# The Distributed Control and Automation Framework (DCAF) Developer's Guide

## Purpose of this guide

This guide is intended to contain all of the information necessary to build an application using DCAF. The guide can help users determine whether DCAF is a good fit for their application, explain the major components of the framework, and walk through the majority of the design decisions that need to be made.

This guide assumes basic introductory knowledge of both LabVIEW and DCAF. A more comprehensive introduction to DCAF can be found in the [Introduction to the Distributed Control and Automation Framework](http://forums.ni.com/t5/Distributed-Control-Automation/Introduction-to-the-Distributed-Control-and-Automation-Framework/gpm-p/3537533).

## How to use this guide

The first three chapters of this guide should be understood by anyone using DCAF to create an application.

**Chapter 1** provides an overview of the major components of DCAF and how they fit together.

**Chapter 2** provides guidance on software design best practices for applications using DCAF. This includes guidance on when additional plugin modules should be developed.

**Chapter 3** goes over the process to create a new application using DCAF and covers the execution templates to run DCAF code.

The remaining two chapters contain greater detail on how to create new plugin modules or make other more advanced customizations using the framework.

**Chapter 4** covers the different templates for creating new plugin modules, and the details required to finish development using those templates.

**Chapter 5** covers some of the concepts of how DCAF is distributed, and how to collaborate with the project.