Introduction

One year ago, in 2022, ACE developed a strategic plan for the period of 2022–2024. This plan, created collectively by ACE staff under the leadership of the Acting Executive Director and approved by the board of directors, was the result of the hard work and dedication of a severely understaffed team. It represented what was needed then.

Things have changed since last year. We added several talented individuals to our team, including new leadership and board members. Instead of following the set plan, we decided to step back and reassess our changed situation—and not just our own. In the decade since ACE was founded, the animal advocacy movement has expanded and matured, the effective altruism community has evolved, and more research is being done into what animals need.

We talked with animal advocates, peers, critics, and funders and listened to their concerns and ideas about what ACE could stop, start, and continue doing to better help people who want to help animals. We compared those perspectives with the plan and people we had in place. We now have a theory of change, guiding principles, and an updated plan for the next two years. Our journey of growth and learning will continue, but now it is time to test our assumptions and deliver results.
We could not do our best work without our supporters or our critics, and we are grateful for all the solicited and unsolicited feedback we’ve received over the past six months. We are moved and motivated by the good you do to make this world more hospitable.

**ACE’s Guiding Principles**

In our collaboration with each other and with external stakeholders, we use the following principles to guide us in the execution of our theory of change:

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**WE ARE ANTI-SPECIESIST.**

We give all individuals who have the capacity for subjective experiences moral consideration.

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**WE SEEK EVIDENCE.**

We follow a rigorous process and use logical reasoning and empirical evidence to make decisions. When we encounter new information, we update our thinking accordingly.

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**WE WELCOME DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES.**

We include the ideas of people with varying experiences and expertise. We solicit input from others and listen openly, seeking to understand their point of view.
WE DO THE MOST GOOD WE CAN.

We prioritize actions with the greatest potential to help animals.

WE ARE TRANSPARENT.

We are open about our reasoning, decisions, and processes. We share information and hold ourselves accountable.

WE ARE COMPASSIONATE.

We treat people and nonhuman animals with kindness and empathy.

How We Create Change

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<tr>
<td>Find and promote the most effective ways to help animals.</td>
<td>Charity Evaluations</td>
<td>Recommendations: Help donors give to highly impactful charities.</td>
<td>The effective animal advocacy movement is better funded and can get more done.</td>
<td>Animals experience wellbeing.</td>
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<td>Grantmaking</td>
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<td>Reviews: Help animal advocates use highly impactful programs and methods.</td>
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<td>Recommended Charity Fund: Increase available funding for proven high-impact charities.</td>
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<td>Movement Grants: Fund underrepresented programs with high expected impact.</td>
<td>The animal advocacy movement is well informed and acts on evidence.</td>
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<td>Movement Grants: Increase available knowledge &amp; data in the movement on new and underrepresented interventions.</td>
<td>We have a pluralistic, resilient movement with broad support around the globe.</td>
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The Spaces Where We Operate

- We have a global focus because animals suffer everywhere, and we need strong advocacy around the world.
- We exist to serve the animal advocacy community so more people can help more animals lead flourishing lives, and we come to this movement for
inspiration and learning.

- We were born out of effective altruism, and we continue to count on this community for their expertise and generosity.
- So far, we have paid less attention to the circle of people who care about animals but may not consider themselves animal advocates. We will now include them in our strategy because:
  - We want to increase the total pool of funding available for impactful animal advocacy and make funding more sustainable by diversifying sources.
  - We want more people who care about protecting animals to include farmed and wild animals in their moral circle.

**Strategic Goals 2023–2024**

*During these two years, ACE will invest in making it easier for more people to help more animals.*

**Goal 1. Increase the rigor and quality of our work**

- So that: People who want to give to successful animal charities trust our recommendations and give to the most impactful and promising charities.
- So that: Animal advocacy is more data- and research-driven and advocates choose the programs with the greatest potential for animals to experience wellbeing.

**Tactics:**

1. *Increase our expertise and strengthen our evaluation and grantmaking criteria*
2. *Optimize our evaluation processes for efficiency and transparency*
3. *Make it easier and more beneficial for charities to participate in evaluations and apply for grants*
4. *Identify and prioritize research needs and program gaps in the movement*
Goal 2. Increase the money pool for high-impact animal charities and promising programs

- So that: More work can be done to help more animals as much as possible.

**Tactics:**

1. Diversify the revenue streams and target audiences that fund our grantmaking program
2. Engage with (potential) donors strategically, transparently, and efficiently
3. Explore new methods to secure funding for our Movement Grants program, Recommended Charity Fund, and our own operations
4. Make it easier for donors to give to our recommended charities

Goal 3. Interact with a broad audience

- So that: The effective animal advocacy movement receives greater support.
- So that: We have a pluralistic and resilient movement with broad support around the globe.

**Tactics:**

1. Optimize our search engine results and visibility in the spaces that are most influential for our mission
2. Improve our relationship with our current stakeholders in the animal welfare and effective altruism communities
3. Message our programs so our work is accessible to a broad spectrum of donors who want to help animals
4. Communicate our mission and programs to animal advocates in different communities around the world who could benefit from our resources
5. Update our brand and website to be more user-friendly and better
represent our theory of change

Goal 4. Strengthen our sustainability

• So that: The animal advocacy movement can count on ACE to amplify its achievements and capacity.

Tactics:

1. Secure the necessary resources to do our work in changing circumstances
2. Hire, retain, and train highly talented staff and board members with diverse skillsets and perspectives
3. Provide staff with the clarity and tools they need to deliver results
4. Create a work environment that sets everyone up to thrive and feel like they belong

Organizational Objectives 2023

1. MORE PEOPLE WHO WANT TO HELP ANIMALS COME TO ACE.

2. THE QUALITY AND NEED OF OUR WORK ARE OBVIOUS TO CHARITIES AND DONORS.

3. WE UNDERSTAND OUR IMPACT AND HOW WE CAN IMPROVE.

4. WE HAVE THE RESOURCES WE NEED TO EXPAND OUR REACH AND IMPACT.
If you’re interested in learning more about our theory of change, our organizational key results, and our quarterly departmental objectives, key results, and initiatives, please reach out to us at info@animalcharityevaluators.org.