

Animal Charity Evaluators
Board of Directors Meeting
Type of Meeting: Standard Meeting
Date: 06 June 2021

In attendance:

Chairperson: Allison Smith
Secretary: Eric Herboso
Treasurer: Kieran Greig
Board Member: Jonas Müller
Board Member: Jeff Sebo
Board Member: Zach Freitas-Groff
Board Member: Sarah Pickering
Board Member: Galina Hale
Executive Director: Leah Edgerton

Quorum established: Yes

1. **Call to order:** AS called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m. EDT

2. **Board Votes:**
 - a. Letter of warning sent to EH via email on 24 April 2021.
 - b. Philosophical Foundations of Our Work was approved on 3 May 2021.
 - c. Sabbatical Policy was approved on 3 May 2021.
 - d. Donation COI Policy and Gift Acceptance Policy was approved on 3 May 2021.
 - e. COI Policy was approved on 19 May 2021.
 - f. Board fundraising overview approved on 31 May 2021.
 - g. Previous minutes were approved via email on 6 June 2021.

3. **Executive Director items**
 - a. Financials
 - i. Q2 financials to be sent via email in July
 - b. Fundraising
 - i. Open Philanthropy grant renewal
 1. \$700k over two years
 - ii. Looking into a Comms-specific EA Funds proposal
 - iii. Guide to Giving and Year in Review printed and mailed to US top donors
 - iv. 2020 Donor Survey Analysis published
 - v. 2020 Giving Metrics report will be published in June
 1. Discussed how to gather giving metrics data moving forward.
 - vi. Planning ACE Movement Grants matching campaign starting mid-June
 1. \$300k match
 - vii. Planning ACE campaign for Q3
 - viii. Planning RCF campaign for Q4

- 1. \$300k match
 - ix. AARF
 - 1. Discussed whether this should be separate from AMG.
 - a. Intended audiences are different.
 - 2. Discussed funding for the next round.
 - 3. Discussed timing of next round in early 2022.
 - x. Also discussed new potential sources of funding.
- c. Strategy
 - i. LE started having strategy advice/input sessions with external stakeholders for the 3-year strategic plan project.
 - 1. Helpful advice from TLYCS, Open Philanthropy, Give Directly.
 - 2. Will discuss with Leads.
- d. Activities
 - i. Charity Evaluations
 - 1. Selected charities to invite!
 - a. Used a more rigorous approach to identifying animal charities outside of our typical radar and then narrowed down the list using a quantitative model
 - b. We weren't satisfied with the low number of charities on our list that have headquarters outside of the US, so researchers will meet again June 1st to discuss adding more international groups to the list
 - 2. Discussed current Sprint schedule
 - ii. ACE Movement Grants
 - 1. Round 5 tentative grantees selected!
 - 2. Public announcement in mid-June during AMG fundraising campaign
 - iii. RCF
 - 1. No updates; next round in July
 - iv. AARF
 - 1. No updates; ongoing follow up with current grantees
- e. External Communications
 - i. LE gave a talk at Altruisme Éfficace France on May 27th
 - ii. Continuing communications audit
- f. HR
 - i. Sabbatical Policy finalized
 - ii. Donation COI/Gift Acceptance Policy finalized
 - iii. Still incorporating suggestions from the board on other COI policies
 - iv. Giving staff 5% salary increase
- g. Staff Updates
 - i. Promotions:
 - 1. Director of People Operations
 - ii. Other Changes:
 - 1. Director of Finance and Impact

- 2. Distribution of responsibilities between Research Co-Directors
- 3. Comms team changes
- iii. Recruitment
 - 1. Communications Manager
 - 2. Copy Editor
- iv. Culture
 - 1. LE spoke with staff about context behind recent changes
 - 2. Next culture survey in August

4. Officer items

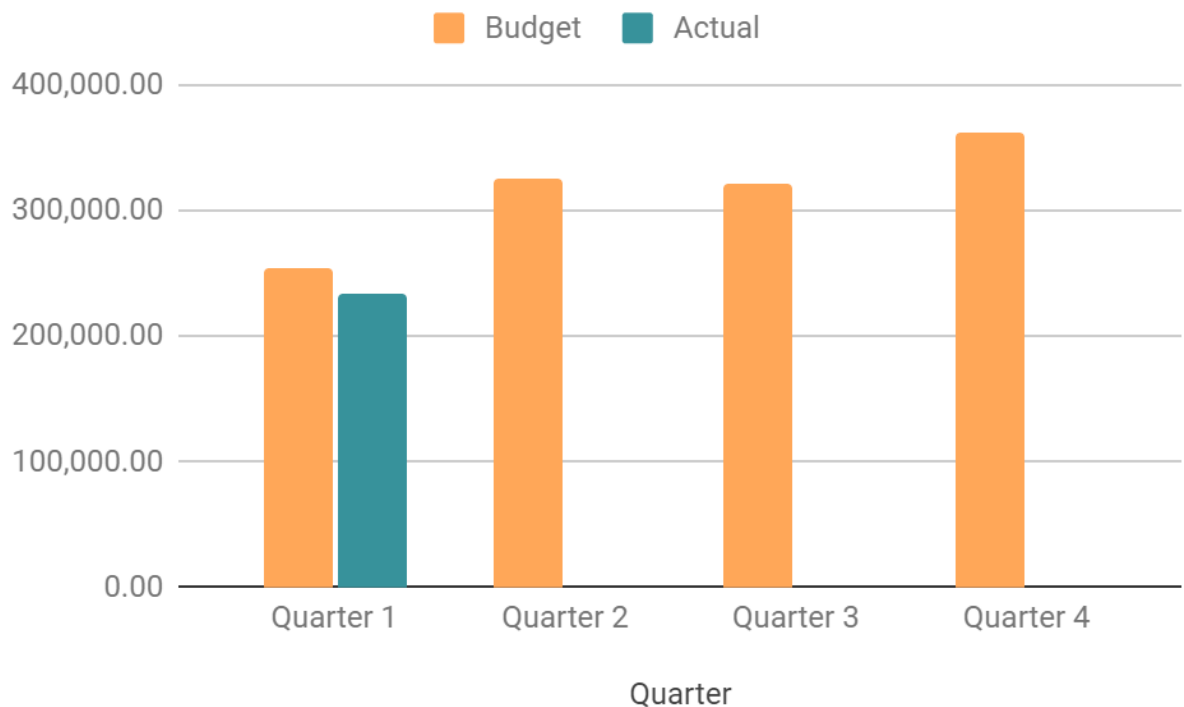
- a. Annual policy training for board members (AS)
 - i. Discussed implementation of an annual policy training for all board members.
 - ii. Focus is on Social Media and other Communications policies
- b. Board communication/engagement expectation review (AS)
 - i. Discussed how board members should respond to emails and what the expectations are with regard to committee membership.
- c. Fundraising survey results sharing (AS)
 - i. To be shared with staff.
- d. Staff topic submission for board meetings. (EH)
 - i. Staff now have an anonymous form that allows them to submit topics to be discussed during board meetings.
- e. Board Meeting Summaries (EH)
 - i. A summary of what the board discussed will be made available in the #req-meeting-notes slack channel after each board meeting. This summary will be subject to board approval alongside the official minutes.
- f. Anonymous Feedback Form (EH)
 - i. Discussed including a separate form for anonymous feedback; decided to integrate this into the staff topic submission form.
- g. 2021 Q1 Financials (KG)

QUARTERLY SUMMARIES—ACCRUAL		
		Q1 2021
Revenue		
	ACE Contributions	\$175,219.87
	Non-ACE Contributions (AARF, Non-ACE restricted programs)	\$0.00
	Supported Charity Contributions (Rec'd charities & Movement Grants)	\$855,698.52
	Other Income (incl. savings account interest)	\$175.74
	Total income	\$1,031,094.13

Expenses		
	ACE expenses (non-AARF)	\$233,344.84
	AARF grants & expenses, Non-ACE restricted programs	\$31,625.07
	Supported Charity Donation fees	\$5,488.14
	Supported Charity Disbursements	\$36,500.00
	Total expenses	\$306,958.05
Investment account gain (loss)		\$9,339.86
Net income/loss		
	ACE's income - loss	-\$48,609.37
	Supported charities & Non-ACE income - loss	\$782,085.31
	Total net income/loss	\$733,475.94
Assets		
	Total Balance at end of month (cash)	\$3,491,821.99
	Receivable	\$41,598.07
Liabilities		
	Carried over liabilities (PPP loan)	\$107,598.00
	Accounts payable	\$263.79
	Allocated for Supported Charities	\$1,755,492.43
	Allocated for AARF & other Non-ACE programs	\$280,954.15
Net assets (ACE)		\$1,389,111.69
	Investment balance	\$473,905.74
	Months of Operating Expenses (total)	12.4
	Months of Operating Expenses (uninvested)	8.2
Property & Equipment assets whose		
		laptops, printer, office chair

total is > \$1,000		
--------------------	--	--

Below are our expenses vs budget for the year so far:



i. Notes:

1. Comms Temps & Contractors (under budget): We overestimated the amount of work needed at this time of the year.
2. Conferences (under budget): We were unsure when in the year we might incur conference expenses (even for virtual ones).
3. Print production (under budget): The budgeted amount was for *Guide to Giving* and *Year in Review*, which was published after these numbers were submitted.
4. Fellows (under budget): Fellows started later than originally planned.
5. AMG & AARF officers (under budget): Some of the invoices were submitted late, which shifted when payments were made.

h. EA Trustees slack channel (EH)

- i. Discussed having some of the board join the EA #board-members slack channel to help other board members in the effective altruism community.

5. Committee/RITW Representative items

- a. Board Recruitment Committee brief update (GH)
 - i. Discussed plan for recruitment.
- b. ED Annual Evaluation brief update (SP)
 - i. The annual ED evaluation was slightly delayed, but is now ongoing.

6. Staff items

- a. Board Member onboarding
 - i. Discussed the process used when new members join the board.
 - 1. We decided on using a spreadsheet rather than dedicated task management software to ensure new board members read and acknowledge all relevant policies and forms.
 - ii. Discussed the process of archiving outdated board content on our intranet. The board secretary will be responsible for ensuring this occurs.
- b. Discussed hiring an organizational consultant to review and improve ACE's organizational structure, operating model, and culture.
 - i. ACE switched operating models a year ago. While the new model helps us take on tasks across competency areas, it doesn't map well with longer term deadlines. ACE continues to measure how the scamster model compares to having a single owner and whether we want shorter deadlines. One significant drawback is that the current model is predicated on having a working product at the end of the shorter period, which ACE does not.
 - ii. Discussed being open to changing the operating model, either at the beginning of next year or sooner.
 - iii. Discussed which consultant might work best to look more deeply into this when it comes to ACE's organizational structure and operating model.
 - iv. Improving ACE's culture might require a different approach. We decided to wait until after the next culture survey to look more deeply into whether a consultant should be used there.
- c. Discussed the balance between social justice and free speech norms; how this relates to our dedication to both effective altruism and representativeness, equity, and inclusion; and what ACE's stance on this balance should be both internally and externally.
 - i. The board spent considerable time discussing the compatibility between free discussion norms and social justice norms and how the board should act to help bridge this gap. It was decided that the board would work with the staff to further clarify how our values and commitments relate to each other.
- d. Discussed the status of ACE's three-year strategic plan.
 - i. We are currently collecting feedback on the process and what the product should look like. Although there have been delays, we feel confident that the pace of work on this is back on track.
- e. Discussed staff culture.
 - i. The board requested an update on staff satisfaction and whether we're doing enough to retain staff.

7. New business

- a. Discussed various strategic planning considerations, including:
 - i. Discussed the philosophy behind evaluating organizations that also do

meta or research work.

1. Questions:
 - a. Is it appropriate to evaluate an organization that does work that is similar to the work that we do?
 - b. Are there incentive problems where we might rank something as less valuable if they do it differently than how we do it?
 - c. What happens if we one day were to determine that a high proportion of recommended orgs were meta orgs? Would this be appropriate, if it hypothetically happened?
 2. Ultimately, we concluded that it *is* appropriate for us to evaluate these organizations.
- ii. Discussed the ratio of US-based charities to within the recommended charity list.
 1. It seems implausible that the best portfolio of charities would include so many US-based charities. Nevertheless, we stand behind our evaluations. It seems like the problem is that we are not finding and evaluating sufficient non-US-based charities.
 - iii. Discussed the difference between Top Charities and Standout Charities.
 1. One common perception is that standout charities include all orgs over a certain threshold of effectiveness, whereas top charities are the relative best charities amongst them. Another common perception is that all recommended charities are the relative best in the categories that are plausibly of the highest impact. Discussed how we might change our messaging to make these distinctions more clear.

8. Closed session

9. Next scheduled meeting: August 8, 2021; 12:00 p.m. EDT

10. Meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m. EDT on 6 June 2021 by AS

Submitted by:

Eric Herboso, Board Secretary

Allison Smith, Board Chair