and Decision Making

Leadership Roles:

- The Lead Organizer: A member of Core who has final say over composition of all Committees and Working Groups, as well as allocation of resources. Both the Lead Organizer and members of Core are elected by Organizers (*next elections will be held in early 2020*).

- Core: The most high-level decision-making body of the SF Bay Chapter after the Lead Organizer. Currently, there are five members of Core. Core is responsible for ensuring that the chapter's activities are conducive to achieving chapter-wide goals and objectives.

Voting:

Chapter members can vote on community decisions, such as whether to have alcohol at events, and Organizers in good standing can, additionally, vote on strategic decisions, such as electing members of Core and the Lead Organizer. Voting procedures can be found [here](#).
Code of Conduct

We set clear expectations around our actions and words to create and maintain the best possible environment for us to do great work. All members of the DxE SF Bay Community are required to adhere to the guidelines of our Code of Conduct and Harassment Policy. We take the safety of our members, and everyone else we engage with in an activism context, very seriously. In addition to the guidelines above, DxE has a specific policy governing dating and relationships to ensure that interactions of a romantic and/or sexual nature are consensual, appropriate, and don’t have an unhealthy impact on the community.

DxE’s protocol when it appears that any of these policies may have been violated includes an investigation by the Report team, who should be notified immediately (if possible) should a problem arise. Investigations into reports — which are kept confidential to the fullest extent possible — can result in a variety of outcomes, including coaching, referral to mental health services, and temporary or indefinite bans.

We recognize the difference between an interpersonal conflict and a violation of DxE’s Code of Conduct or Values. DxE’s Report team is not the appropriate body to intervene in interpersonal conflicts.
What does healthy culture look like?

Healthy culture is everyone’s responsibility, because a culture is created by the beliefs, words, and actions of the individuals in it. Culture is, however, more than the sum of its individual parts- it shapes the behavior of individuals at the same time as it is shaped by them. In other words, everything you say and do as part of our community impacts everyone else, and ultimately the success of our movement. Sounds pretty important, right? Here are some examples of what does, and what does not, support the type of culture we aim for in DxE:
• An angry person comes up to you as you’re demonstrating outside a grocery store, yelling that you are “forcing your beliefs on everyone” and telling you to leave.

  ○ **Do:** Stay calm and rational. Does it make sense to engage this person in conversation right now, right here? Probably not. Look to your demonstration marshall for guidance if it seems like an unsafe situation may be developing, or for help getting the person to move on if they are interfering with the action.

  ○ **Don’t:** Respond with aggression, such as raising your voice, insulting them, or making physical contact with them.

• At a Saturday morning Meetup, you spot a new person standing awkwardly in the back. You go over and introduce yourself. They tell you that they were walking past ARC and curious about what was going on, but they eat animals and have no intention of stopping.

  ○ **Do:** Be friendly and let them know that everyone is welcome at our events. If they’re interested in talking about their beliefs about animal rights, be a good listener. Speak respectfully but unapologetically about what the movement stands for, paying close attention to areas of common ground. Have good personal boundaries and take appropriate action if the person is abusive, taking up an unreasonable amount of your time, or making you uncomfortable.
○ *Don’t*: Tell them that they are evil or stupid for eating animals or immediately pull out your phone and demand they watch slaughterhouse videos.

**Remember, the animal liberation movement starts with you!**