



2021

YEAR IN REVIEW

Animal Charity Evaluators



Animal Charity Evaluators (ACE) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit registered in the United States with a globally distributed team (currently in five countries) dedicated to effective animal advocacy. ACE's mission is to find and promote the most effective ways to help animals.

01 Letter from ACE Staff

Welcome to ACE's 2021 Year in Review! For ACE, 2021 was a year of resilience, and we are proud of how we evolved and what we managed to achieve. We influenced an estimated \$10.8 million within the animal advocacy movement, and we distributed \$2.4 million in grants from our Recommended Charity Fund—our largest distribution to date! On top of that, we completed our fifth round of Movement Grants, awarding over \$1 million to 35 promising charities and initiatives around the world.

Our research team conducted rigorous evaluations of 13 charities and published recommendations of the organizations we determined to be the most effective based on our criteria. Most charities we recommend work in the high-impact cause areas of farmed animal welfare and wild animal welfare. However, this year we decided to award Top Charity status to a research organization, Faunalytics. We have long recognized the value of having access to up-to-date research to maximize the effectiveness of animal advocacy; we are thrilled to see Faunalytics, a Standout Charity for six years, ascend to our top recommendation category.

Internally at ACE, we sought to improve employees' support and motivation. To retain and reward our talented team, we introduced a generous sabbatical policy. We implemented a four-day workweek option that allows staff to condense their regular weekly hours into four days. We also continued to promote staff connection and wellbeing through paid self-care time and optional team-building games and meditation sessions.

We hope that you enjoy reading ACE's 2021 Year in Review. All of our achievements for animals highlighted in this report were made possible by your generous support. Thank you for continuing to believe in our work and for your dedication to reducing animal suffering.

Sincerely,
ACE Staff

02 The Year in Numbers

\$10,831,405

estimated donations influenced

\$2,458,774

Recommended Charity Fund
grants awarded

\$1,645,898

donated to Recommended
Charity Fund

\$1,090,456

Movement Grants awarded

16

recommended charities

35

Movement Grants recipients

29,800

followers across all
social platforms

131,777

website visitors



03 Recommended Charities

TOP CHARITIES



Wild Animal Initiative

THE HUMANE
LEAGUE 

STANDOUT CHARITIES





When we at Dharma Voices for Animals (DVA) first learned of ACE's recommendation of Standout Charity status, we were very happy, but we didn't realize how impactful it would become. A number of our people have shared how proud they are to work for an organization which has received public praise by ACE. Some of the internal changes recommended by ACE have significantly improved DVA. ACE's direct financial support, as well as encouraging individual donors to support DVA, has opened the door to a major upgrade to our success in saving the lives of countless animals. There can be no doubt that our movement is so much better off with ACE and its evaluation process."

—Bob Isaacson, President and Co-Founder, Dharma Voices for Animals

"ACE's review and recommendation of the Material Innovation Initiative (MII) has been absolutely pivotal for us as a young organization. One of the hardest things to balance in startup mode is long-term strategic planning and pursuing financial stability, and ACE's review and subsequent exposure brought a whole new level of confidence in our ability to plan for the future. This is invaluable. Not to mention, we've had the pleasure of welcoming a whole new network of donors and partners as passionate as we are about removing animals from the supply chain. ACE's presence and diligence in the movement is imperative to achieve our collective mission in reducing animal suffering—the stakes are high, and they hold us all to a high standard of impact. For all of these reasons, we cannot thank ACE enough for their work, and what that has done and will continue to do for MII."

—Victoria Ramm, Director of Development, Material Innovation Initiative

"Being recommended by ACE as a Standout Charity has opened doors with donors of all sizes. Having been evaluated by ACE multiple times now, I've seen their process become increasingly rigorous and take into account important internal metrics about management and labor practices which too often go unscrutinized in the nonprofit world. Our mission isn't just to build the field of cellular agriculture, but instead, to build it with integrity. I am grateful that ACE recognizes the nuances of our work to maximize the positive impact of a technology with the potential to radically disrupt animal agriculture."

—Isha Datar, Executive Director, New Harvest

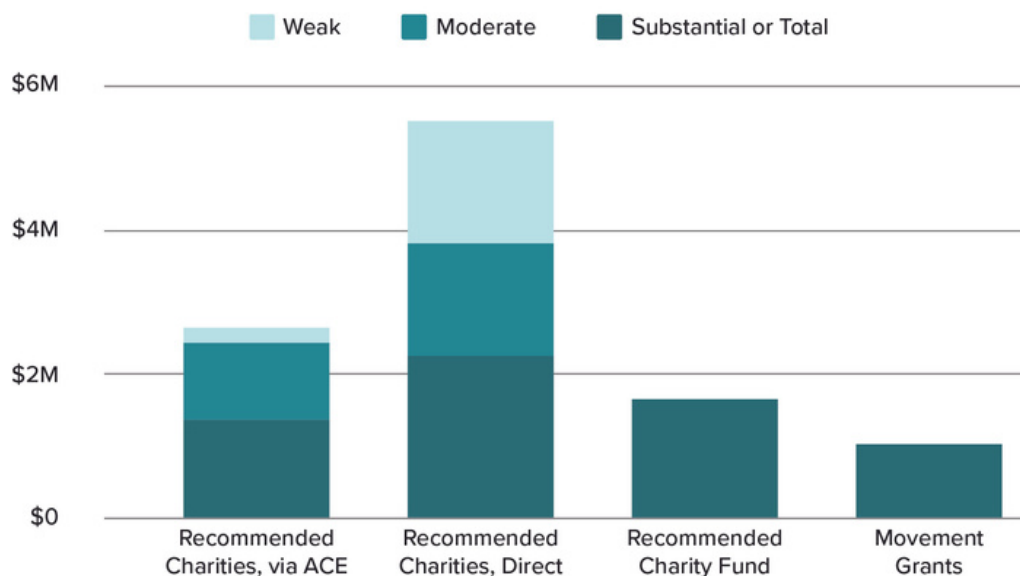
04 Notable Accomplishments

IMPACT

All of the following accomplishments were made possible by generous individuals, organizations, and companies who care about reducing animal suffering. We extend our genuine gratitude to everyone who donated in 2021. It is because of your compassion and philanthropy that ACE can continue our mission to find and promote the most effective ways to help animals. Thank you!

Estimated Donations Influenced

In 2021, animal advocacy supporters from around the world stepped up to donate effectively. ACE helped influence an estimated \$10.8 million in donations within the animal advocacy movement: This includes over \$8 million donated to our recommended charities (both directly and via ACE), \$1.6 million donated to our Recommended Charity Fund, and \$1 million raised for our Movement Grants program.



Since 2014, our estimates for the total donations we've influenced have been our primary quantitative metric to assess our impact. However, the metric is not perfect. While we cannot address all of our concerns with this metric, we are now asking donors to estimate the level of influence ACE had on their large gifts. This will give us more information to compare across years. Of ACE-influenced donations to recommended charities, we estimate we had a substantial influence on 45% of donations, a moderate influence on 32% of donations, and a weak influence on 23% of donations. We consider donations to our Recommended Charity Fund and Movement Grants program to be 100% influenced by ACE. The chart above shows the amounts in each category. More detail is available at animalcharityevaluators.org/financials.



Matching Campaigns

In 2021, ACE was thrilled to be able to offer our own matching opportunities for the Recommended Charity Fund and Movement Grants. We give special thanks to Richard, a dedicated animal advocate and legacy donor whose estate generously provided \$600,000 in matching funds to honor his memory and inspire others to give.

Giving Tuesday

On November 30, 2021, ACE celebrated a successful Giving Tuesday thanks to the fantastic organizing of the EA Giving Tuesday team and the generosity of our supporters. Because of some high-speed clicking by online donors, we secured \$19,949 in matching funds from Facebook. The global day of generosity resulted in \$148,143 to support ACE, our effective Top and Standout Charities, and our Movement Grants recipients.

Crypto Philanthropy

ACE set a new record for cryptocurrency donations in 2021. We received over \$400,000 in crypto donations, including an extremely generous Bitcoin gift. ACE partners with The Giving Block to accept a wide variety of cryptocurrencies.

Double Up Drive

ACE is honored that our Recommended Charity Fund was selected as a beneficiary of the December 2021 Double Up Drive. In partnership with The Life You Can Save, the Double Up Drive offered an incredible \$3 million in matching funds to support 12 effective charities. We raised \$414,582, which was then doubled to \$821,281! Thank you to the organizers of the Double Up Drive!

Read more about our giving options on our website.



To access the link above, open the camera app on your smartphone. Hold your device so that the QR code appears in the viewfinder. Tap the notification that appears to open the link associated with the QR code.



“ACE’s commitment to addressing the large-scale suffering of animals raised for food, and doing so in an effective, efficient, and transparent way, gives me hope for the future. Being a monthly donor to ACE allows me to be part of this hopeful movement, and it has brought a lot of meaning to my life.”

—Hannah Tierney

“Many animals can enjoy and suffer not much less than we humans. As I argued in 1995, their net welfare is likely negative. Apart from avoiding existence-threatening catastrophes, a most important moral imperative is for us the more capable species to help reduce animal suffering, hopefully increasing their net welfare to a positive level, especially to animals we farm. To make our effort more effective, we have to be selective. Thus, the role of ACE is very important.”

—Yew-Kwang NG

"Why ACE? It's pretty simple: The number of systemic animal abuses—and locations where it happens around the world—is too hard for one person to get a handle on. The number of animal charities working to alleviate the problem is also too large and varied for one person to get a handle on. This is why I rely on the evaluations of ACE, to try to get a handle on things. I'm a 30-year vegan, and I know many of the animal charities out there, but the landscape (or seascape?) of organizations is growing and changing all the time. ACE helps in sorting it out."

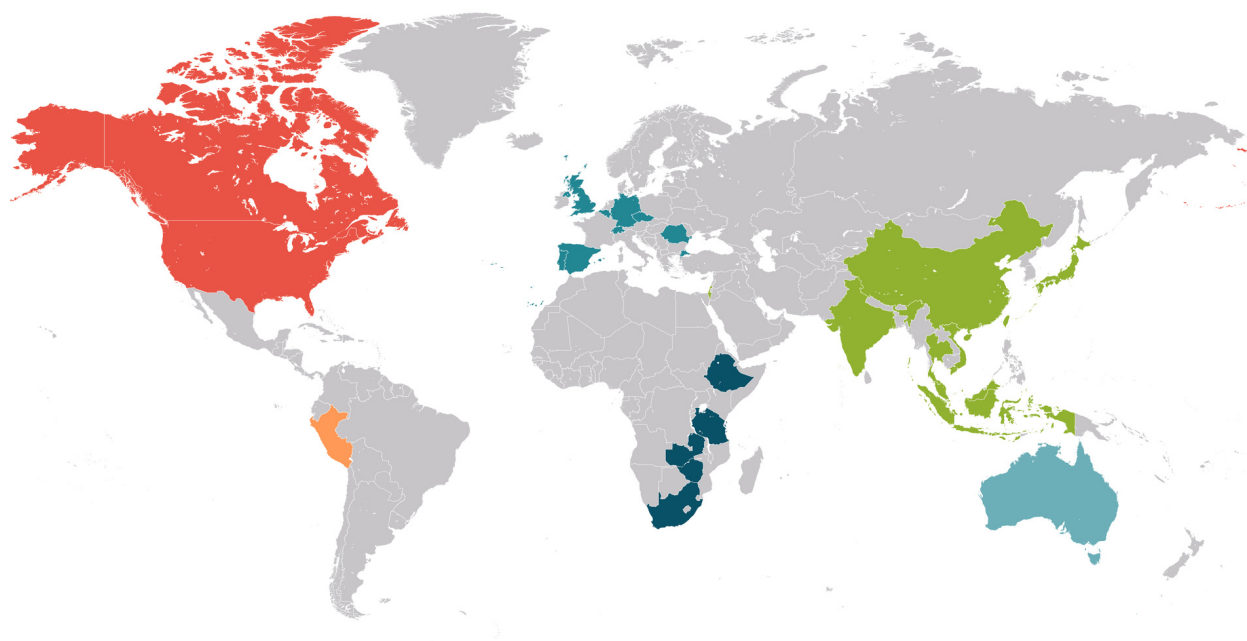
—Roy Wessbecher

Thank you to all of our top donors whose generosity is recognized on our website.

MOVEMENT GRANTS PROGRAM

While our Charity Evaluations program targets and promotes some of the most effective organizations helping animals, our Movement Grants program provides funding to organizations and individuals working in neglected regions or exploring novel approaches to animal advocacy. We believe that a broad, pluralistic, and global animal advocacy movement is more likely to be resilient—and hence more impactful—than a narrow, monistic animal advocacy movement. The Movement Grants program complements our Charity Evaluations program, helping fund impactful projects from around the globe working to reduce animal suffering. Seven of the 16 charities recommended last year through our Charity Evaluations program started out as Movement Grants recipients.

In 2021, thanks to many generous supporters, ACE awarded \$1,090,456 to 35 promising projects. Thank you to everyone who contributed to Movement Grants and got their donations matched! We are eager to see what our sixth round of grantees will accomplish for animals with this funding. Learn more about our 2021 Movement Grants recipients at animalcharityevaluators.org/movement-grants.



146
applicants

35
recipients

27
countries

6
continents



"The grant we received from Movement Grants allowed us to expand our research team by adding a Research Analyst. Not only did this grant increase our overall research capacity, but it also allowed us to shift vital resources towards strategic planning and overall operational sustainability at a critical point in our organization's development. We are incredibly grateful to ACE and their staff for their support!"

—Amy Odene, Co-Founder, Animal Ask

"Thanks to generous funding from Movement Grants, the Institute of Animal Law of Asia (IALA) successfully completed the initial phase of setting up during the pandemic. By receiving this grant, our team was able to develop new projects and new perspectives on animal law in Asian countries and regions, allowing us to more effectively use animal law to reduce animal suffering. [Movement] Grants allowed us to identify our strengths and weaknesses, and this is a valuable contribution to IALA. Through Movement Grant[s], we had the opportunity to highlight our work among many individuals and organizations, and to collaborate with them to achieve better animal protection in Asia."

—Zihao Yu, Executive Director, Institute of Animal Law of Asia

"ACE's Movement Grants are a critical resource for small organizations interested in building their capacity and achieving balanced and sustainable growth. They also provide a potential entry point for these organizations to consider being evaluated by ACE with the goal of becoming a Standout Charity, which may be of interest to many small EAA organizations. Thanks to this grant, in Equalia we have been able to build our capacity and free up leadership positions to focus on management."

—José Ramón Mallén, Communications and Fundraising Manager, Equalia

RESEARCH

Improvements to Our Charity Evaluation Process

We made several improvements to our charity evaluation process last year. We updated our charity selection process to be more comprehensive and rigorous by compiling a master list of charities from around the world and using a quantitative model to select charities based on important factors. We also updated our criteria for evaluating charities to better capture and communicate the reasoning behind our recommendation decisions.

To increase transparency in our assessments and improve readability, we decided to focus on the most relevant criteria for our recommendation decisions: programs, room for more funding, cost effectiveness, and leadership and culture. We also divided each criterion into three main sections to clarify which areas of the review explain our method, our analysis, and our assessment.

Finally, we continued to intensify our verification process and devoted a slightly larger proportion of our time to verifying claims reported by charities. We relied on publicly available information, internal documents, media reports, and independent sources to verify claims, and we followed up with charities for further information or details. For each charity, we verified at least one key result per program.



Improvements to our Movement Grants Process

We took significant steps to improve our grantmaking process during our fifth round of Movement Grants. We redesigned the application and review process to be multi-stage, progressing only the most promising applicants to a more thorough evaluation stage, during which we asked them tailored questions to address any uncertainties with their initial application. Shortening the initial application reduced the burden on applicants and allowed us to spend more time focusing on the most promising proposals. This updated process ultimately led us to make better decisions.

In addition, we are excited to now have seven former Movement Grant recipients become Standout Charities after completing our evaluation process. We hope to see this synergy between our programs carry forward into the future as we continue to help build an effective global animal advocacy movement.

New Research Publications

To increase transparency with our audience about what evidence and considerations inform our beliefs, we developed a procedure for publishing research briefs. Each brief summarizes the evidence for a key question relevant to our charity evaluations and grantmaking decisions. After generating a list of multiple important questions, we published three research briefs exploring the following questions:

- What are the effects of increasing the availability of animal-free foods on animal product consumption?
- How does producing advocacy research affect the animal advocacy movement?
- What is the effect of institutional outreach on the availability of animal-free products?

Read these briefs and others at animalcharityevaluators.org/research-briefs.

ENGAGEMENT

Communications Campaigns to Support Fundraising

To meet our fundraising goals in 2021, we focused on strategic campaigns developed by our communications and philanthropy teams. We used our expertise to carefully curate each campaign's launch, promotion, and momentum. Thanks to our generous donors, we hit all of our targets and fulfilled our Recommended Charity Fund matching challenge in just two weeks—a new record!

Media Relations and New Mediums to Reach Key Audiences

ACE experimented with new mediums to ensure our messaging reached key audiences in 2021. We participated in online and in-person speaking engagements, including the European Effective Altruism Unconference and the University College London Animal Rights Movement Panel. ACE was also mentioned in various articles throughout 2021: Vox published a feature article about our charity recommendations, and the New York Times featured ACE as a trusted source to inform peoples' charitable giving.

Expanded External and Internal Communications

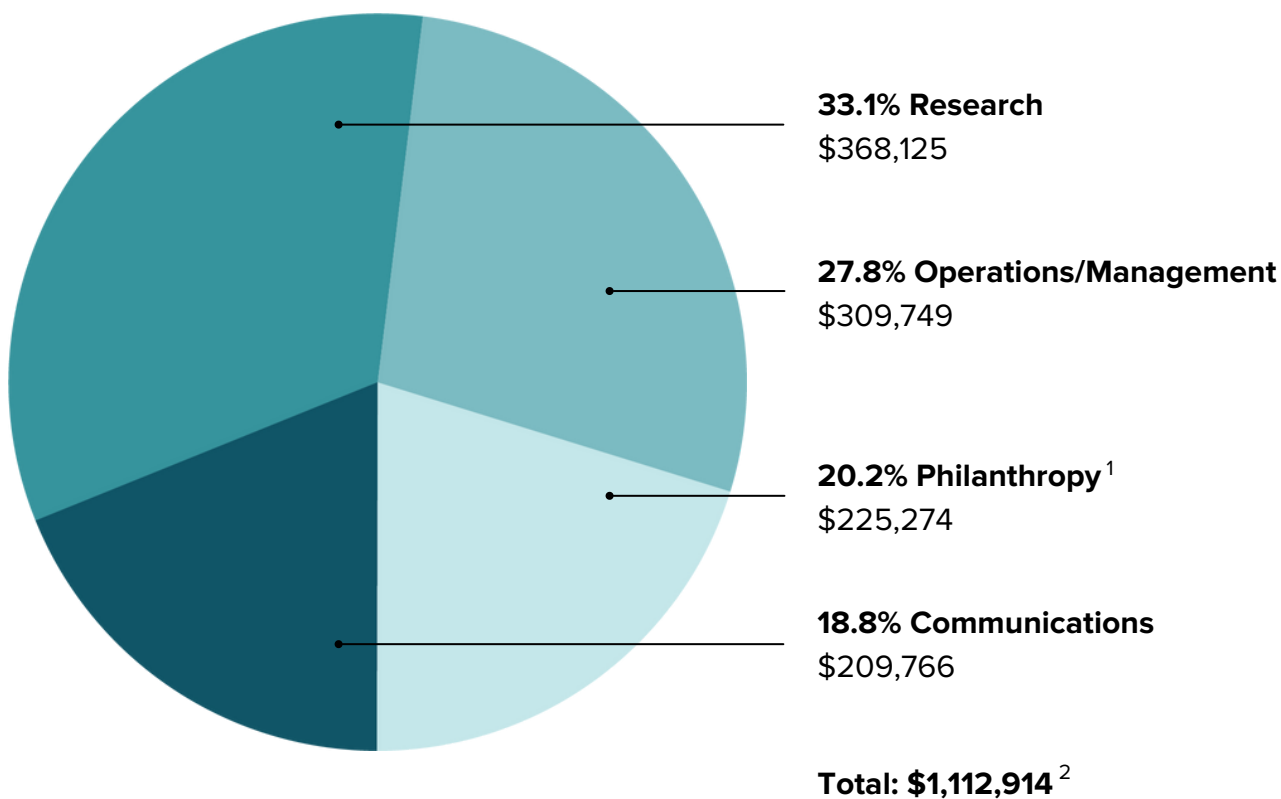
To keep donors and prospective applicants updated on Movement Grants funding rounds and projects, we introduced the Movement Grants Newsletter. We also focused on re-engaging our social media audience by increasing our presence across platforms and experimenting with creative content, such as Instagram reels. Internally, we updated guidelines to improve editorial workflows and started a monthly newsletter for staff.

Vox Future Perfect to Cover More Farmed Animal Issues

With support from a generous restricted donation, ACE's partnership with Vox Media continued in 2021. We collaborated on stories about farmed animal welfare issues for their latest season of the Future Perfect podcast, highlighting the negative impacts of factory farming on nonhuman animals, farmworkers, and the environment. We promoted these stories through our online community and social channels.

FINANCIALS

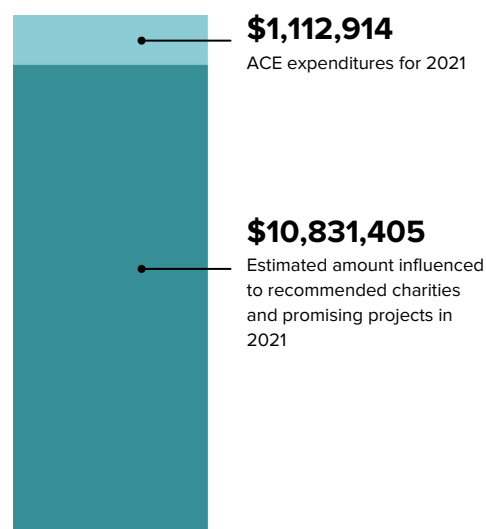
Expenses



Revenue by Restriction

Revenue	
Unrestricted (donations, investment gains, interest)	\$1,458,307
Restricted	
Donation restricted to Movement Grants program staff time	\$39,000
Donation restricted to country prioritization research	\$4,560
Total	\$1,501,867

Expenses vs Donations Influenced



1. A significant but undeterminable portion of fundraising expenses is allocated to fundraising for our recommended charities and our Movement Grants program.

2. Our 2021 expenses were lower than budgeted due to some extended staff vacancies.

05 Looking Ahead

ACE celebrated many accomplishments in 2021. With your continued support, we plan to do even more in 2022. We recently published our new three-year strategic plan, which details clearly defined goals, our vision for the future, and our plans to optimize key programs, drive capital, and empower our talented team. We look forward to achieving several particular goals this year.

Our research team is working to find ways that our Movement Grants and Charity Evaluations programs can better complement each other. For Movement Grants, we plan to connect with promising charities in neglected regions to increase awareness of funding opportunities and encourage more organizations from these areas to apply. To improve our distribution of funding, we will establish a framework for country prioritization. We will also identify groups that can help us widen our call for applications, such as global networks and U.S.-based organizations led by Black, Indigenous, and people of the global majority (BIPGM).

Like every year, ACE aims to publish new charity reviews and recommendations ahead of Giving Tuesday. This year, we plan to reassess our charity recommendation categories, re-evaluation frequency, and evaluation criteria—for the latter, we will focus on updating our Cost-Effectiveness assessment and increasing transparency about our Room For More Funding model. We also plan to re-evaluate and update our decision-making process for charity recommendations. Perhaps the most exciting change this year will be onboarding an Evaluations Program Manager, a new position that will oversee our Charity Evaluations program. This will afford the Director of Research more time to explore opportunities to improve the quality and quantity of ACE's research work.



ACE is updating standard operating procedures to increase the efficiency of workflows and reviewing cross-training of essential programs to improve institutional resilience and succession planning. We are in the process of refining our operating model based on feedback from staff. Improvements will include i) reducing the complexity of project roles and responsibilities, ii) rewriting our internal communications documentation to make it more user-friendly, and iii) holding annual refresher training sessions for all staff. We are further strengthening team building and collaboration by holding monthly all-staff calls and resuming in-person staff retreats. We are also working on expanding our impact assessment work to new areas, which will help us better understand our potential impact and enable us to maximize animal welfare improvements.

Finally, one of ACE's key focuses for 2022 is refreshing and refining our communications. We will create new content to continuously highlight how our work—and your support—is making a difference for animals. We aim to promote ACE's core programs through new channels and reach new audiences, spreading our message to help as many animals as possible.

We hope you enjoyed reading ACE's 2021 Year in Review. Thank you for being part of our incredible community of animal advocates and for believing in our work. Everything that we do is made possible by the generous contributions of our supporters, and we are beyond grateful for the opportunity to do the most good for animals. Here's to another year of helping animals in the most effective ways, together!

To learn more about our 2022—2023 prospective goals, visit our website.



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