American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation, Inc.


This report represents American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation, Inc.'s responses to Charting Impact, a joint project of BBB Wise Giving Alliance, GuideStar USA Inc, and Independent Sector. Charting Impact uses five simple yet powerful questions to encourage strategic thinking and help organizations share concise information about their plans and progress toward impact.

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Mission:
The mission of the American Kennel Club Canine Health Foundation, Inc. (CHF) is to advance the health of all dogs and their owners by funding scientific research and supporting the dissemination of health information to prevent, treat and cure canine disease.
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1. What are we aiming to accomplish?

Within our mission and vision, the AKC Canine Health Foundation has three primary goals: To fund canine health research projects to the Foundation's capacity which address the diversity of canine health concerns and may have comparative medicine benefits for humans To select and monitor, through a rigorous process, research projects that meet high scientific standards and have the greatest potential for advancing the health of dogs To communicate to the pet-owners, veterinarians and researchers funded discoveries that help prevent, treat, and cure canine diseases.

2. What are our strategies for making this happen?

The AKC Canine Health Foundation supports research that will improve the health and lives of all dogs. The Foundation achieves this by awarding grants to scientists and professionals in research that concern the origins of canine illness, the diagnosis of canine diseases, the developments of effective treatments and the identification of disease prevention strategies. 1. Fund canine health research projects through two main grant types: a. OAKs are research projects that are solicited via requests for proposals, submitted through a tiered application process, reviewed by internal and external expert reviewers, and approved by the board of directors. b. ACORNs are seed grants that may be submitted at anytime throughout the year and are reviewed and approved by volunteer experts on a monthly basis. 2. The Foundation's established grants review process is rigorous and stringent. Applications are reviewed internally by dedicated professionals and are subjected to reviews by experts in the application's field of study. 3. The Foundation's process is distinctive in that it gathers information about canine health priorities from the AKC Parent Clubs as well as dog owners, breeders, veterinarians, academic institutions, and researchers. We encourage our investigators to submit applications based on this feedback. 4. The Foundation raises the funds needed to support the canine health programs through contributions from corporate alliances, dog club organizations, and individuals. 5. As a public not-for-profit 501(c)3 foundation, the Foundation is dedicated to using it's fiduciary responsibility to maximize canine health funding opportunities. 6. The Foundation follows generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and is dedicated to maintaining data integrity in all financial areas. 7. To ensure financial stability, the Foundation's accounting operations include: a. Evaluating and updating internal controls b. Providing timely financial reporting and financial statements c. Arrange for an annual external audit d. Closely monitoring the composition and performance of investment portfolio e. Planning, preparing and implementing an annual budget f. Updating financial forecasts quarterly g. Performing cash flow analysis and cash disbursement planning h. Ensuring compliance with all local, state, and federal regulations regarding charitable solicitations 8. The Foundation provides educational material through multiple venues to reach audiences interested in canine health. These include symposia, electronic and traditional mailings, online website, podcasts, and scientific conferences.

3. What are our organization's capabilities for doing this?

Since 1995, the AKC Canine Health Foundation has become the largest funder of exclusively canine health research in the world. The Foundation raises funds to support quality research to discover: (1) causes of disease; (2) earlier, more accurate diagnoses; (3) better, more effective treatments. 1. The Foundation provides annual budgeted funding of approved OAK and ACORN grants which have been evaluated for scientific soundness, based on an assessment of the Foundation's financial strength. 2. The Foundation maintains an endowment that provides additional support and stability of the Foundation. In addition, the Foundation uses prudent investment strategies in order to weather the changing economic and political climate. 3. The Foundation's staff is internally responsible for financial reporting, analysis and day to day accounting functions. The Foundation's accountant ensures timely filings and compliance of all state and federal regulations, including tax filings. 4. The Foundation's Board of Directors provides leadership to the Foundation and ensures operational and fiscal responsibility with an independent audit and finance committee. 5. The Foundation employs individuals with expertise in law, negotiations, financial accounting, foundation leadership, scientific research, business process development, grant management, non-profit development, fundraising, donor relations, and club relations. 6. The Foundation's internal project assessment
team includes volunteer individuals passionate about canine health and who are professionals in veterinary medicine, clinical medicine, and various fields within scientific research. 7. The Foundation’s grant making operations follow the procedures documented in the Foundation's grants operations manual. The processes are periodically reviewed and improved to incorporate best practices in grant making, technological advancements, and growth of the Foundation's capabilities. 8. The Foundation has a unique relationship with the AKC Parent Clubs and breed foundations. Each organization has a designated Health Liaison that works with the Foundation and their club’s Board of Directors to identify breed-specific health concerns, fundraise for canine health research, and sponsor grants of particular interest to that breed or club. 9. The Foundation has invested in technology solutions that provide efficient and accurate processing of grant, donor, and financial information. These include MicroEdge GIFTs grant management system which provides for online submission and review capabilities, Blackbaud’s RaiserEdge for donor management, Blackbaud’s FinancialEdge for financial management, and Convio’s online marketing and content management capabilities. 10. To educate about canine health, the Foundation’s established programs include breeder symposia throughout the country, podcast interviews released bimonthly, scientific conferences, videos of scientific presentations, quarterly newsletters, and online resources.

4. How will we know if we're making progress?

To ensure the AKC Canine Health Foundation is achieving its goals, the Foundation takes actions to monitor the progress of its programs and operations. Evaluation procedures of the Foundation’s performance include: 1. Quantitative measurement of the Foundation research funding. • Number of grants funded per year • Amount of funds distributed per year 2. Evaluate the distribution of funded research projects in the Foundation's grant portfolio. The Foundation's portfolio is analyzed on multiple parameters: • Time period • Portfolio of currently active grants • Portfolio of grants funded in the past three years • Portfolio of grants since 1995 • Disease Area • Distribution across Disease Areas (ex: oncology, neurology, dermatology) • Distribution within a single Disease Area (ex: oncology – osteosarcoma, melanoma, lymphoma) • Research Area •Distribution across type of research (ex: Genetic Research, Clinical Treatment, Diagnostic Tools, Epidemiology) • Research which is clearly applicable to human medicine • Grant Type • Portfolio of OAK grants • Portfolio of ACORN grants • Canine Health Concerns • Comparison to the health concern priorities obtained through the Foundation's health polls and surveys 3. Monitor the progress of the Foundation's funded research project through mandated bi-annual grant reports. These reports are used to: • Compare the progress to the original study design • Identify potential problems or delays in the research • Ensure grant funds are utilized according to the approved budget • Provide non-confidential lay summaries to sponsors of individual projects • Determine if the Foundation must take action for projects not performing to Foundation's expectations. Projects may be cancelled based on conditions as outlined in the grant agreement. 4. Evaluate the results of funded research after a grant is completed. • Number of scientific publications resulting from the grant • Impact factor and number of citations of publications resulting from a grant • Additional grant funding received based on results from a grant • Health advancements utilized in practice for today’s dogs • Ascertained translations to human medicine 5. Evaluate the canine health communication outreach by measuring: • Number of participants in symposia and conferences • Participant evaluations of symposia and conferences • Number of newsletters distributed • Volume of email distribution • Online metrics: • Foundation's website traffic • Multimedia downloads including podcasts and videos 6. Evaluate the financial stability of the Foundation through: • Financial reporting and financial statements • Annual external audit • Budget comparisons and analysis

5. What have and haven't we accomplished so far?

The donors who contribute to the AKC Canine Health Foundation have made significant investments in our organization. They invest time by surveying their breed associations about their health concerns, they invest their money through sponsorship of research, and most importantly, they invest trust in the AKC Canine Health Foundation that their time and money will be used wisely. While both the AKC Canine Health Foundation and the researchers we fund have the desire to solve our health problems, the complexity of many canine diseases makes it impossible to hit a homerun in a single project. Rather, the success or failure of biomedical research is measured by the contribution of a given project to the greater
understanding of the disease under study. One tangible measurement of this contribution is through peer-reviewed publication of study results. Peer-reviewed publications are accessible to all researchers in the field, and each paper becomes the next stepping stone on the path to solving the problem and finding a cure. The AKC Canine Health Foundation rigorously tracks the tangible outcomes of our funded research. We regularly evaluate both the quantity and quality of the publications that result from donor investments. Quantity is easily defined: As of October 2012, the AKC Canine Health Foundation has contributed to 115 peer-reviewed publications in both veterinary journals, such as the Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine, and journals with broad biomedical community readership, such as Science and Nature Genetics. Quality is less easily defined, but can somewhat be measured by how many times the original projects funded by the AKC Canine Health Foundation were cited or "used" by another investigator to make strides in the area of study. As of October of 2012, AKC Canine Health Foundation-sponsored publications have been cited 519 times, independently from the original research group. When self-citing from the original research group is included, our publications have been cited a total of 604 times. Importantly, every year we grow in our contribution to canine health and biomedical research.