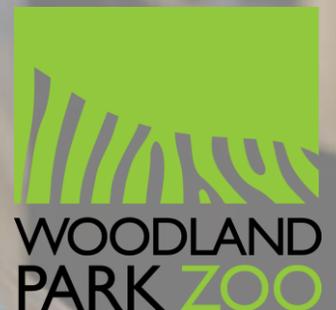


# ADVANCING EMPATHY FOR WILDLIFE PROGRAM EVALUATION PLAN

January 2022



# CONTENTS

- Introduction ..... 1
- Advancing Empathy Program Background..... 3
- Evaluation Research Questions ..... 4
  - External Evaluation Research Questions..... 4
  - Internal Evaluation Research Questions..... 6
- Evaluation Approach ..... 7
  - External Evaluation ..... 7
  - Internal Evaluation ..... 8
- Evaluation Methods: Sample & Data Collection..... 9
- Data Analysis & Reporting..... 16
- Value & Benefits of the Evaluation..... 16
- Appendix A. .... 20
  - Research Questions By Data Source ..... 20
- Glossary..... 24
- References ..... 25



# INTRODUCTION

**Empathy** is a powerful emotion that relies on the ability to perceive, understand, and care about the experiences or perspectives of another person or animal (Young et al., 2018). Several effective interpretive practices have been identified that aim to foster empathy for animals (Minarchek et al., 2021) and research has shown that empathy can drive **conservation action**, by prompting people to connect their concern for the well-being of animals to the importance of preserving a healthy environment for them to thrive (Luebke, 2018). Woodland Park Zoo (WPZ) has been dedicated to fostering empathy for animals for many years. In 2019, WPZ launched their current Advancing Empathy program, designed to build the **capacity** of zoos and aquariums to engage in empathy work and, ultimately, foster human-wildlife connection and caring action within their communities. The Advancing Empathy project has two key components: 1) the ACE for Wildlife network; and 2) the Building Organizational Capacity to Foster Empathy for Wildlife Grant program.

Together, WPZ and Catalyze Evaluation (Catalyze) will be conducting coordinated internal and external evaluations, respectively, to understand the implementation and impact of the Advancing Empathy program. WPZ's internal evaluation will focus on understanding how organizations and their workforce grow in their use of empathy practices and develop their internal evaluation capacity. Catalyze's external evaluation will examine the effectiveness of the project's two-pronged approach (i.e., the network and grant-making programs) for building capacity for empathy work among participating organizations. With respect to the network, the evaluation also seeks to understand the value that the network provides for members as well as the contextual factors and network structures that support network engagement, collaboration, and sustainability. With respect to the grant-making program, the evaluation seeks to understand how the grant-making program supports the growth of sustainable empathy-based experiences at grantee organizations. The internal and external evaluations will both take a collaborative, strengths-based approach that involves stakeholders in the evaluation process and begins with the perspective that every organization brings strengths to their work.

The high-level goals of the external evaluation are two-fold: a) to drive immediate learning and timely, iterative improvements to the ACE for Wildlife network and the Capacity Building Grant program; and b) to inform longer-term decisions around the design and expansion of the network and the future of the grant-making program. The evaluation will achieve these goals by creating concrete, evidence-based knowledge that stakeholders can use to advance their work. The external evaluation research questions focus on big picture work where the expertise and distance that an external consultant has from the Advancing Empathy work is invaluable. The external evaluators can ask questions about WPZ in their role with greater objectivity than our internal team that will provide greater credibility to the data received.

The high-level goals of the internal evaluation are: a) to drive immediate improvements to our Capacity Building Grant program and ACE for Wildlife network operating procedures, b) to understand the landscape of empathy practices in the region and grow our understanding of effective implementation of,

and perceived value and barriers of the practices and c) to gain an understanding of how network and grant making procedures can lead to increased evaluation capacity.

The process of engaging with the evaluation will have a myriad of benefits including creating community and buy-in and building stakeholders' evaluation capacity. Appendix A provides a more detailed description of the anticipated benefits of the evaluation work.

# ADVANCING EMPATHY PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Advancing Empathy program engages two complementary strategies to build capacity for empathy work among participating organizations.

1. **Advancing Conservation through Empathy (ACE) for Wildlife Network:** The ACE for Wildlife network includes 20 Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) accredited institutions from a funder-bound seven-state region in the western United States.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the network is to strengthen the creation, use, and evaluation of empathy experiences through partner collaboration and learning. With an eye toward **sustainability**, WPZ is planning to expand the network outside this seven-state region in the next few years, and transfer facilitation of the network from their own organization to a steering committee of diverse network participants.
2. **Building Organizational Capacity to Foster Empathy for Wildlife Granting Program:** The purpose of the grant program is to build capacity for empathy work among grantees. To be eligible, organizations must be located within the same seven-state region and have AZA accreditation. WPZ offers two tiers of grants: Tier 1 grants have a budget of up to \$250,000 and a timeframe of up to two years; Tier 2 grants have a budget of up to \$50,000 and a timeframe of up to one year. WPZ is administering the grants in phases: the first phase awards have been made and grant projects are kicking off; the second phase solicitation has concluded, and applications are being reviewed; and the third phase solicitation will go out early in 2022. The grants also aim to help organizations build their capacity for conducting internal evaluation around their empathy efforts.

This evaluation was informed by and will continue to reference previous evaluation work and monitoring practices that will inform baselines and measurement processes. A comprehensive [needs assessment](#) conducted in 2019 gathered valuable information from network member organizations about their use of empathy practices in their work and the areas they want to improve on to continue to foster empathy in their guests. In 2020, WPZ evaluated a [pilot sub-granting program](#) and results contributed to **iterative** improvements to the program's procedures and policies. These earlier studies provide baseline benchmarks against which to measure, and they will continue to inform our understanding of the Advancing Empathy program's success.

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<sup>1</sup> The seven-state region includes Alaska, Washington, Idaho, North Dakota, Montana, Minnesota and Wisconsin.



# EVALUATION RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With input from WPZ empathy program staff, WPZ and Catalyze articulated a set of research questions (RQs) to guide the internal and external evaluations. We recognize that these questions cover a broad range of topics, and the WPZ empathy program staff worked to prioritize each RQ's sub-questions into three categories:

**Core:** These are the high priority questions that are central to the overall research question.

**Monitoring:** These sub questions pertain more to program monitoring but are still required as part of each RQ to provide a complete picture.

**Reach:** These questions are those that have been identified as having a longer-term trajectory/timeline and while they might not be achieved within this evaluation plan, they represent the longer-term outcomes of the Advancing Empathy team.

## External Evaluation Research Questions

- I. How successful is **the ACE for Wildlife network** at achieving its goals around capacity-building, collective impact, and sustainability?

**Member benefits:** What value, if any, results from membership in the network and what factors contribute to or impede this added value?

**Organizational capacity:** To what extent does the network help participating organizations to build their organizational capacity (e.g., resources, policies, routines) to do empathy work? What new capacities have organizations built? Which capacities do staff believe to be most crucial to their work?

**Context:** What are the supports and/or barriers that shape network collaboration and sustainability?

**Sustainability:** What network features are likely to support sustainability of the network? What else is needed to further support network sustainability?

**Activities:** What activities is the network undertaking? How do those activities contribute to network success? Which activities are most/least important for participating organizations and for the network overall?

**Products:** What programs, tools, resources and learnings is the network creating? To what extent are those products being effectively shared throughout the network?

**Structures:** What formal and informal structures and partnerships are emerging within the network? How and to what extent are those structures and partnerships supporting the network's capacity-building goals?

**Collective impact:** What collective impact is emerging from the network and are we achieving more together than as individual institutions? To what extent does building

capacity within each network partner organization also build the capacity of the network as a whole?

2. What impact is the **Capacity Building Grant program** having on growing sustainable empathy programming?

**Organizational capacity:** To what extent does the grant-making program help grantee organizations to build their organizational capacity (e.g., resources, policies, routines) to do empathy work? What new capacities have organizations built? Which capacities do staff believe to be most crucial to their work?

**Context:** What organizational factors support or hinder the grantee organization from implementing their plans and achieving their goals, as conceptualized in their proposals? Is there a “recipe” for optimal outcomes?

**Sustainability:** How has the grant contributed (or not) to longer-term programmatic changes at the grantee organizations?

**Activities:** What activities are grantee organizations undertaking with their grant funds? Have they had to make any significant changes to their plans as conceived in their proposals? Why? With what result?

**Products:** What programs, tools, resources, and learnings are grantee organizations creating through their grant-funded empathy work? To what extent are they sharing/disseminating those products beyond the requirements of the grant?

3. To what extent is the **two-pronged approach**—the ACE for Wildlife network combined with the Capacity Building Grant program—successful at advancing zoos and aquariums’ capacity to foster empathy for animals?

**Relationship between strategies:** How do the network and the grant-making program interact and potentially reinforce one another?

**Organizational capacity:** To what extent do the network and grant-making program jointly help participating organizations to build their organizational capacity (e.g., resources, policies, routines) to do empathy work?

**Organizational culture:** To what extent do the network and grant-making program support participating organizations to make cultural shifts in which empathy becomes embedded in the organizational culture? What evidence exists of emerging cultural shifts toward empathy?

4. Is **Woodland Park Zoo** effective in its multifaceted role, as a facilitator of the ACE for Wildlife network, an active participant in the network, and the manager of the Capacity Building Grant program?

How do relevant stakeholders perceive Woodland Park Zoo in their multifaceted leadership role? What has worked well for supporting network success? What has worked well for supporting relationships between WPZ and both network members and grantees?

To what degree are Woodland Park Zoo’s network and grantmaking goals shared among network members and grantees?

■ To what extent is Woodland Park Zoo an active member (i.e., not purely the leader) of the network?

## Internal Evaluation Research Questions

5. What **empathy practices** are organizations incorporating into their work, how are they implementing them and what perceived value do they have on fostering empathy?

■ To what extent are the empathy practices accessible, and being used by network members and grantees? Which departments and professional roles are engaging with the empathy practices, and through which medium (e.g., static signage, social media posts)?

■ What are the potential barriers to implementing empathy practices?

6. Are WPZ's Capacity Building Grant program and ACE for Wildlife network **operating procedures** (such as application process, review process, network committee chair election) **actionable, comprehensive, and valuable** to participating individuals?

■ What value does the grant review process offer grant reviewers?

■ What are the strengths of our grant application, review, monitoring, and reporting processes, and what are our opportunities for improvement?

■ What are the barriers to application for eligible AZA institutions who have not applied for a grant?

7. How, if at all, do the **evaluation capacity strengths, assets and needs change** over a period of network engagement or grant project?

■ For those that demonstrate a change in evaluation capacity, what factors were most valuable to contributing to this change?

# EVALUATION APPROACH

## External Evaluation

### External Evaluation Strand I: Formative Evaluation

The **formative evaluation** is the center of this evaluation plan and will focus on the broad, higher-level topics associated with collective impact. The purpose of the formative evaluation is to understand the overall effectiveness of the ACE for Wildlife network and the Capacity Building Grant program model, as well as WPZ's role within each. We will seek to understand what capacity building is happening and what structures, activities, and contexts support and strengthen capacity building. To build this understanding, Catalyze will gather survey and interview data from a broad range of stakeholders participating in the network and grant-making activities.

### External Evaluation Strand II: Rapid Inquiry Cycles

The evaluation team will engage in a series of six **rapid inquiry cycles** with project stakeholders to study and refine practices, activities, and resources that they are using to build capacity to foster empathy for animals. Catalyze will work collaboratively and iteratively with the WPZ evaluation team and various project stakeholders to identify questions of interest, engage in **systematic inquiry** around those questions, analyze and interpret the results, and identify follow-up actions to make improvements to existing practices and resources. The questions that we foresee investigating as part of this work are directly tied to the overarching evaluation questions but are focused at a more granular level. For example, an inquiry cycle might focus on a particular collaboration strategy or resource. Consistent with the WPZ conceptualization of capacity, the inquiry might focus on strategies or resources pertaining to staffing; knowledge and expertise; partnerships; facilities; and resources and supplies. From there, we would gather input about the value and effectiveness of the strategy/resource as well as persistent needs and opportunities for improvement. The rapid cycle data collection tools are brief and targeted; they might take the form of a short questionnaire that participants/stakeholders complete after engaging with the target activity or resource and/or they might include short follow-up interviews. Depending on the focus of inquiry, we may also collect and analyze artifacts from the activity itself. Our team will quickly process the data and produce data summaries to share with the group, highlighting key information, areas for collective meaning-making, and decision points. Our team will then facilitate collaborative discussions to make sense of the information and identify follow-up actions. In addition to directly informing practice, the rapid inquiry cycles will serve as a mechanism to involve network members and grantees directly in the evaluation process, thereby supporting their own evaluation capacity. Data collection tools from the rapid inquiry cycles can also serve as internal evaluation tools going forward. Although the formative evaluation takes a higher-level, more holistic view of the initiative, the data from the rapid inquiry cycles will be used to inform the overall formative evaluation.

### External Evaluation Strand III: Case Study

Catalyze will conduct a supplemental case-study to further explore the experiences of one or two organizations that are particularly active in the ACE for Wildlife network. We will use data from the

overall formative evaluation to identify and select candidate organizations for the case study. Through the case study, we will investigate the context and factors that enabled and fostered those organizations' successful participation, with an eye toward understanding how those experiences could be scaled. The case study will help us to understand the considerations that motivated these organizations (and/or individuals at the organizations) to be active in the network, the contextual factors that enabled that participation, the value that individuals and the organizations have experienced from that participation; views on the network's collective impact overall; and ideas about opportunities to strengthen and sustain the network.

## **Internal Evaluation**

### **Internal Evaluation Strand I: Formative Evaluation**

Several effective interpretive practices have been identified that aim to foster empathy for animals (Minarchek et al., 2021). These 'effective empathy practices' include framing, modeling, increasing knowledge, inviting perspective taking and activating imagination. The purpose of the evaluation approach for our evaluation research question around empathy practices is to gain an understanding of the current and evolving landscape of the empathy practices being used by ACE for Wildlife network organizations and grantees. A formative evaluation approach will also allow us to gain an understanding of the perceived value of various empathy practices, the barriers to use for different empathy practices, the perceived efficacy of certain practices and the accessibility of the various empathy projects throughout the network and grantee landscape. Learnings from the formative evaluation approach on this evaluation question will inform a broader body of knowledge around empathy effective practices and inform models and processes for optimum network expansion. A formative evaluation approach will also be taken to our internal evaluation question around evaluation capacity change. This approach will allow us to gain an understanding of the various factors that are most valuable to any evaluation capacity change. Learnings from the formative evaluation approach on this evaluation question will inform a broader body of knowledge around evaluation capacity building, inform internal practices, and contribute to an understanding of how to sustain an increased evaluation capacity.

### **Internal Evaluation Strand II: Developmental Evaluation**

A developmental evaluation approach will be taken to facilitate close to real-time feedback to program staff thus facilitating a continuous development loop. Because the internal evaluator is positioned as an embedded member of the ACE for Wildlife network and Capacity Building Grant program teams, feedback can be rapid, user-friendly, and real time changes can be made to operating procedures to increase equitability, accessibility, comprehensiveness and value.

### **Internal Evaluation Strand III: Additional Approach**

An additional approach to evaluating Evaluation Capacity Building will be heavily informed by "A Conceptual Framework for Developing Evaluation Capacities: Building on Good Practice" by Caroline Heider from *Influencing Change: Building Evaluation Capacity to Strengthen Governance*. The skill areas we highlight, dimensions of measurement and specific concepts we evaluate around capacity building will be informed by this framework.

# EVALUATION METHODS: SAMPLE & DATA COLLECTION

## Participant Sample

The following table lists the proposed sample of participants to include in the evaluation. We plan to include a subset of these participants in both the external case study and rapid inquiry cycles.

**Table 1. Evaluation Participants**

	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Participants</b>
<b>External Evaluation Participants</b>	Woodland Park Zoo Staff	Evaluation Team Leads Empathy Initiatives Team Other Woodland Park Zoo staff Organization volunteers
	ACE for Wildlife Network Member Organizations	Participating staff Non-participating staff Leadership team or staff Organization volunteers
	Capacity Building Grant Program Grantee Organizations	Actively engaged/program staff/volunteers/interns Other organization staff Leadership team or staff Non-participating, eligible grantees Organization volunteers
<b>Internal Evaluation Participants</b>	ACE for Wildlife Network Member Organizations	Participating staff Non-participating staff Leadership team or staff Organization volunteers
	Capacity Building Grant Program Grantee Organizations	Actively engaged/program staff/volunteers/interns Other organization staff Non-participating, eligible grantees Organization volunteers

	<b>Stakeholder Group</b>	<b>Participants</b>
	Other Organizations and Consultants	Grantee partner organizations' staff (e.g., Denver Zoo) Grantee organizations' consultants (i.e., external evaluators) Grant reviewers

### Data Collection Plan

The external evaluation will include a) a survey of key stakeholders who are involved with the Advancing Empathy program; and b) interviews with a subset of those stakeholders. The internal evaluation will include a) monitoring and document review; b) an internal survey; c) outlier interviews; and d) observations. A priority of our overall evaluation approach is to ease the burden on our audiences by optimizing our data collection methods and capitalizing on existing processes. Table 4 shows the proposed timeline.

**Table 2. Evaluation Timeline**

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Dates</b>
<b>Formative Evaluation</b>	Create data collection instruments	November 2021 - April 2022
	<b>Deliverable: Data collection instruments</b>	<b>April 2022</b>
	Administer baseline survey	April - May 2022
	Conduct baseline survey analysis	June - August 2022
	Conduct interviews	August 2022 - August 2023
	<b>Deliverable: Interim analysis memo or data placemats</b>	<b>April 2023</b>
	Administer follow-up survey	April - May 2023
	Conduct follow-up survey analysis	June - August 2023
<b>Case Study</b>	Select case study site	January 2023
	Create case study interview protocol	January 2023

Strand	Task	Dates
	Conduct case study interviews	February - April 2023
	Analyze case study interview data	May - July 2023
<b>Rapid Inquiry Cycles</b>	Rapid Inquiry Cycle 1	February 2022
	<b>Deliverable: Data placemats, action plan</b>	<b>February 2022</b>
	Rapid Inquiry Cycle 2	May 2022
	<b>Deliverable: Data placemats, action plan</b>	<b>May 2022</b>
	Rapid Inquiry Cycle 3	July 2022
	<b>Deliverable: Data placemats, action plan</b>	<b>July 2022</b>
	Rapid Inquiry Cycle 4	October 2022
	<b>Deliverable: Data placemats, action plan</b>	<b>October 2022</b>
	Rapid Inquiry Cycle 5	February 2023
	<b>Deliverable: Data placemats, action plan</b>	<b>February 2023</b>
	Rapid Inquiry Cycle 6	June 2023
	<b>Deliverable: Data placemats, action plan</b>	<b>June 2023</b>
<b>Empathy Practices</b>	Monitoring and Document Review	Ongoing
	Create observation instruments	January - April 2022
	<b>Deliverable: Data Collection Instruments</b>	<b>April 2022</b>
	Observations	April 2022 - August 2023
	<b>Deliverable: Site Visit Executive Summaries</b>	<b>April 2022 - August 2023</b>

<b>Strand</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Dates</b>
	Internal Survey	July - August 2023
	Outlier Interviews	August 2023
	Conduct comprehensive data analysis on practices	September - October 2023
	<b>Deliverable: Empathy Practices Supplemental Reports</b>	<b>September - November 2023</b>
<b>Operating Procedures</b>	Monitoring and Document Review	Ongoing
	Quick, Targeted Assessments	As needed at key learning opportunities
	<b>Deliverable: Grant Reviewer &amp; Applicant Feedback Report</b>	<b>August 2021, January 2022, July 2022</b>
<b>Evaluation Capacity</b>	Monitoring and Document Review	Ongoing
	Internal Survey	July - August 2023
	Evaluation Capacity Outlier Interviews	August 2023
	Conduct data analysis	September - October 2023
	<b>Deliverable: Evaluation Capacity Building Supplemental Report</b>	<b>August 2023</b>
<b>Reporting</b>	<b>Deliverable: Draft Evaluation Report (including Case Study)</b>	<b>November 2023</b>
	<b>Deliverable: Final Evaluation Report (including Case Study)</b>	<b>December 2023</b>

## External Evaluation

The **external network and grantee surveys** will gather information from individuals affiliated with network member organizations and grantee organizations. We plan to administer the survey to all participants at two key timepoints during the evaluation, roughly May-July 2022 and again in February-April 2023. By design, these timepoints will represent different stages of involvement for different participants--some individual network participants may have been involved since the beginning, while others may be just beginning; and some grantees may have already completed projects, while others may have just received funding. We will tailor our survey instruments to align with these different stages of

participation, using skip-logic to direct respondents to the questions that match their location in time. At a high level, the surveys will gather information about stakeholders' experiences with the network and/or grant-making program; their roles and involvement so far; perspectives about collaboration, capacity-building and sustainability in connection with the network and/or grant-making program; their perspectives on the benefits and potential challenges of participation in the network and/or grant-making program; and other related topics.

The **external evaluation network and grantee interviews** (including case study interviews) will provide an opportunity for us to hear from participants in more detail about their experiences with these programs. We will plan to sample a subset of survey respondents for these interviews. First, we will select a subset of participating network and grantee organizations, approximately five organizations in all. Next, we will select a subset of 4-6 individuals from each of those five organizations to participate in interviews, with the aim of having representation across a range of roles and engagement levels within the organization. To the extent possible, we plan to schedule the interviews at times that coincide with other network/grantee convenings; other interviews will be scheduled at times that are convenient for the participants and will mostly take place remotely. The interviews will be tailored to fit the organizations' involvement (network member and/or grantee) and the individuals' role within the organization. However, at a high level, the interviews will address participation and experiences with the network and/or grant-making; thoughts on the collaboration(s) that took place; perceived value/benefits of participation (for both the individual and the organization); examples of organizational learning and capacity building connected with that participation; factors that supported and/or hindered participation, collaboration and/or learning; thoughts about future directions for the network; etc.

## **Internal Evaluation**

### **Monitoring and Document Review**

The internal evaluation approach, in contrast to the external evaluation approach, will greatly leverage **monitoring activities** that are embedded into the Capacity Building Grant program and ACE for Wildlife network existing processes. For example, grantees are obligated by contract to participate in a minimum number of check-in calls, reporting requirements and dissemination opportunities. Additionally, network participants can participate in network wide meetings, committee meetings, online discussions, informal learning groups and an annual empathy summit. Network organizations are also invited to participate in annual check-in calls with WPZ staff about their successes and needs. Most notably, Tier I grantees will be required to complete an evaluation template along with their grant project that explicitly embeds questions around evaluation capacity into their contracted grant agreement.

This internal evaluation approach will embed questions around empathy practices, actionability of operating procedures, and evaluation capacity into each of these touchpoints. These touchpoints also allow us to capitalize on existing processes and leverage learning toward our internal evaluation questions. The documents or artifacts that result from grant and network activities will also benefit our learning toward empathy practices, operating procedures and evaluation capacity. Monitoring and document review will be continuous throughout the grant period and understanding how to optimize

the leveraging of embedded monitoring processes will continue to evolve through 2023 as the processes themselves evolve as well.

### **Internal Survey**

To get a full picture of the empathy practices landscape, a network wide survey will be sent out by the internal evaluation team in mid-2023. The survey questions and criteria will be informed by the ongoing monitoring processes and document review. The network wide survey will also contain items around evaluation capacity change. To get a full picture of how evaluation capacity strengths, needs and assets may have changed, the survey questions and criteria will be informed by the ongoing monitoring processes and document review and “A Conceptual Framework for Developing Evaluation Capacities: Building on Good Practice” by Caroline Heider from *Influencing Change: Building Evaluation Capacity to Strengthen Governance*.

### **Outlier Interviews**

To gain more qualitative and contextual information around 1) empathy practices and their usages and perceived value at various institutions and 2) evaluation capacity change and the factors contributing to that change, outlier interviews will be conducted subsequent to the internal survey in mid-2023. Empathy practices interviews will be conducted with two organizations that are found to be the most highly engaged with the use of empathy practices and two organizations that are found to be the least engaged with the use of empathy practices. Evaluation capacity interviews will be conducted with one grantee that has been found to increase their evaluation capacity the most and one that has had the least amount of change in their evaluation capacity, as well as one network organization that has that has been found to increase their evaluation capacity the most and one that has had the least amount of change in their evaluation capacity. Overall, a total of eight outlier interviews will be conducted.

### **Observations**

In an effort to balance out otherwise solely self-reported data, observations will be conducted on the frequency and efficacy of the use of empathy practices at network institutions. Observations will be conducted by the project evaluator, advancing empathy staff, as well as staff from the host network institution. Staff would be trained in the observation tool protocol. Ideally, observations would: capture at least one network institution member per state; contain an equal distribution of small, midsize, and large institutions; contain an equal distribution of very engaged and not very engaged institutions; take place in person, given COVID-19 travel regulations allow it. For each observation, network institutions will be asked to identify the opportunities where they feel empathy practices are displayed. Examples of possible opportunities that institutions could identify are:

1. A program that incorporates empathy practices.
2. Signage at the institution that incorporates empathy practices.
3. A curriculum, program description or interpretive master plan that incorporates empathy practices.
4. Something additional that is unique to those institutions: e.g., a grant funded project, a unique programmatic experience.

Observations will take place between the spring of 2022 and the summer of 2023. If in person travel is not allowed or feasible before the fall of 2022, then all observations can be conducted virtually.

### **Quick, Targeted Assessments**

To get a full picture of the nature of ACE for Wildlife network and Capacity Building Grant program operating procedures, brief, targeted assessments will be deployed to specific audiences (e.g. grant reviewers, grant applicants, committee chairs etc.) to make sure our processes are equitable, etc. The assessment questions and criteria will be informed by the ongoing monitoring processes, document review and previous quick assessments. Semi-informal interviews will be conducted with a variety of audiences to gain a greater understanding of the qualitative context around questions about operating procedures. These assessments will be analyzed quickly in order to inform real time changes to internal operating procedures.



# DATA ANALYSIS & REPORTING

## **Data Analysis and Collaborative Sense-Making**

Both evaluation teams will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the data gathered throughout this evaluation. For qualitative data, we will review the data and conduct emergent coding to construct themes, identify patterns, describe outliers, and so forth. We may use qualitative analysis software (i.e., Dedoose, NVivo) as needed or desired. For quantitative data, we will use statistical analysis methods to produce descriptive statistics. As needed, we may also conduct additional analysis to examine relationships between different variables. We will use quantitative analysis software (SPSS, R, and Excel) for this analysis.

For the external rapid inquiry cycles in particular, the analysis phase will focus on collaborative sense-making with the stakeholders who participated in that inquiry cycle. Internal observations will be conducted by two observers, either synchronously (on location or virtually), or asynchronously using observation recordings. Observational frameworks will be used to provide structure to observations, and qualitative observational data will be reviewed, and emergent coding will be conducted to construct themes, identify patterns, describe outliers, and so forth. Preliminary evaluation work conducted prior to 2021 will be used as a comparative baseline for evaluation work conducted as a part of this evaluation plan. Specifically, comparisons will be made to the [pilot granting program of 2020 and the needs assessment conducted in 2019](#). Both evaluation teams will engage in collaborative sense-making with each other and all stakeholders.

## **Evaluation Reporting & Dissemination**

Throughout the evaluation, we will share products and findings with interested stakeholders, including the WPZ empathy teams, network members and grantees, and our funder Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies (MACP). We will make our interim products available to stakeholders and provide occasional opportunities for more active sharing (e.g., presenting results at a network meeting). For each rapid inquiry cycle, the external evaluation team will produce a) data placemats to display the data in a visual format for sharing and discussing with stakeholders; and b) an action plan to describe the forward-looking outcomes of the inquiry cycle. Findings from the brief, targeted assessments around the operating procedures will be shared as they are analyzed and summarized. For the formative evaluation and case study, we will create a final report describing the findings from the evaluation and highlighting key themes and lessons learned. A comprehensive story of practice will be presented in the final report that includes data from network institutions and grantee organizations around evaluation capacity and empathy practices. Observational data will be analyzed and summarized and presented in the final report.

# VALUE & BENEFITS OF THE EVALUATION

We anticipate that the evaluation will have myriad benefits for all stakeholders -- both from the *process* of engaging with the evaluation and from the *knowledge* that the evaluation produces. In the table below, bolded phrases indicate knowledge that the evaluation will produce, followed by ideas about how that knowledge will inform action.

**Table 3. Anticipated Benefits from the Advancing Empathy Evaluation Activities & Findings**

Stakeholder Group	Benefit / Value	Formative Evaluation	Case Studies	Rapid Inquiry Cycles	Internal Evaluation
WPZ	Hold WPZ accountable to their model and their goals	X	X	X	
	Identify <b>aspects of WPZ's role that are more/less supportive of network/granting goals</b> so that WPZ can continue successful practices and adapt/adjust others	X	X	X	
WPZ & Network Leadership	Drive immediate learning and timely, iterative improvements for network and granting processes			X	X
	Inform future and longer-term program design decisions	X	X	X	X
	Identify <b>factors that support active participation in the network</b> , including supports and barriers to participation, in order to facilitate greater participation	X	X		
	Identify <b>"successful" network/grantmaking structures and practices</b> in order to bolster/continue those strategies				X
	Identify <b>evaluation capacity-building needs and supports</b> in order to optimize evaluation capacity-building efforts				X
	Identify <b>organizational characteristics</b>	X	X		

Stakeholder Group	Benefit / Value	Formative Evaluation	Case Studies	Rapid Inquiry Cycles	Internal Evaluation
	that are a good fit for network membership to guide network expansion				
<b>WPZ, Network Leadership, Network Members &amp; Grantees</b>	Build a) community (relationships, shared priorities, co-created tools and resources), b) buy-in and support for the network and the evaluation, and c) evaluation capacity, through participation in the evaluation			X	X
	Identify <b>value and benefits of network participation</b> in order to a) build internal buy-in and support decisions about ongoing participation and b) support fundraising and recruitment of new members	X	X		
	Identify <b>tangible examples of how to apply empathy practices in different settings/mediums</b> in order to support empathy programming across organizations				X
	Identify <b>what works in empathy practices and programming</b> in order to inform future design & implementation				X
	Promote desired organizational culture change through participation in the evaluation process <i>and</i> by producing knowledge that can support continuous improvement	X	X	X	X
<b>Other AZA Organizations</b>	Inform decision-making around joining the network based on information about the organizational characteristics that support valuable participation and the value/benefits other network members gain from their participation	X	X	X	
	Share empathy practices that are most applicable and effective in a zoo/aquarium setting				X
<b>Zoo</b>	Improve visitor experiences through	X	X	X	X

Stakeholder Group	Benefit / Value	Formative Evaluation	Case Studies	Rapid Inquiry Cycles	Internal Evaluation
<b>Audiences</b>	better empathy programming and practices at zoos and aquariums				
<b>WPZ Evaluation Team and Catalyze Evaluation</b>	Identify “successful” co-evaluation (internal/external) structures and practices in order to bolster/continue those strategies	X	X	X	X

# APPENDIX A

## Research Questions by Data Source

	Surveys				Interviews			Other	
	Network member, participant	Network, non-participant	Grantee, participant	Grantee, non-participant	WPZ staff	Network member, participant	Grantee participant	Activity Monitoring	Doc Review
<b>EXTERNAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b>									
<b>To what extent is the two-pronged approach of a learning network combined with a capacity-building grants program successful at advancing zoos and aquariums' capacity to foster empathy for animals?</b>									
Individual capacity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Organizational capacity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Organizational culture	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Role of strategies	X		X		X	X	X		
Relationship of strategies	X		X		X	X	X		

	Surveys				Interviews			Other	
<b>How successful is the ACE for Wildlife network at achieving its goals around capacity-building, collective impact, and sustainability?</b>									
Activities	X				X	X		X	X
Products	X	X			X	X		X	X
Structures	X				X	X		X	X
Context	X				X	X			
Member benefits	X	X			X	X			
Collective impact	X				X	X		X	X
Sustainability	X				X	X			
<b>What impact is the Capacity Building Grant program having on growing sustainable empathy programming?</b>									
Activities			X		X		X	X	X
Products			X	X	X		X	X	X
Context			X		X		X		

	Surveys				Interviews			Other	
Sustainability			X	X	X		X		
<b>Is Woodland Park Zoo effective in its multifaceted role, as a facilitator of the network, an active participant in the network, and the manager of the capacity building grants program?</b>									
Stakeholder perception of WPZ in their role?	X		X			X	X		
WPZ goals shared with network and grantees?	X		X			X	X		
WPZ's role contributing to and/or inhibiting success?	X		X		X	X	X		
WPZ as an active member of the network?	X		X		X	X	X		
Network and granting structures support WPZ relationships with network members and grantees?	X		X		X	X	X		

Monitoring and Document Review			Surveys and Interviews				Observations		
Network member, participant	Network, non-participant	Grantee, participant	Grantee, non-participant	Network member, participant	Grantee participant	Other orgs staff	Network member, participant	Grantee participant	Grantee, non-participant

**INTERNAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**What empathy practices are organizations incorporating into their work, how are they implementing them and what perceived value do they have on fostering empathy?**

Accessibility and use of empathy practices	X		X					X	X	X
Barriers to use	X		X					X	X	X

**Are WPZ's Capacity Building Grant program and ACE for Wildlife network operating procedures (such as application process, review process, network committee chair election) actionable, comprehensive, and valuable to participating individuals?**

Grant Reviewers							X			
Strength and opportunities for growth	X	X	X	X		X	X			
Barriers to application	X			X			X			

**How, if at all, do the evaluation capacity strengths, assets and needs change over a period of network engagement or grant project?**

Factors contributing to change	X		X				X			
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# GLOSSARY

**Empathy:** a stimulated emotional response that relies on the ability to perceive, understand, and care about the experiences or perspectives of another person or animal.

**Conservation Action:** interventions that need to be undertaken to help improve the conservation status of various taxon.

**Capacity:** The ability to do something: a mental, emotional, or physical ability. The removal of barriers that allows for something to take place.

**Sustainability:** the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level.

**Iteration:** the repetition of a process to generate a sequence of outcomes. Each repetition of the process is a single interaction, and the outcome of each iteration is then the starting point of the next iteration.

**Needs Assessment:** a systematic set of procedures that are used to determine needs, examine their nature, and causes, and set priorities for future action.

**Monitoring:** The periodic tracking of any activity's progress by systematically gathering and analyzing data and information.

**Formative Evaluation:** evaluation that takes place before or during a project's implementation with the aim of improving the project's design and performance.

**Rapid Inquiry Cycles:** A relatively fast turn-around process in which teams work collaboratively to identify a question of interest related to a specific practice or resource; gather evidence about that question; analyze and interpret the data; and make decisions about improvements to the practice or resource.

**Strength-Based Approach:** a community development approach that focuses on a community's strengths rather than deficits. Applied to this evaluation, a strengths-based approach means focusing on the strengths of network organizations and grantees as it relates to building capacity for empathy practices

**Systematic Inquiry:** The systematic process of collecting and logically analyzing information to provide explanations.

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