



2026 ASPCA® Grants for Shelters: Strengthening Shelter Essentials

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals® (ASPCA®) is offering Strengthening Shelter Essentials grants ranging from **\$25,000 - \$100,000** to support evidence-based operational strategies and programs that improve outcomes for animals and communities.

Eligible funding options include, but are not limited to, projects or programs focused on strengthening:

- [Return to Owner \(RTO\)](#) strategies (e.g., microchip clinics and registration support, lost and found systems, field RTO efforts, piloting reduced or waived RTO fees)
- [Adoptions](#) (e.g., conversation-based adoptions, customer service training, simplified adoption processes)
- Adoption Promotion (e.g., adoption ambassadors, foster to adopt, fee-waived or low-fee adoption models, targeted marketing)
- [“Less is More” Operational Optimization](#) (e.g., reducing the number of animals on the adoption floor, streamlining animal flow, prioritizing fast-track outcomes)
- Foster Expansion (e.g., foster onboarding automation, foster support and retention strategies)
- Staff and Volunteer Training (e.g., training on open adoption practices, field services training on RTO, customer-first communication training)

All eligible, interested organizations are invited to submit a funding application for consideration with the following information:

Application Questions

Organization Information:

- Organization Name
- Street (Mailing Address)
- City
- State
- Zip Code
- Website
- Federal Tax ID/Employer Identification Number (EIN)

Contact Information:

- Primary Contact Name
 - Title
 - Email
 - Phone #
- Signatory Name (*person authorized to sign a grant agreement*)
 - Title
 - Email



- Phone #

Is your organization a physical facility housing animals available for adoption with regular/set hours open to the public for adoption?

Is your organization a nonprofit, governmental entity, or other?

- **Nonprofit Animal shelter with a government contract** (defined as a private/nonprofit agency with a physical facility and a contract for animal control and/or housing services)
- **Nonprofit Animal shelter without a government contract** (defined as a private/nonprofit agency with a physical facility)
- **Nonprofit Friends of Group** applying on behalf of a government animal shelter
- **Government Animal Shelter** (defined as an entity operated by a city or county providing animal control or housing services)
- **Other**
 - If Other, what type of organization?

For nonprofit organizations:

- Is your IRS tax exempt status (501c(3), etc.) current?
 - Yes
 - No
- Are you in good standing with the Secretary of State in the state where you are incorporated?

This means that you meet all state-imposed requirements, which may include: filing reports/forms, paying required fees, appointing a registered agent, etc.

If you aren't sure, go to your state's Secretary of State's website (or do an online search for: your State, "secretary of state," "business search") and look up your organization.

- Yes
 - No
- Do you have 4 or more Board Members, and are the majority of your Board independent?

"Independent" means that fewer than half of your Board members can be paid employees and/or family members or close relatives. Note: Applicants who are incorporated in the state of New Hampshire are subject to compliance with N.H. Rev. Stat. § 292:6- a. If you are incorporated in New Hampshire and answer "yes" to this question, you are asserting that you meet the State's minimum board requirements or are exempt from them based on your status as a private foundation or receipt of an express waiver from the Director of Charitable Trusts.

- Yes
 - No
- Do either your board chair or treasurer receive compensation from the organization?



- Yes
 - No
- Is your charitable registration current/active in the state of your primary location?
 - Yes
 - No

Required documents:

- For non-profits:
 - current fiscal year budget
 - most recently filed 990
 - current Board List
 - prior year balance sheet or financial statement
 - board chair bio
 - board treasurer bio
 - executive director bio
- For government animal services:
 - signed Form W9

Do you report data to Shelter Animals Count?

At the time of application, applicants must either:

- *Be actively reporting data to SAC, or*
- *Have initiated registration with SAC and are in the process of reporting 2025 and 2026 intake and outcome data*

By contributing to SAC, organizations help build a reliable national dataset. Contributors to SAC also receive a wealth of information on national trends that may affect their organization.

Register with SAC here: <https://data.shelteranimalscount.org/login>

Note: Applicants selected for funding will be required to opt into a 2026 ASPCA shelter grants [SAC coalition](#).

- Yes
- No

Animal Shelter Data:

- 2025 total feline intake
- 2025 total canine intake
- 2025 total equine intake
- 2026 Jan – May feline intake
- 2026 Jan – May canine intake
- 2026 Jan – May equine intake

How much grant funding are you requesting?

Organizations may request between \$25,000 and \$100,000 in grant support, and should match the amount on the attached Budget Template.



Attach your grant funding budget

Please use this [budget template](#), and within the template include a description of how each major line item supports your proposal.

Proposal Title

What is the specific problem you are trying to solve with this proposal, and (if known) what is driving that problem?

Describe how the grant funding would address the needs/challenges of your organization and/or community, including the specific activities to be implemented to address those challenges/needs.

If your proposal includes a permanent staff position, how you will sustain it beyond the grant term?

How would you describe your organization's current ability to implement "strengthening shelter essentials" programming, as described in this RFP, with existing resources and capacity?

- Not at all able
- Slightly able
- Somewhat able
- Very able

What past efforts have you made to address the challenge you're seeking to address with this grant application? What worked, and what didn't?

Describe the information and/or measures you will use to know if the activities outlined in your proposal achieve the results you expect.

What new knowledge, training, or operational capacity will your staff/volunteers gain from this project?

Please provide an expected timeline for the proposed upgrade, program, or project.

What are your organizational priorities for the next 3-5 years?

Do you anticipate needing to sustain this project beyond the grant period? If so, please describe how you will do so.

What past efforts have you made to address the challenge you're seeking to address with this grant application? What worked, and what didn't?

How would you define the area(s) you serve? Select all that apply.

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

List all the counties, or county equivalents (e.g., borough or parish), that your organization serves.



Are there specific counties focused on in this proposal? If so, please specify those.

Big Picture Questions

What formal and informal partnerships does your organization maintain with other organizations (including within and beyond animal sheltering/rescue and animal welfare) in your community? How do these partnerships influence decision-making, resource-sharing, or collective problem-solving?

What programs, services, or capabilities does your organization currently share or coordinate with the broader community or partner organizations?

From your perspective, what are the most significant challenges currently facing animal shelters?

If your organizational budget were increased by 50%, what long-term changes or community-wide improvements would you prioritize? How would additional capacity enable you to influence or strengthen the broader animal welfare ecosystem in your community?

Anything else you'd like to share

By submitting an application for an ASPCA grant, you agree to allow the ASPCA to utilize the information submitted on such application in any way it deems appropriate to support its mission to prevent cruelty to animals, including fundraising. Such uses may include, but are not limited to, reproducing such information in print or on the ASPCA website and/ or allowing third parties to access such information. In addition, by submitting this application, you hereby certify that the requesting organization is aware of and endorses this request and the information herein and you are authorized to submit this application on behalf of the requesting organization.

Acknowledgment of Submission of Application to ASPCA: check box

If your proposal is approved, the following data and reporting requirements will apply:

- Grantees will be required to:
 - opt into a 2026 ASPCA shelter grants SAC coalition
 - submit 2025 and 2026 YTD intake and outcome data within three months of grant approval date

Learn more about SAC Coalitions: <https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/coalitions/>

- At the time of the grant agreement, the ASPCA will provide a universal reporting template and reporting frameworks that align with the relevant sections of the [Association of Shelter Veterinarians \(ASV\) Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters checklist](#) for impact data requirements supported by the grants.

These reporting requirements are designed not only to document baseline (pre-grant) conditions and grant-funded improvements to shelter animals' quality of life, but they will also support a broader understanding of cumulative impacts across communities served



by ASPCA grantees. This includes impacts on shelters and rescues, pet-owning households, and community cats.

- Reporting requirements and frequency will include the following:
 - Baseline data submission at the time of grant agreement, including:
 - Calendar year 2025 summary data
 - Calendar year 2026 data from January through the month of the grant agreement or project kick-off
 - Interim reporting at six months into the grant-funded project
 - Final reporting at the conclusion of the grant period