

Charity Evaluation Handbook

2024 Version | Updated May 2024



**ANIMAL CHARITY
EVALUATORS**

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FOREWORD

Animal Charity Evaluators is a nonprofit organization dedicated to finding and promoting the most effective ways to help animals. One of the ways we do this is by evaluating animal charities. We share our findings on our website and encourage donors to give to the charities that will use additional donations to provide the highest positive impact (e.g., reduced suffering and/or improved wellbeing) for the greatest number of animals in both the short and long term.

We aim to secure a high level of participation in our evaluation process, and we've designed our process intending to maximize benefits for the charities that participate. As you know, many donors are looking for independent reviews on charitable impact, and ACE is one of the resources they turn to for thorough reviews of animal charities. Having a review of your organization (or a summary review¹ if your organization does not end up being recommended) on our website will strengthen your current and potential donors' trust in your work because it indicates that you are interested in assessing your impact and effectiveness.

We are happy to compensate you for the time spent participating in our evaluation process. We will send participation grants of at least \$2,000 USD (or the equivalent amount in your local currency) to all charities that do not receive a recommendation but that, in our judgment, make a "good faith effort" to work with us toward the publication of a review. Allowing us to publish a summary review of your organization is not a requirement to receive a participation grant.

In the fiscal year spanning April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023, we estimate that ACE's recommendations helped to influence approximately \$7.6 million in funding for our recommended charities. We provide our recommended charities with high-value donors; the average gift made via ACE in the past fiscal year was \$722.²

Our evaluation process runs from May to November and includes the following activities:

- We select charities based on their application responses and invite them to participate in the evaluation process.
- If the charity accepts our invitation:
 - We request written information about the charity's programs, financials, and policies, and we send an engagement survey to staff and volunteers who work five or more hours per week on average.
 - We make a public announcement introducing them as one of the charities being evaluated this year.
 - We work with the charity to develop quantitative estimates of their impact on animals as well as qualitative descriptions of their theory of change.

¹ We no longer publish full reviews for charities that are not recommended. We will instead publish a summary review that will include highlights of each of the evaluation criteria, as well as information about why the charity was not recommended.

² Because some donors give more than once per year, this is less than the average from each donor.

- We notify them of their recommendation status and share a draft of their full review (for charities receiving a recommendation) or summary review (for charities not receiving a recommendation) for approval.
- We publish our reviews, summary reviews, and charity recommendations.
- After publication, we send a survey to charities to solicit feedback on how we can improve the evaluation process.

This handbook details our [evaluation process](#) and [policies and procedures](#). Please read through each section thoroughly. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, please contact our Charity Liaison, Vince Mak, at charity-liaison@animalcharityevaluators.org.

OVERVIEW

KEY DATES

Below is a table of activities and deadlines for the 2024 charity evaluation process. These dates are tentative and subject to change because they are dependent on all charities meeting their deadlines throughout the evaluation process; the Charity Liaison will communicate all final deadlines via email.

Activity	Deadline
<i>Charities accept or decline the invitation</i>	<i>Mid-May</i>
<i>ACE publishes a blog post announcing the charities being evaluated</i>	<i>Late May or early June</i>
<i>Charities submit completed general information request</i>	<i>June (two to three weeks from receipt)</i>
<i>Charities distribute engagement survey links to staff and volunteers who work five or more hours a week on average and ensure all responses are submitted</i>	<i>June (two to three weeks from receipt)</i>
<i>Charities respond to follow-up questions</i>	<i>Throughout June and July</i>
<i>ACE notifies participants of their recommendation status</i>	<i>September</i>
<i>Charities examine charity review drafts for accuracy and give their approval for publication</i>	<i>October</i>
<i>ACE publishes reviews, summary reviews, and charity recommendations</i>	<i>November 12</i>
<i>Charities submit post-evaluation feedback survey</i>	<i>December</i>
<i>ACE sends participation grants to non-recommended charities</i>	<i>Early 2025</i>

EVALUATION PROCESS

INVITATION AND ELIGIBILITY (MAY)

Background

ACE's evaluation committee considers charities who have applied and selects a small group of highly promising charities to invite to participate in our evaluation process.

We are happy to offer participation grants of at least \$2,000 USD to charities that are not recommended but make a “good faith effort” to work with us toward the publication of a review.

What's expected of charities

- Read the invitation and attached documents.
- (Optional) Schedule an introductory call using the appointment scheduling link in the invitation email if you have any questions or would like more information.
- Confirm your organization meets the eligibility requirements outlined in this handbook.
- Accept or decline the invitation by the date specified in the invitation email.
 - Accept the invitation via email by returning signed charity handbook.
 - Decline the invitation via email; please include your reasoning for declining. (See [Reasons for declining invitation.](#))

Eligibility requirements

To maximize the likelihood of your organization receiving a recommendation, please double-check that your organization meets the following eligibility criteria³ before accepting our invitation to participate:

- Annual expenditure of more than \$100,000 USD
- At least three paid full-time equivalents (including full-time, part-time, and contractors)
- Have been an organization for at least three years
- Not working or based in a country that is comprehensively sanctioned by the U.S.⁴
- Ability to gather and send all financial documents required for ACE to distribute funds to your organization, either directly or through the use of a fiscal sponsor

³ ACE uses these criteria as a way to identify that charities have enough room for more funding to receive a recommendation and enough historical data to assess their programs.

⁴ Countries and areas that are [comprehensively sanctioned](#) by the U.S. Government: Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Syria, and the Crimea, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.

If your organization does not meet all of these criteria, we request that you decline our invitation, as it is unlikely that the organization will be selected as a Recommended Charity. That said, we invited your organization because we believe you are doing promising work in animal advocacy.

Announcing charities under evaluation

In early June, ACE plans to publicly announce the charities that have passed the first stage of consideration and accepted their invitation to be evaluated. (We will check in with each charity and get their permission to be listed before making this announcement.) We aim to bring positive attention to participating organizations and the fact that they are interested in assessing their impact and effectiveness. Charities that ACE selects to participate all show evidence of running effective programs and engaging in highly impactful work; even those that are not ultimately recommended are typically among the most effective charities in their space, so we are happy to spotlight their work.

Reasons for declining invitation

For some charities, deciding whether or not to participate in our evaluation process is a difficult choice. Here are some common reasons why some charities may decline to be evaluated:

- They do not meet the eligibility criteria required to participate in the evaluation process.
- They are too busy during Animal Charity Evaluators' evaluation season to participate in the evaluation process.
- They disagree with Animal Charity Evaluators' evaluation criteria, methodology, and/or philosophy.
- They do not currently have a significant need for more funding.⁵
- They prefer to wait until the following year to be evaluated.
- They are in an exploratory or testing phase where there is significant uncertainty about which of their programs they prefer to scale.

In 2024, we expect to recommend about half of the charities under evaluation. This is to keep the bar for recommendation high, lead to more influenced funds for Recommended Charities, avoid overwhelming potential donors, and ensure that our team has the capacity to meaningfully promote all of our Recommended Charities. However, we make every effort to make the evaluation process worthwhile for participating charities, outside of the exposure and financial incentive that comes from being recommended. Previous cohorts of evaluated charities [generally found](#) that participating in the evaluation process was useful, regardless of their final recommendation status.

If you are unsure whether these (or similar) reasons apply to your organization or outweigh the benefits of participating in our evaluation process this year, please schedule a call with us using the appointment scheduling link provided in your invitation. We would be happy to discuss the decision with you further.

⁵Animal Charity Evaluators does not recommend charities that cannot absorb at least the expected funding that comes from being a Recommended Charity (at least \$200,000 USD).

INFORMATION REQUESTS (JUNE – AUGUST)

Background

The first stage of our evaluation process consists of requesting information from each charity that has agreed to participate. As defined below, information will be requested at least three times during this stage. We expect this period of evaluation to be the most demanding for charities.


We ask that you ensure that all information submitted to us is truthful and accurate to the best of your knowledge. Your ability to submit accurate data is vital to the outcome of our evaluations; submitting inaccurate information may result in us discontinuing our evaluation of your organization.

What's expected of charities

- Fill out the general information request by the deadline noted in the email.
- Distribute engagement surveys to staff and volunteers who work five or more hours per week on average, instructing them to submit their responses by the deadline.
- Submit a response to our follow-up questions by their respective deadlines.

General information request

After accepting the invitation and returning the signed handbook, ACE's [Charity Liaison](#) will send a general information request for you to fill out.

 The Charity Liaison will be your main point of contact for all matters related to your evaluation. Please direct all communications to: charity-liaison@animalcharityevaluators.org

Our general information request helps us understand your organization's primary achievements over the past couple of years and the breakdown of your organizational budget by activity. The information we request at this point may include:

- Your organization's key achievements and expenditures on the key achievements over a particular time period
- Revenue and expenditures for 2021–2023 and projected revenue and expenditures for 2024
- Restricted donations
- Current reserves held, reserves policy, and reserves target
- How your organization's operations and programs would adapt between now and 2026 under different funding scenarios
- A list of your organization's human resource policies and processes

- Information about your organization’s governance and structure
- A list of current key staff members, including directors and board members

We will be using Google Workspace (especially Docs and Sheets) during the evaluation process. Please let the Charity Liaison know as soon as possible if you are unable to access these online tools.

If any information in your response is **confidential**, we require you to flag it for us somehow. (We recommend formatting such as ****CONFIDENTIAL: {confidential info}****.) This will ensure that we redact confidential information before publication.

Engagement survey

As part of the evaluation process, we request that you distribute an anonymous engagement survey⁶ on ACE’s behalf to your staff and volunteers who work five or more hours per week on average. This year, we have engagement surveys available in the following languages: English, Spanish, Japanese, Portuguese, Sinhala, Thai, Vietnamese, and Chinese. If your staff or volunteers speak a language that is not on this list, we ask that they use translation software to interpret the survey questions, but they can complete it in the language with which they’re most comfortable. The Charity Liaison will send you links to survey(s) to share. We ask that you distribute the survey and **ensure all responses are submitted by the deadline specified in the email**.

We encourage all of your employees and volunteers to be candid and thorough in their responses to the engagement survey, as this aids us in better understanding your organization from the vantage point of your staff rather than leadership. This can aid us in making our recommendation decisions. To ensure representative responses, we require at least 65% of the staff at your organization to respond to the survey. **This is an eligibility requirement to receive a recommendation from ACE.**

Engagement survey responses are used to produce a summary that identifies themes in respondents’ comments and provides details on the average score and distribution of quantitative questions. Our staff will use this summary to draft each charity’s final review, but **it will not be published** alongside the review or anywhere else on our website.

Follow-up questions

To help us verify your primary accomplishments and clarify any uncertainties about your organization’s work or recent achievements, **we will send you some follow-up questions**. Please don’t take these questions to reflect ACE’s attitude about your organization; follow-up questions are simply part of our regular process for clarifying and verifying claims of all charities under review.

⁶ See the [2023 engagement survey](#) as an example of questions included in previous surveys.

To ensure that we have adequate time to draft all of our reviews, we require that you submit your response to our follow-up questions by the deadline. Please ensure you have shared all relevant information with us by this point, as we cannot include any new information in charity reviews after making recommendation decisions.

Other sources of information

We may consult external experts in some circumstances, during which we will attempt to preserve your anonymity as much as possible. For instance, we may ask for help validating assumptions we make when applying our evaluation criteria without naming your organization or ask for feedback about a specific type of intervention in a particular regional context. In situations where we must deanonymize (e.g., to confirm claims or to verify partnerships) or where it's possible to identify that your organization is the one in question (e.g., to seek feedback about a theory of change), we will first ask for your permission and, if appropriate, ensure that non-disclosure agreements are in place.

Additionally, we may share anonymized, organization-level summaries of engagement survey responses with the organizational consultant [Scarlet Spark](#) to improve our processes for assessing leadership and organizational practices in future evaluations. Scarlet Spark will operate under a confidentiality agreement with ACE and will not share any information with any other party. If you prefer that ACE does not share an anonymized summary of responses with Scarlet Spark, please let the Charity Liaison know as soon as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND REVIEW APPROVAL (SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER)

Background

After our evaluation committee makes recommendation decisions, the Charity Liaison will communicate those decisions to charities. If we select your organization as a Recommended Charity, we will promote it for the duration of your recommendation. Your charity will be featured on our website, in promotional materials, on social media, and in our presentations. We will also fundraise on your behalf, provide you with your donors' contact information every quarter, and distribute donations to you twice per year. We will send you ACE-approved badge graphics to use in your promotional materials, newsletters, websites, or wherever you see fit.

The Charity Liaison will also send you a draft of your review, instructions for requesting corrections, and the next steps. If your organization is not selected for recommendation, we will send you a shorter summary review. You will have an opportunity to flag inaccurate information and/or request that we remove confidential information from your review. If any changes are needed, you should note those changes as suggestions or comments in the document and contact ACE's Charity Liaison.

All charities will have three weeks to correct any factual errors and/or request that we remove confidential information from their review and supplemental documents.

As previously indicated, if you are not happy with our review or summary review of your organization for any reason, you may choose to [withdraw](#) it from publication.

What's expected of charities

- Thoroughly read through your review draft and note if any changes are needed.
- Approve supplemental documents for publication (if applicable).
- Submit your approval for publication (or request to withdraw) to the Charity Liaison **no later than the deadline**. This will be a strict deadline, and any delay in approval could jeopardize the publication of your review.
- Maintain strict confidentiality regarding your recommendation status; do not share this information with anyone before ACE publishes your review and announces this year's charity recommendations.**


Recommendations notification

The Charity Liaison will notify all participating charities of ACE's recommendation decisions. If you receive a recommendation, the Charity Liaison will send you additional information, including graphics and a best practices guide for promoting your recommendation.

Considerations when approving

When you receive the draft of your review or summary review, please bear in mind that *all* of our reviews contain critical content. Our role is not to "sell" any particular organization to the community but rather to provide honest, detailed reviews. Your organization's review will have been written alongside many others, all of which were created using the same process and format. This format may or may not have changed significantly from those used in previous years, but we assure you that it will be consistent with all reviews written during the same year.

If you are not happy with our review or summary review of your organization for any reason, you may choose to [withdraw](#) it from publication.

 Please keep the contents of your review (along with your recommendation status) **confidential** until publication.

Publication

This year, we aim to announce our charity recommendations on **November 12, 2024**. This is the date that we will announce our list of charity recommendations and publish reviews for recommended charities and summary reviews for non-recommended charities.

FEEDBACK AND ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS REQUEST (DECEMBER – JANUARY)

Background

After publishing reviews and recommendations, ACE distributes a post-evaluation feedback survey to all participating charities to gain insight on improvements for future evaluations. We may also request additional information that is required to send participation grants and other funds to charities.

What's expected of charities

- Submit feedback survey responses.
- Submit documents necessary for us to distribute funding (e.g., participation grants).

Post-evaluation feedback survey

Sometime after reviews and summary reviews are published, the Charity Liaison will send you a survey link. We request that you submit your survey responses by the deadline. Please reach out to us if you need an extension for submitting the post-evaluation feedback form.

Additional documents request

If needed, the Charity Liaison will contact you to request additional documents needed to distribute funds—including participation grants—to your organization.

PARTICIPATION GRANTS (JANUARY – FEBRUARY)

Once you've submitted all required documents, ACE will send your charity's participation grant in early 2025 (if applicable).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OUR CONTINUING RELATIONSHIP

We hope that each new evaluation sparks the beginning of a long working relationship with a charity. If we select your organization as a Recommended Charity, we will promote it for the next two years, featuring it on our website, in our promotional materials, on social media, and in


presentations. We will encourage the public to donate to your organization as one of the most effective animal advocacy organizations in the world.

Even if your organization is *not* selected as a Recommended Charity, we may reach out to you to provide feedback on our research, apply for our [Movement Grants](#) program, or be featured in a [blog post](#). Occasionally, we even connect donors with charities that we have evaluated but not recommended if we feel they are an exceptionally good fit. We are always looking for new ways to support a broad range of charities in our work and promote various ways to help animals.

If you'd like, contact our [communications team](#) throughout the year with updates on your accomplishments. We'd love to hear from you! We keep track of all of the information you send us, though we generally only [update](#) our charity reviews during our annual evaluation cycle.

ACE's Recommended Charity Fund

If we select your organization as a Recommended Charity, we will not only direct donors to your organization but also actively fundraise on your behalf. In addition to collecting donations for individual Recommended Charities through our website, we solicit donations to our [Recommended Charity Fund](#), which is distributed among our Recommended Charities. This fund is disbursed in January and July of each year; the amount distributed is based on each Recommended Charity's plans for using future funding and the amount of money in the fund.

 In order to distribute any funding, we require some [background information](#) from your organization.

Tracking ACE-influenced donations

If we select your organization as a Recommended Charity, we request that you help us track donations that are influenced on some level by ACE's recommendation of your organization. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us evaluate our own impact as a nonprofit in the animal advocacy movement. For more details, please review our [donation tracking standard operating procedures](#) for Recommended Charities.

Following up on your organization's room for more funding

Twice a year, we follow up with our Recommended Charities about their room for more funding. We will ask you for your best estimate of how much funding you have raised since our most recent check-in. We are only interested in your total revenue; there is no need for this update to distinguish ACE-influenced donations from other donations. If, based on your fundraising success, we're concerned that your organization may have limited room for additional funding prior to our next recommendation update, we may reach out to discuss your current plans for growth.

Review and recommendation updates

We generally do not update our charity reviews or change our recommendations outside of our annual evaluation process. We do, however, reserve the right to remove parts of a review, archive a review, and/or rescind a recommendation in the event that (i) a major change occurs at one of the charities we've evaluated, or (ii) we discover highly relevant new information. We will make every effort to contact the charity in question to verify the relevant facts and notify them of our decision before making any such change.

Schedule of subsequent reviews

ACE's charity recommendations last for two years, after which you will need to apply again to be re-evaluated.

If we evaluate your organization but do not select it as a Recommended Charity in 2024, we may invite you to apply again in the future. Please let us know about any major changes at your organization that you think may contribute to the need for an update.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Note: A complete description of [Animal Charity Evaluators' policies](#) is available on our website. Here, we describe aspects of our policies and procedures that are relevant to our evaluation process.

Participation in the evaluation process

We're always glad to hear that a charity has chosen to participate in our evaluation process. Please know that we will make every effort to evaluate your organization fairly and in line with our policies and procedures. To ensure consistency across reviews, we evaluate every charity according to the same criteria. Each criterion is thoroughly researched and supported by evidence and reason. Prior to publication, we solicit feedback from other parties, including our Executive Director, board members, and you—the charity under evaluation. We understand that *you* are the expert on your own organization, and we value your input because it helps us draft a review that accurately reflects your work.

Declining evaluation

If you decline to participate in our evaluation process, we make a note that your organization declined to be evaluated. Because of our commitment to transparency, we would like to disclose the reasons why the organization has declined to be evaluated. Some reasons why charities decline are listed earlier in this handbook. (See [Reasons for declining invitation](#).)

If you do not respond to our invitation to be evaluated, we will simply note that your organization “did not respond to our invitation.”

Conflicts of interest

We maintain a strict conflict of interest policy for our charity evaluation committee, which is detailed on our [website](#). Serious conflicts of interest (e.g., holding a current paid position with an organization under evaluation) disqualify ACE employees or board members from participating in any aspect of the evaluation of a particular organization. Minor conflicts of interest (e.g., volunteering, most donation histories) are publicly acknowledged, though in general, we expect these not to interfere with our standard evaluation procedures.

We also have a policy in place to prevent conflicts of interest that may arise from donations. Should ACE receive a donation from an individual strongly tied to a recommended charity, the donation will be returned and said individual will be directed to the section of our [website](#) that addresses this issue. ACE will not apply for grants from organizations that could be considered for future recommendations.

If you believe that your organization has a conflict of interest and do not see it reflected on our [disclosures](#) page, please [contact us](#).

Sensitive and confidential information

During the evaluation process, you may wish to share information with us that is not yet public and/or that you wish to remain confidential. There will be many opportunities for you to share such information and notify us of its confidential nature. We will never disclose information that we understand to be private, either in our reviews or in our conversations with donors. We will send you our review of your organization prior to publication so that you may flag any information you would like us to omit from the published version.

Our commitment to honoring confidentiality extends to most circumstances surrounding your participation in our evaluation process. For example, if at the start of this process, you choose not to participate for reasons that you prefer not to publicize, we will not disclose those reasons to third parties.

Approval of publication

We will not publish a review of your organization without your permission. By approving a review for publication, you agree to its use on our website and in our promotional materials. You also agree that we may share information that appears in the review in our conversations with donors, as well as in other materials.

If you wish, you may quote parts of the review or link to the review on your website or in your promotional materials. You may also publish a response to the review via your own materials.

Withdrawal from publication

All organizations are free to withdraw from our evaluation process at any time, for any reason. If your organization chooses to withdraw in a given year, we will not publish any information we acquired about your organization during that year's evaluation process.⁷ This includes the reason(s) for your withdrawal, should you wish for them to remain confidential.

We will, however, note the approximate stage of the evaluation process at which your organization withdrew from participation. For example, one of the following notes might appear on our website next to the names of withdrawn charities:

- Withdrew from evaluation before we began drafting our review
- Withdrew from evaluation before we completed our review
- Withdrew from evaluation after viewing a draft of our review

If you would like us to publish a reason for your withdrawal from publication, you may select one or more [reasons for declining invitation](#), or we can state that you believe our review “misrepresented and/or misvalued” your organization.

Mutual non-disparagement agreement

In choosing to participate in our evaluation process, you agree to enter a mutual non-disparagement agreement with Animal Charity Evaluators, even in the case of your withdrawal. We promise not to make public evaluative claims about your organization (outside of the scope of the review or summary review we publish with your permission), and we ask that you make a commitment not to make negative evaluative claims about our evaluation of your organization. This agreement is designed to protect our organization; because we maintain the confidentiality of all information gathered during withdrawn evaluations, we would not be able to respond if a charity made disparaging statements about us—even if those statements were false.

Your agreement to not disparage Animal Charity Evaluators means that you will not make any negative evaluative statements (written or verbal) about our evaluation of your organization. Examples of negative statements include (but are not limited to):

- Claims that our (published or unpublished) review or summary review of your organization was poorly conducted or poorly written
- Claims that our (published or unpublished) review or summary review of your organization would cause harm to the animal advocacy movement
- Claims that we lack expertise or are otherwise ill-equipped to do our jobs

While we ask that you do not make negative *evaluative* statements about our review or summary review of your organization, you are welcome to make *factual* statements about our evaluation

⁷ In early June, we plan to publish a blog post announcing the list of charities undergoing evaluation. If you withdraw from the evaluation process or decline to publish your review or summary review, your charity's name will remain on that blog post.

process. For instance, you may state that you chose to withdraw from the evaluation process because you disagreed with our review or summary review or because you believe we misunderstood your work.

This agreement does not prevent you from making evaluative statements about *other areas* of our work, as long as those statements do not relate to our review or summary review of your organization or our charity evaluation process. For example, you would still be permitted to critique a piece of research that we publish or a grantmaking decision that we make through Movement Grants.

Donor privacy policy

ACE will distribute donations and share donor contact information with our recommended charities so long as they maintain strict adherence to our [donor privacy policy](#). **Charities are required not to share, sell, or rent a donor's information with any other entities without first obtaining the donor's permission.**

Participation grants

We administer participation grants to all organizations that make a “good faith effort” toward the publication of a review but were not recommended. Allowing us to publish a summary review of your organization is not a requirement for receiving a participation grant. Charities that successfully complete our evaluation process will receive a participation grant of at least \$2,000 USD (or the equivalent amount in your local currency).

Participation grants are administered by our Finance Director after the release of our charity reviews—sometime around early 2025. Organizations may choose to have their grant sent by check or bank transfer. For a check, we will need to know (i) who to make the check out to and (ii) your organization's mailing address. For a bank transfer to organizations in the U.S., we will need to know the routing number, account number, and account type of your organization's bank account. We will also need to know the name of the account, the organization's physical address, and a contact name and email address.

In order for ACE to distribute participation grants (or any funding) to your organization, we will need some [background information](#).

Grantee background information

For ACE to distribute any funding (including participation grants) to your organization, we require the following information:

- The organization's name, address, a contact name, and email address
- Board and leadership names and titles
- Most recent year's financial statements or tax return (this is needed each calendar year that ACE provides funding)

- A spreadsheet with your organization’s current operating budget, including a breakdown of expenses and salaries by program (this is needed each calendar year that ACE provides funding)
- For organizations in the U.S.:
 - a copy of your bylaws, articles of incorporation, (if registered charity) tax exemption letter, (if applicable) Internal Revenue Code (IRC) section, and IRS Form W-9
- For non-U.S. charities:
 - a document showing you are registered as a charity in your region
- For other non-U.S. organizations:
 - a document showing you are registered as an organization in your country (e.g., could be similar to the articles of incorporation)

ACE will reach out to your organization via email to remind you to send this information and instruct you on how to submit it. We are only providing this list in advance should your organization want to start preparing this information or have any questions/concerns regarding this requirement. **If you do not provide this required information, ACE will be unable to distribute funding to your organization.**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Where will ACE’s review or summary review of our organization be published?

All of our reviews and summary reviews are published on our website. We also promote our recommended charities on social media, in our newsletters, and in other promotional material.

2. How long does the evaluation process take? What deadlines will you have for our organization?

The evaluation process lasts from May through November. Most of that time, however, our team is doing the work—not yours! We require three basic stages of participation from the charities we evaluate. First, we ask you to send us some information and distribute an engagement survey to your staff and volunteers who work five or more hours per week on average. We will also ask you to answer some follow-up questions. You will have up to three weeks to request corrections or redactions and approve your review draft. Finally, around the time of [publication](#) (November 12, 2024), we will ask you to implement donation tracking and send us your contact details so that we can distribute your participation grant.

According to [recent surveys](#) of charities we have previously evaluated, participating in our evaluation process takes a median of **100 hours**. This is typically higher for larger organizations. If you find that your organization is spending more time than anticipated, please let us know so we can discuss ways to reduce your time commitment.

3. How does being evaluated help our work? Will we be compensated for our time?

Many donors are looking for independent reviews on charitable impact, and ACE is one of the resources they turn to for thorough reviews of animal charities. Having a review of your organization on our website will strengthen your current and potential donors' trust in your work because it indicates that you are interested in assessing your impact and effectiveness.

We are happy to compensate you for the time spent participating in our evaluation process. We will send participation grants of at least \$2,000 USD (or the equivalent amount in your local currency) to all charities that were not recommended but, in our judgment, make a "good faith effort" to work with us toward the publication of a review. Allowing us to publish a review of your organization is not a requirement to receive a participation grant.

4. My organization is very busy at this time of year. Can a certain aspect of the evaluation process be delayed a few weeks? Can it be delayed until spring?

We will make every effort to accommodate your organization's schedule, but there are certain deadlines that we are unable to move. We intend to publish all reviews on November 12, and they must be completed well in advance so that our Communications team has time to format and publish them. If you'd like to request a deadline extension that would not interfere with our publication date, please email our [Charity Liaison](#).

5. Can my organization be evaluated next year instead of this year?

You will need to apply again next year to be considered.

6. Can my organization be evaluated both this year and next year?

Recommended Charities retain their recommendation status for two years. We generally encourage evaluated charities that are not recommended to wait before reapplying. As more time passes, there will be a greater chance of a different result: we can see how changes in your organization's strategy/tactics play out; the evidence base in the movement may have changed; and our methods will continue to evolve.

7. Will Animal Charity Evaluators publish sensitive or confidential information about my organization?

We will never disclose any information about your organization without your permission. You will have an [opportunity](#) to approve our review or summary review of your organization before we publish it.

8. Can my organization withdraw from evaluation at any time?

Yes. The entire evaluation process is optional, and your organization may [withdraw](#) at any time. In line with our commitment to maintaining transparency with our donors, we list the

status of all organizations we work with on our website. If your organization withdraws from the evaluation process, we may list it on our website with the note: “withdrew from the evaluation process.” We may also list the approximate stage of the process that you withdrew, and since we will announce the list of charities under evaluation in early June, your charity name will remain on that announcement.

9. If we are selected as a Recommended Charity, how long does that status last?

Recommended Charity status lasts for two years. We reserve the right to revoke that status in the event that we uncover significant new information about a Recommended Charity.

10. Can my organization decline to be listed on Animal Charity Evaluators’ website?

While charities [can decline](#) to be listed on our website, we will by default list all charities that have participated in the evaluation process on our "list of charities considered in 2024" archive page, along with information about whether the organization was evaluated, declined or withdrew from the evaluation process, or did not respond to our invitation. We will also include your reasons for declining. Publishing this information helps us maintain transparency about our process, and we feel it is immensely helpful for our donors. Of course, we respect charities' requests, so please contact the [Charity Liaison](#) if you do not want your organization to be listed on the website or on the blog post we plan to publish announcing charities that are under evaluation.



Animal Charity Evaluators
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I have read the contents of ACE’s Charity Evaluation Handbook in its entirety and, on behalf of my organization,

_____, I agree to participate in ACE’s 2024 evaluation process.

Signature

Date

If your organization chooses to participate in Animal Charity Evaluators’ 2024 evaluation process, please sign and return this form as soon as possible to our Charity Liaison at: charity-liaison@animalcharityevaluators.org.

If you’d like a translated version of the engagement survey (Spanish, Japanese, Portuguese, Sinhala, Thai, Vietnamese, or Chinese) for some or all of your staff and/or volunteers who work five or more hours per week on average, please let the Charity Liaison know as soon as possible.