

Peace Advocacy Network Vegan Activist Academy Implementation Summary

2022

Peace Advocacy Network's (PAN) Vegan Activist Academy (VAA) certifies vegan activists to be more effective in their community activism for the animals.

Through our initial intensive 9-week online program, participants learned to:

- Create an effective activist strategy
- Communicate about their efforts to multiple audiences
- Fundraise
- Support self and community care
- Build racial equity in the movement
- And more!



“ I didn't think of myself as an activist at all—just a vegan. Now I feel brave and knowledgeable to go out and do some real activism in the way I'm most comfortable advocating, and I know I can and WILL make a difference! I LOVE PAN Academy and am SO grateful for this class. I can't express it enough.”



CLASS STRUCTURE

- + **One hour of learning together and discussing the topic of the week.**

Participants were given reading materials and thought exercises prior to each meeting through a workbook.

- + **One hour of guest subject matter experts.**

Seasoned activists shared their stories and effective strategies related to the topic of the week.

- + **One hour workshoping what was learned in the previous two hours.**

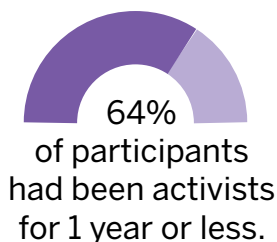
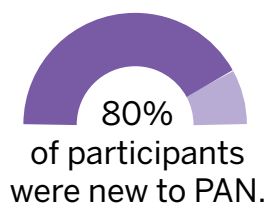
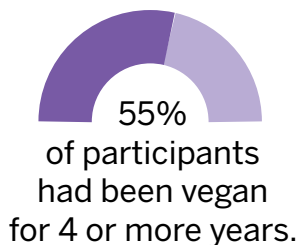
Breakout sessions for activists to practice skill sets related to the topic of the week, including mock conversations to improve communication skills and brainstorming questions for mutual support.

During the final meeting, participants presented their individual activist plan to the cohort to further grow in public speaking skills and receive additional ideas for their community plan.

“ I love how PAN included safe space for everyone in the Academy. Respecting privacy and cultural differences are huge important issues for me. With this space, I believe this Academy won't fail to help you thrive in your activism. ”

VAA RESULTS

PAN is proud to have implemented our first capacity building VAA, running from February 2022 to March 2022. Participants from all over the world, including Pakistan, Indonesia, and Latvia, have now taken critical activist skills back to their communities.



We prepared passionate vegan activists to be more effective, involve more people, and help promote a peaceful existence.



ACTIVIST PLAN UPDATES

Each participant was required to build their own community activist plan and projects included the following with progress at their one month check in.	Creation of a new farm animal sanctuary and veganic farm. This graduate already has secured the land, created partnerships, and begun fundraising efforts.	Working to ban the use of farmed animal crates in their local community. This graduate has already begun talking with others to build a base of activist support as the first step in their activist plan.
Planning a vegan bake-off to raise funds for local animal rescues and sanctuaries. This graduate has already built a support group to plan the community-building event.	Holding “Conversations with a Friendly Vegan” in their local community to raise awareness and support others to go vegan. This graduate has placed vegan starter guides in display areas throughout their community.	Partnering with local organizations to educate families on veganism through cooking demonstrations and organize trips to sanctuaries. This graduate has begun outreach and planning.
Creating a vegan support group in their local community. This graduate has already purchased a food truck and is updating it to bring more healthy vegan food to their traditionally food-insecure community.	Supporting and leading a 31 Day Plant Based Vegan challenge in a city that has only once before had a vegan challenge. This graduate has already submitted a grant application to support the work.	Working to ban horse drawn carriages and fur sales in their local community. This graduate joined the board of a local nonprofit working on these issues and is bringing the VAA skills to this work.
Working with local low-income communities to provide plant based food options. This graduate works with the only farm animal sanctuary in their country and is applying for grants to support adding plant-based food options.	Social media support and amplification for activists and vegan curious. This graduate has already identified other activists and actively amplified their work, as well as creating new content to share.	Making and providing plant based community meals to distribute to nonvegans with education on the benefits of diet change. This graduate has already served over 100 plant based community meals in an animal-product heavy culture.

“ I was one of those people who never quite knew what they wanted to do with their life. This changed when I discovered the world of veganism, the atrocities that happen behind closed doors and that are being hidden from people. I care deeply for the world, its nature and everyone in it and I want to give a deeper meaning to my life, dedicating my skills to helping others. I have found my passion in life and I want to learn and become better and more efficient at helping animals and people.”

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THE FUTURE OF VAA

Based on what we learned from feedback of our first implementation, we will implement the following changes to our January 2023 VAA:

- > Share slides ahead of meetings to support language barriers and better prepare participants for group discussions.
- > Add a tenth week for personal activist plan reflection and midpoint check in.
- > Adjust guest speakers as helpful for greater engagement.
- > Add ongoing lessons for program alumni to continue learning.
- > Additional specific changes to curriculum presentation.



The next Vegan Activist Academy will begin January 8, 2023.
Applications are now open: PeaceAdvocacyNetwork.org/Activist-Academy/

“ Deanna and Mo are wonderful mentors and they’ve put together a great course. The weekly meetings were a true joy, giving me the possibility to learn both from many different and amazing speakers as well as from other students. The atmosphere was always so welcoming and safe that it felt like being between friends. I have already implemented many of the ideas that I learned in the VAA in my everyday activism and I will definitely continue using many of the resources that were shared. ”

“ I won’t ever stop learning as an animal activist. Helping other vegans get active is the next challenge and hopefully I get to connect and encourage my fellow vegan friends to become active, especially in my local community. I want to do this to make myself a better vegan activist for the non human animals and human animals. It’s also crucial to conduct vegan activist workshops for local chapters. Seeing this opportunity in a different time zone and culture makes me realize that it’s not going to be easy but it’s going to be a stepping stone for local activists to show up and learn from each other. ”

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