

2019



# Year in Review

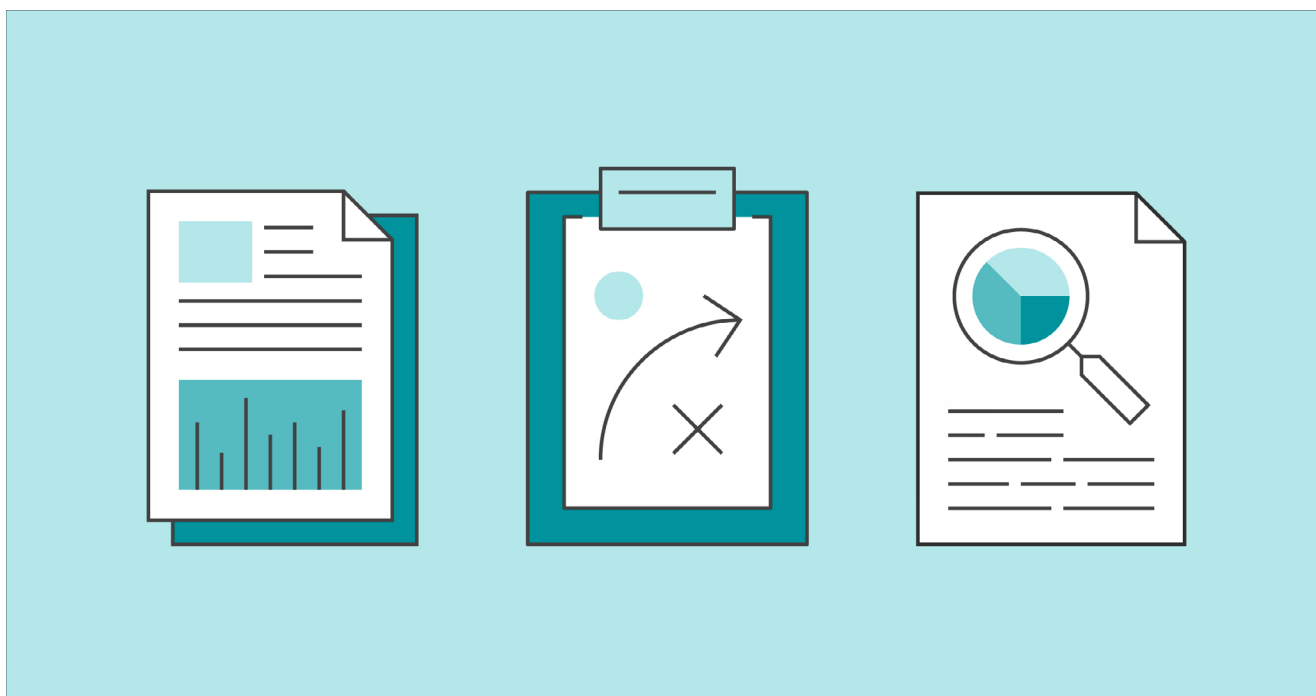
Animal Charity Evaluators



# Helping people help animals

**Animal Charity Evaluators** (ACE) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to finding and promoting the most effective ways to help animals. We assist compassionate volunteers, donors, and professionals in making informed decisions about the potential impact of their contributions. We do this by thoroughly reviewing charities and interventions in order to provide you with the most comprehensive recommendations in the animal advocacy movement. Inspired by the philosophy of effective altruism, we use evidence and reason to determine the most impactful ways to help animals. We believe that you can be substantially more effective by carefully considering where you donate your time and money.

# 01 Introduction



For ACE, 2019 was a year of growth, both in terms of our impact and in terms of our resilience as an organization. We are proud to have influenced a record-setting \$8.9 million to impactful animal charities working around the world to reduce animal suffering. Notably, we were able to disburse our two first rounds of grants from our Effective Animal Advocacy Fund among 62 recipients. Our research team conducted thorough evaluations of 12 charities, resulting in the selection of four Top Charities and three Standout Charities. We presented at more conferences and events than ever before, reaching new audiences and engaging more deeply with our community. We also published several important research pieces that contributed to our movement's understanding of important yet neglected topics, such as effective animal

advocacy in India and Brazil and fish welfare. In order to support our team in carrying out impactful research for years to come, we also invested significantly in developing our own organization's processes and infrastructure. We worked with an organizational development consultant over eight months and hired Jaya Bhumitra as Managing Director. We strengthened our policies and narrowed the focus of our work to play to our strengths.

We hope that you enjoy ACE's 2019 Year in Review. It highlights our achievements for animals, all of which were made possible by your generous support. Thank you for your belief in our work and for your tireless commitment to reducing animal suffering.

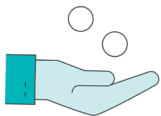
## 02 The Year in Numbers



**\$8.9M**  
donations influenced



**5**  
AARF projects funded



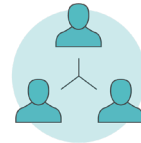
**\$560k**  
RCF grants distributed



**9**  
recommended charities



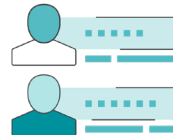
**\$1.8M**  
EAA Fund grants distributed



**66**  
EAA Fund grant recipients



**4.2k**  
email subscribers



**16**  
interns



**212k**  
website visits



**26**  
employees & contractors



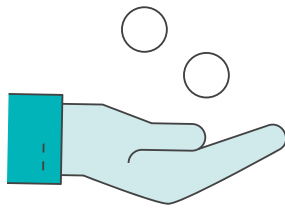
**1.3k**  
Instagram followers



**20**  
volunteers



## 03 Notable Accomplishments



### PHILANTHROPY

#### Gifts influenced

In 2019, ACE helped to influence \$8.9 million in donations to a variety of impactful charities working around the world to reduce animal suffering, including our recommended charities and our Effective Animal Advocacy Fund (EAA Fund) grant recipients. This was a significant increase from the \$6.3 million influenced in 2018, bringing the total amount we've influenced to over \$26 million since we started tracking this metric in 2014. ACE remains committed to doing our part to grow the effective animal advocacy movement.

The Recommended Charity Fund (RCF) is a convenient giving option for anyone who wishes to support ACE's recommended charities through a single donation. Last year, we were excited to participate in a matching campaign organized by the Double Up Drive, which matched over \$234,000 in donations for this Fund. We distributed a total of \$560,292 from the Recommended

Charity Fund in 2019 to our Top and Standout Charities. Grant recipients included Albert Schweitzer Foundation, Anima International, Compassion in World Farming USA, Faunalytics, Federation of Indian Protection Organisations, The Good Food Institute, The Humane League, L214, The Nonhuman Rights Project, Open Cages, ProVeg International, Sinergia Animal, and Sociedade Vegetariana Brasileira. From achieving historic corporate animal welfare commitments and passing lifesaving legislative reforms, to conducting influential research and revolutionizing the way food is produced via innovative technology, our recommended charities continue working to achieve significant change for animals.

# OUR 2019 RECOMMENDED CHARITIES

## Top Charities



## Standout Charities





*“ACE's recommendation of Sociedade Vegetariana Brasileira (SVB) as a Standout Charity was one of the most important acknowledgments we have ever had as an organization throughout our 17-year existence. SVB was already well known in Brazil and had a good reputation in some circles abroad as well, but it was partly due to ACE's recommendation that we started being noticed by more supporters, advisors, and funders across the globe.... Also, we have learned a lot during the evaluation process, and have since then used it as a guide to improve our strategies, governance, policies and methods.”*

**—Guilherme Carvalho, Secretário Executivo, Sociedade Vegetariana Brasileira**

*“ACE has played an instrumental role in helping the animal advocacy movement become increasingly effective year after year. Their annual review of The Humane League gives us the opportunity to evaluate the impact of our interventions and identify opportunities for growth. ACE serves as a vital partner to donors and charities alike, and we are deeply grateful for their tireless work to ensure that our movement spares as many animals from suffering as possible.”*

**—Caroline Mills, Director of Donor Relations, The Humane League**

*“Effective animal advocacy is hard. We strategize, we test, we evaluate—all to prevent future suffering, knowing how much individuals are in pain right now. But we do it because it's worth it, because that's how we currently believe we can save the most animals. We appreciate that ACE encourages us to continue on this path; their acknowledgement of our achievements inspires our staff, volunteers, and donors to 'do good better.' ACE's work is critical in pushing the entire movement to work smarter and kinder.”*

**—Stien van der Ploeg, Head of International Growth, Anima International**



# EFFECTIVE ANIMAL ADVOCACY FUND

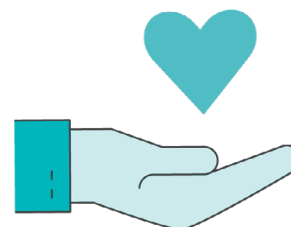
The Effective Animal Advocacy Fund is for anyone who is interested in making the animal advocacy movement more effective. ACE launched the EAA Fund in late 2018 for three main reasons. First, we believe that the movement should continue to fund a wide range of approaches because a broad, pluralistic animal advocacy movement will be more impactful overall than a narrow, monistic animal advocacy movement. Second, we believe that we should continue to support a broad range of interventions given that there is little available evidence supporting the effectiveness of any given one. Third, we believe that building relationships with a larger group of advocates and charities will make our own work more effective by providing us with new information to consider and new groups with whom to collaborate.

In 2019, ACE secured a generous grant that enabled us to hire a Program Officer to manage our growing EAA Fund. We also invested time and effort into improving our application and grant-making process. Thanks to many generous supporters, the EAA Fund raised \$682,441 last year. Again, special appreciation goes to an anonymous donor who provided a matching challenge via ACE

that raised \$306,441, which was then doubled! We are eager to see what our third round of grantees will be able to accomplish for animals with this funding. In the meantime, you can visit our website to learn more about our previous grantees and the progress they have made for animals.

## RESULTS FROM OUR GIVING TUESDAY PROMOTION

Last year, ACE celebrated our most successful Giving Tuesday yet—surpassing the record we set in 2018! With incredible organizing by the EA Giving Tuesday team and generous support from donors, we raised \$148,391 on December 3, 2019. Facebook provided an additional \$43,211 in matching funds, bringing the total to \$191,602 to support ACE, our Funds, and our recommended charities. Thank you to everyone who participated on #GivingTuesday!







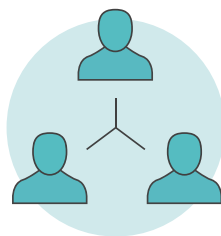
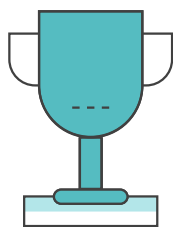
*“As a new nonprofit, support from ACE’s EAA Fund has been critical to Encompass’ growth during our formative first two years. Because of the grant, we were able to bring on our second staffer allowing us to double our efforts. We encourage new and growing animal protection organizations to apply for this transformational opportunity, and we thank all the funders who made—and make—ACE’s EAA Fund possible.”*

**—Aryenish Birdie, Executive Director of Encompass and Effective Animal Advocacy Fund grant recipient**

*“Ending animal suffering is a generational problem, it may take hundreds of years to solve. Given the long timeframes it is very difficult to figure out what we should do today. ACE helped broaden our horizons by shining a light on effective charities working on this problem so we can identify the charities and groups we can support. Thanks to ACE, we both sleep a little better knowing we helped support the movement in some small measure toward solving the problem.”*

**—Chak & Kavita Dantuluri, Effective Animal Advocacy Fund donors**





## RESEARCH

ACE's research team went through a number of transitions in 2019. We welcomed the return of Senior Researcher Greg Boese (now Research Manager) and the additions of EAA Fund Program Officer Marianne van der Werf, Researcher Maria Salazar, and Field Research Associate Cash Callaghan, each of whom brings a great deal of knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm to their work. Under the guidance of then Director of Research Toni Adleberg, they made excellent contributions to ACE's research, charity evaluations, and grant-making in 2019.

### Improvements to our charity evaluation process

Last year, we wrote extensively about our charity evaluation process and the thinking behind our 2019 charity recommendations. We improved the readability and visual appeal of our reviews by providing overall ratings for each of our assessment criteria and increasing the use of charts, tables, and images. We made a departure from

quantitative cost-effectiveness estimates toward a more qualitative approach that allowed us to compare how well a charity is implementing their interventions compared to other charities doing similar work. Finally, to ensure consistency and rigor in our assessment of organizational culture, we made ACE's culture survey mandatory for charities receiving a recommendation.

### New research publications

We published a comprehensive report on farmed fish welfare, an area which we believe is currently highly neglected in the movement. The report served as foundational research to aid other organizations working on this issue, as well as to improve our own understanding for evaluations and grant-making. As part of our efforts to more effectively evaluate the movement internationally, we published reports on the animal advocacy movements in India and Brazil. We also published a range of blog posts on our thinking, including a piece on the importance of welfare biology, an in-depth look at how we evaluate workplace culture, and a three-part roundtable series about remote organizational culture.

## Projects funded through our Animal Advocacy Research Fund

The Animal Advocacy Research Fund (AARF) was created in 2016 to improve our collective understanding of effective animal advocacy through the support of high-quality research. Last year, the AARF funded five novel research projects (Round 7) conducted by academic teams from Faunalytics, Animal Ethics, and Lancaster University, among others. Two previously funded projects were completed and published in 2019: A Survey of Consumer Perceptions of Plant-Based and Clean Meat in the USA, India, and China and Eating to Save the Planet: Evidence from a Randomized Control Trial using Individual-Level Food Purchase Data.



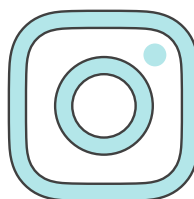
*“The AARF funding has been instrumental to making our experiment happen. Literally without it, there would be no project. We believe that the experiment will make an important contribution to our understanding of moral decision making and meat eating.”*

**— Josh Tasoff, Assistant Professor,  
Claremont Graduate University,  
Co-Author of “Eating to Save the Planet:  
Evidence from a Randomized Controlled  
Trial using Individual-Level Food  
Purchase Data”**

*“Receiving AARF funding has enabled Faunalytics to conduct impactful, large-scale projects on topics of relevance to a large number of advocates. We are very grateful that this fund exists to encourage transparency and quality in advocacy research, and that we were able to be a part of it.”*

**— Jo Anderson, PhD, Research Director,  
Faunalytics**





## COMMUNICATIONS

### Updates to our social media strategy to emphasize visually engaging content

In 2019, we updated our social media strategy to create more engaging social share content, such as videos and graphics. For example, we compiled video updates from our Effective Animal Advocacy Fund grant recipients and published them on ACE's YouTube channel. Additionally, we focused on organically growing our Instagram account following and engagement by sharing posts and stories multiple times per week. We now have over 1,300 followers on Instagram!

We also partnered with GreyDuck.tv to create an animated explainer video on cause prioritization, which has been viewed over 1,800 times across YouTube and Facebook. Shortly after publication, the video was featured in a Fast Company article.

### Successful recommendations release and #GivingTuesday communications initiatives

As in previous years, ACE announced our charity recommendations on the day before Giving Tuesday, so our team had to carefully plan our communications activities to promote two of the biggest events of the year in a cohesive way.

In addition to receiving multiple mentions in various articles about where to donate throughout the giving season, we were thrilled that Vox published a feature article about our charity recommendations on Giving Tuesday. In December, our Executive Director spoke about effective animal advocacy and ACE's work on The Other Animals, a public radio show.

We also partnered with Reddit's r/vegan to host an Ask Me Anything (AMA) with our researchers so they could answer questions related to ACE's charity recommendations and evaluation process. Our 2019 AMA garnered





*Current and former ACE staff and interns at EA Global: San Francisco 2019*

much more engagement than in 2018—we received twice as many questions—and it helped us to reach a broader community that may be less familiar with our work.

## **Increased presence at effective altruism and animal advocacy events**

ACE staff attended and spoke at a number of conferences and events in 2019, including EAG San Francisco, EAGxNordics, CARE conference, and many more.

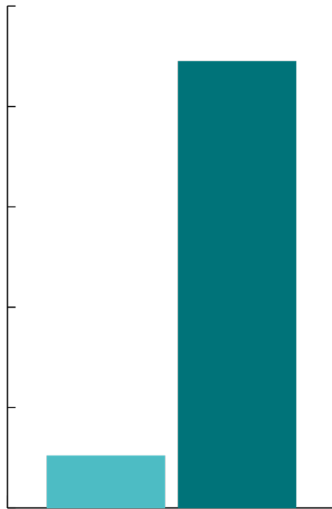






# FINANCIALS

Since 2014, ACE has influenced over \$26 million within the animal advocacy movement, while only spending \$3.1 million on our own programs and operations. Below is a snapshot of our 2019 finances.



ACE operating expenses in 2019 (excluding AARF grants):  
**\$1,037,345**

Money influenced to Recommended Charities and EAA Fund in 2019:  
**\$8.9 Million**

## 2019 revenue by restriction

Unrestricted*	\$719,802
Gifts restricted to Animal Advocacy Research Fund	\$375,715
In-kind gifts	\$72,239
Gifts restricted to EAA Fund program officer salary	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,217,757</b>
* Our unrestricted revenue includes gifts, investment gains, and interest earned.	

Note: The figures in this table are rounded to the nearest dollar.

## 2019 expenses

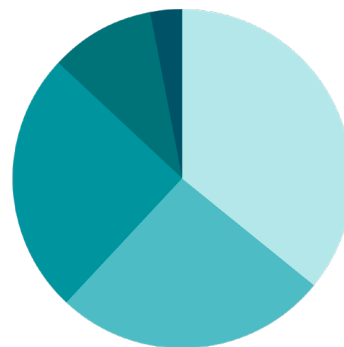
Research	\$384,263
Communications	\$276,382
Operations/Management	\$267,669
Philanthropy*	\$109,031
Animal Advocacy Research Fund† Grants and Expenses	\$28,283
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>\$1,065,628</b>
<b>Net assets‡</b>	<b>\$2,177,318</b>

\* A significant but undeterminable portion of fundraising expenses are allocated to fundraising for our recommended charities and our Effective Animal Advocacy Fund.

† The AARF Program Officer salary and employer taxes are included under "Research."

‡ Our end-of-year net assets include \$722,591 held in our Effective Animal Advocacy Fund, \$356,048 held for AARF grants and program expenses, and \$503 restricted to advertising.

Note: The figures in this table are rounded to the nearest dollar. We did not include here the donations that ACE collected for our recommended charities and EAA Fund, which totaled \$2,293,932.



Research  
Communications  
Operations/management  
Philanthropy  
AARF Grants and Expenses

## **04      2019 Lessons Learned**

At ACE, we realize that we are not perfect in our work. As is the case with any organization, we sometimes make mistakes. In the interest of fully disclosing our past activities and showcasing how our thoughts and research have developed over time, we have identified some things we could have done better in 2019.

### **AARF Round 5 application data shared outside of organization**

While processing applications for Round 5 of the Animal Advocacy Research Fund last year, we inadvertently shared some candidates' application and assessment information with a single individual who represents an organization with which ACE collaborates. This was due to an error made by one of our staff members, and once aware of the issue, we immediately corrected the document sharing permissions. We have notified all applicants whose information was shared and drafted an action plan to reduce the likelihood of similar errors occurring in the future. As part of that plan, we will conduct an organization-wide document permissions audit and have all staff complete training on proper Google Drive usage.

### **Experimental research division**

Beginning in 2017, we launched an experimental research division. We started this division before we had a clear idea of what kinds of questions it would investigate, or what the relationship would be between the experimental research division and the rest of the team. Ultimately we found these questions difficult to navigate, and the result was a prolonged project prioritization and discussion process with few decisions reached. In the meantime, our Experimental Researchers worked on projects that suited their skill sets and interests, but were not necessarily the most impactful. In 2019, we had some staff transitions and reabsorbed the experimental research division into our research department. Our future experimental research will focus on topics that directly impact animal advocates' work and/or that can directly inform our own work.

### **Delayed announcement for EAA Fund grants**

We opened applications for our EAA Fund in December 2018 with the goal of making our first round of grants in January 2019. It is clear in hindsight that this timeline was not realistic. We received many more applications—and much more funding—than we anticipated. It



took our research team longer than expected to review all of the applications and to make our grant decisions. Once decisions were made, it also took longer than expected to draft and publish the grant announcements, as various stakeholders had different ideas about how to best present the information.

## **Competing matching campaigns**

Last year, ACE was very grateful to be able to offer matching campaigns for both our Effective Animal Advocacy Fund (through an individual donor) and our Recommended Charity Fund (through the Double Up Drive). Unfortunately, there was some overlap in the campaigns' dates that caused confusion for many donors, requiring additional staff time and post-donation allocation adjustments. The competition between these two campaigns may have also contributed to the lower than anticipated fundraising total for our EAA Fund. We will try to avoid overlapping matching campaigns in the future, while also improving our messaging to reduce confusion.

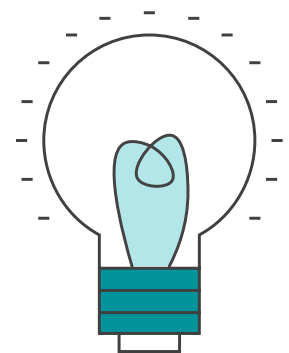
## **Not meeting our operating budget fundraising goal**

While we exceeded our \$7 million goal for donations influenced within the animal advocacy movement in 2019, we did not meet our \$1 million operating budget fundraising goal. (This goal excludes the AARF and in-kind gifts.) Last year, approximately 70%

of ACE's funding came from 17 donors, which included a significant grant from one supporter. Being overly dependent on any one source of funding can be risky for a charity, particularly when unexpected events occur. In order to increase ACE's financial stability and ensure that we secure funding to support our operations and programs in the future, we need to prioritize diversifying our fundraising sources and cultivating our current donors.

## **Inadequate policies around workplace safety**

Over the course of 2019, we came to realize that ACE was lacking sufficiently robust internal policies and management training to create and maintain a safe workplace culture. In response, we drafted and implemented a strong and comprehensive Respect in the Workplace policy, including mandatory training for our full international team. In addition, we are in the process of piloting an internal management training program for all of our managers.



## 05 Looking Ahead

ACE celebrated many accomplishments in 2019. With your continued support, we plan to do even more in 2020.

Carrying forward last year's momentum, we have set an ambitious goal of evaluating 15 charities during this year's evaluation cycle. In particular, we are striving to improve our ability to identify and evaluate charities working in important but neglected regions of the world. In order to give our recommended charities time to plan impactful Giving Tuesday fundraising campaigns, we plan to release our recommendations a full week ahead of Giving Tuesday this year for the first time.

Internally, our team is transitioning to a new operating model and project management system which will allow us to conduct our research more efficiently and collaboratively. We also plan to further strengthen our internal policies and benefits offerings in order to continue supporting and retaining our talented staff.

In light of global events, we've adapted our programs and plans to better support our team, our recommended charities and grantees, and our network of supporters. We look forward to navigating these unprecedented times together in ways that make our community stronger and even more impactful at helping animals.

*To learn more about our 2020 prospective goals, visit [animalcharityevaluators.org/2020goals](https://animalcharityevaluators.org/2020goals)*

**Thank you for working with us to help the greatest number of animals in the most effective ways!**





# Helping people help animals



ANIMAL CHARITY  
EVALUATORS

[animalcharityevaluators.org](https://animalcharityevaluators.org)