

Fund Your Lifesaving: How to Apply for 2026 Rachael Ray No-Kill Excellence grants and Rachael Ray Save Them All grants

Best Friends Network Webinar
August 7, 2025

BFNetwork@bestfriends.org



Housekeeping

- Please put questions for panelists in the Q+A
- Feedback:
 - One-question short survey at the end
 - Email bfnetwork@bestfriends.org
- We will make the webinar recording and deck available in ~3 business days





Welcome to Q&A

Questions you ask will show up here.
Only host and panelists will be able to
see all questions.

Who can see your messages?

To: Everyone

Hello



Chat



Raise hand



Q&A



Hide captions



Leave

Type your question here...



Who can see your questions?



Today's Speakers:

- **Carolyn Fitzgerald**, Senior Strategist, East Region, Best Friends Animal Society (she/her/hers)
- **John Graves**, Strategist, East Region, Best Friends Animal Society (he/him/his)
- **Sally Heins-Limberty**, Senior Manager, Enterprise Data Management, Best Friends Animal Society (she/her/hers)

Moderator:

- **Katelyn Durkin**, Manager Network Partner Relations, Best Friends Animal Society (she/her/hers)

Funding Goal

Create No-Kill communities and close lifesaving gaps at shelters

Definitions



What is No Kill?

- Saving every dog or cat in a shelter who can be saved
- 90% benchmark
- [Resource for more information](#)



Lifesaving Gap

The lifesaving gap is the number of cats and dogs who would have had to be saved last year to achieve the 90% save rate threshold.

If you are curious how we do it, here is the calculation we use to determine the lifesaving gap for each impacted shelter:

$$[\text{Non-Live Outcomes}] - [\text{Live Intake} \times 10\%]$$

Non-Live Outcomes = animals euthanized, euthanized by owner request, or lost in care



No-Kill Community

A community is considered to have no lifesaving gap when every brick-and-mortar shelter located within the county has a save rate of 90% or higher.



Pet Lifesaving Dashboard



Pet Lifesaving Dashboard

National Overview



[Best Friends Animal Society | Pet Lifesaving Dashboard](#)

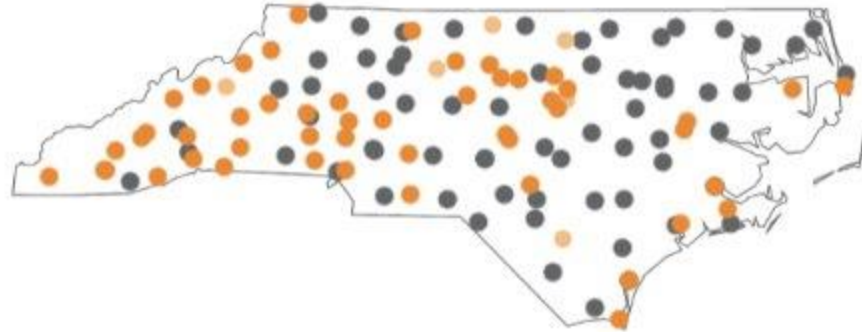


Pet Lifesaving Dashboard



Pet Lifesaving Dashboard

North Carolina



- No-Kill
- Nearly No-Kill
- Not No-Kill or Unknown

Using Data for Lifesaving



Data: Why and How

Data tells an **accurate and measurable** story about how each agency is meeting the needs of the community and when more support is required.

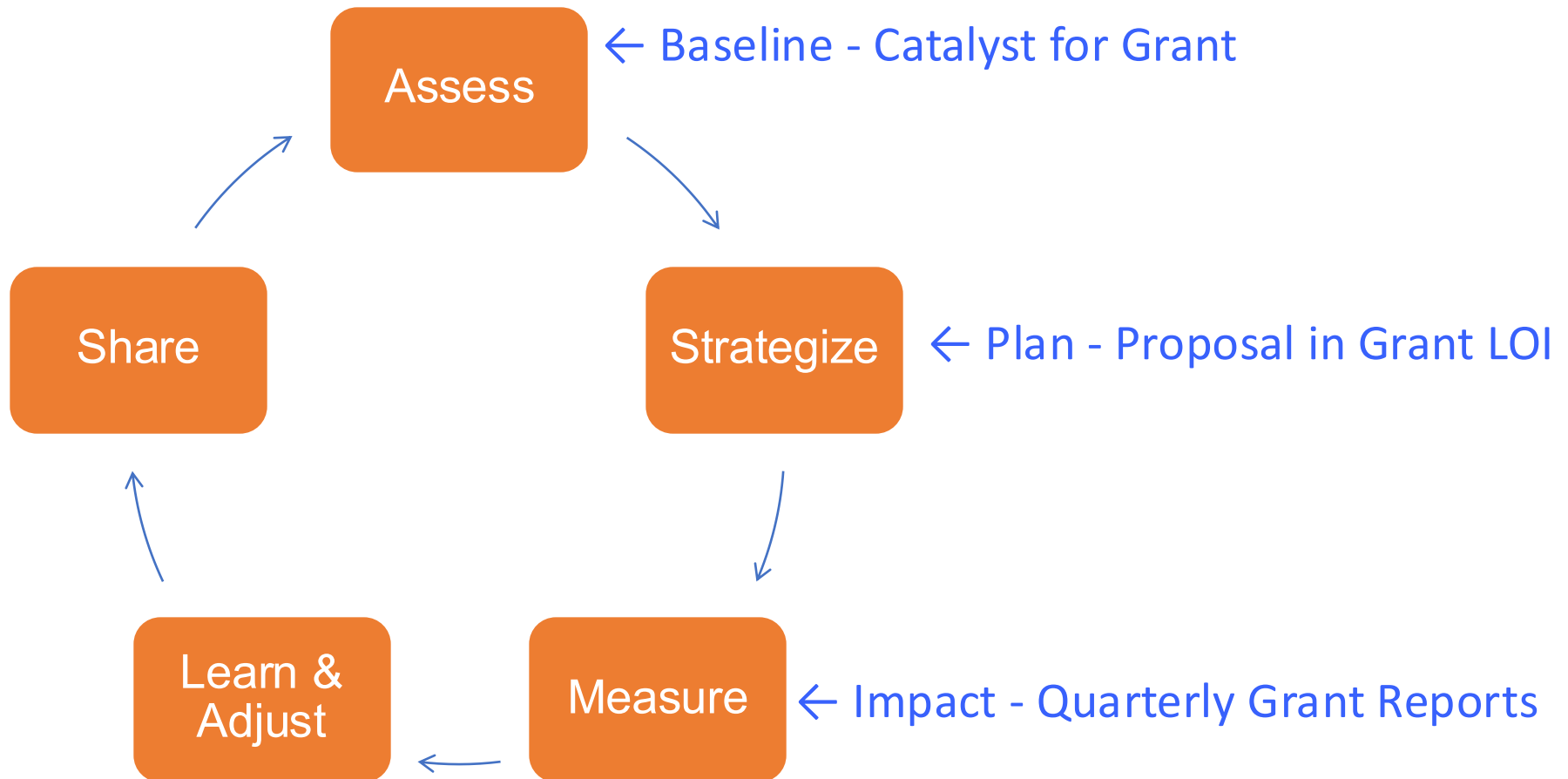
Resources:

- [Gathering Data for Shelters](#)
 - self-paced training
- [Shelter Data Collection Template \(Excel\)](#)
 - can be used to tally intake and outcome data- monthly or annual



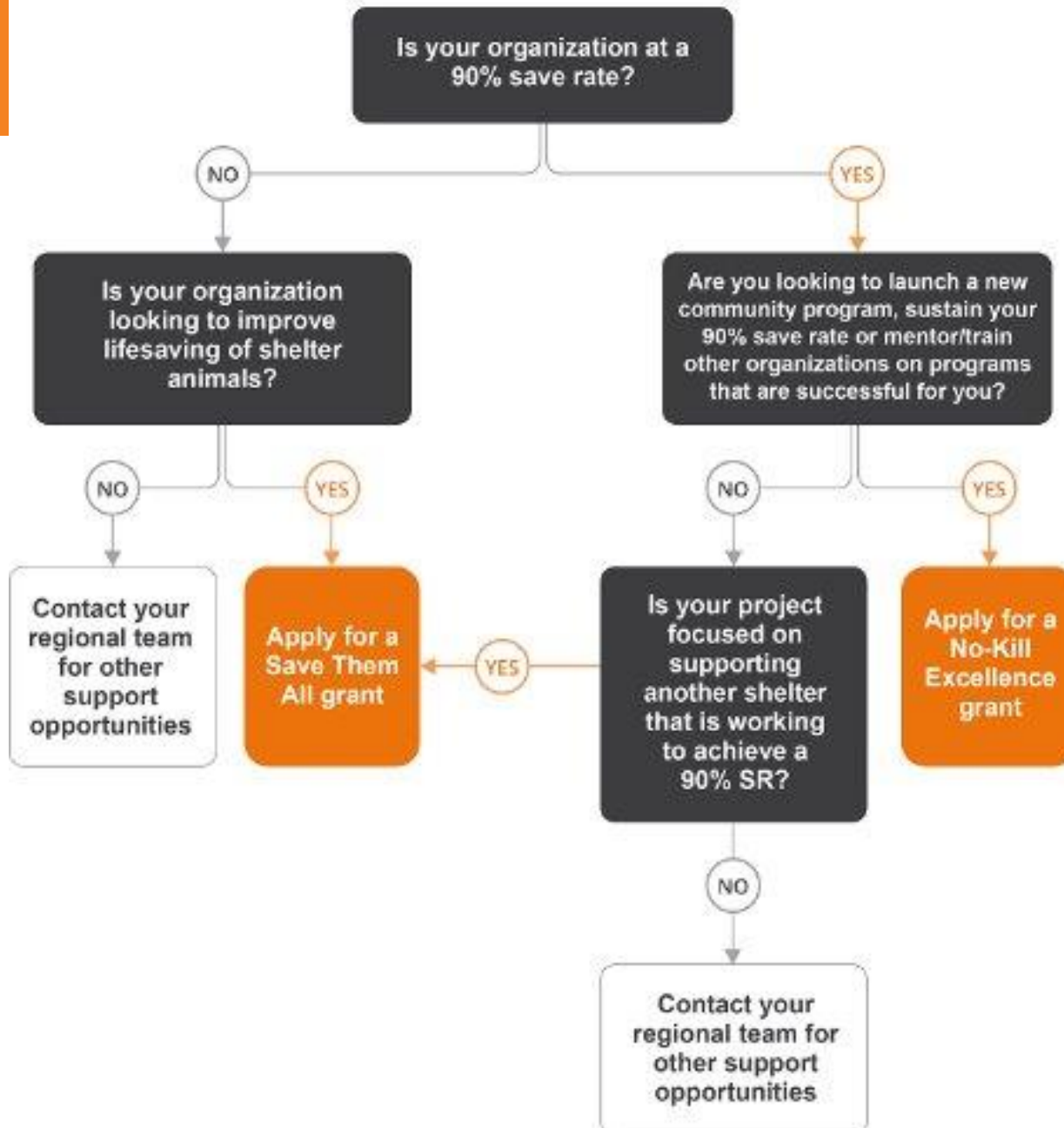


Data-Driven Decision Cycle





Which grant should I apply for?





Save Them All Grants

- Close gap by reducing shelter death in your own shelter or a partner shelter.
- Open to public and private shelters, as well as rescue groups and other animal welfare organizations focused on impacting lifesaving at shelters.
- Funding cap: \$50,000, not exceeding 10% of your operating budget.



STA Example Project: Lifesaving Gap of 100+ Large Dogs

- **Marketing and Adoption Events:** Fund marketing campaigns and host adoption events to increase the visibility of large dogs. This can include online ads, social media promotions, and community events.
- **Partnerships with Rescue Groups:** Collaborate with breed-specific or large-dog rescue organizations to find foster homes or permanent placements for the dogs.
- **Emergency Medical Fund:** Set aside a portion of the money as an emergency fund for unexpected expenses or urgent needs that may arise for the dogs.
- **Transportation and Transport Services:** Use funds to cover transportation costs for large dogs being moved to other shelters, rescues, or new homes, ensuring they get the best possible care.
- **Intake Diversion Programming for Large Dogs:** Use funding to establish return to home in the field, safety net fostering, home to home rehoming.



STA Example Project: Lifesaving Gap of Neonatal Kittens

Medical Care and Vaccinations: Allocate funds for veterinary care, including vaccinations, spaying/neutering, and treatment for illnesses or injuries. Kittens are particularly vulnerable, so ensuring their health is crucial.

Foster Care Programs: Set up a robust foster care program to place kittens in temporary homes where they can receive individualized care, socialization, and attention until they are ready for adoption.

Adoption Promotion: Fund marketing efforts to increase awareness and adoption rates for kittens. This can include social media campaigns, online listings, and local outreach.

Intake Diversion for Kittens: Wait until eight, finder to foster, etc.

Training and Education: Provide training for shelter staff and volunteers on kitten care, including proper handling, socialization techniques, and developmental needs.

Medical Emergency Fund: Establish an emergency fund to cover unexpected medical expenses, which can be particularly important for sick or injured kittens.

Partnerships with Rescue Groups: Collaborate with rescue organizations and other shelters to transfer kittens or seek additional resources for care and adoption.

Community Engagement: Invest in community outreach and education programs to inform the public about community cats and kittens



STA Example Project: Lifesaving Gap of Community Cats

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) in Lieu of Intake/SNR Programs: Implement and support TNR programs to humanely manage and reduce the community cat population. This involves having cats that enter the shelter as intakes spayed or neutered and returning them to their original locations instead of using euthanasia as a method of population control.

Community Outreach and Education:

Educate the public about community cats, the benefits of TNR, and how to coexist peacefully with them. This can help reduce negative perceptions and increase community support.

Advocacy for Legal Support: Advocate for local ordinances or policies that support humane treatment of community cats, such as TNR-friendly laws and regulations that prevent the displacement or harm of feral cats.



No-Kill Excellence Grant

- Celebrate groups that are leading the movement through innovative partnerships, mentorships, and progressive collaborations within their community.
- Help no-kill organizations maintain their lifesaving while also assisting other organizations in their community reach the 90% threshold.
- Close lifesaving gap by reducing shelter death in other shelters
- Funding cap: \$60,000, not exceeding 10% of your operating budget.



NKE Example Project: Lifesaving Gap at Partner Shelter of Kittens

- Immediate Rescue and Transfer:** Quickly arrange for the rescue and transfer of kittens from the shelter to your organization. Prioritize the most vulnerable kittens, such as neonates or those with medical issues.

- Foster Network Expansion:** Expand your network of foster homes to provide temporary care for the kittens. Recruit more volunteers or collaborate with other rescue groups to increase the number of available foster homes.

- Triage and Prioritization:** Work with the shelter to triage the kittens based on their health and urgency. Prioritize the most at-risk kittens for immediate rescue and care.

- Community Outreach:** Engage the local community through social media, local media, and events to raise awareness about the situation and encourage adoptions, fostering, and donations.

- Shelter Collaboration:** Collaborate with the shelter to create a plan for managing and caring for the kittens. This could include scheduling regular visits to assess their needs and provide additional support.

- Adoption Events:** Organize or participate in adoption events to increase the visibility of the kittens and find them loving homes more quickly. Promote these events through various channels to attract potential adopters.

- Education and Training:** Provide training for foster homes and volunteers on kitten care, including feeding, socialization, and health monitoring. This ensures that the kittens receive the best possible care in their temporary homes.

- Long-term Solutions:** Work on developing long-term strategies to prevent future crises, such as creating a more robust foster network, advocating for more resources for shelters, or implementing community-based programs like TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) for stray cats.



NKE Example Project: Lifesaving Gap at Partner Shelter of Large Dogs

- Immediate Rescue and Transfer:**

Quickly coordinate with the shelter to rescue and transfer as many large dogs as possible to your rescue group. Prioritize dogs in the most urgent need.

- Expanding their Foster Network:**

Increase the number of foster homes available for large dogs. Reach out to your existing network and recruit new volunteers who are able to care for large breeds.

- Adoption events:** Organize or participate in adoption events specifically for large dogs. Promote these events through social media, local media, and community outreach to find them loving homes quickly.

- Community Engagement:** Engage the local community through social media and other channels to raise awareness about the plight of the large dogs and encourage adoptions, fostering, and donations.

Timeline and Application Process



Foundant



Logon

Email Address*

Password*

Log On

Create New Account

[Forgot your Password?](#)

Welcome to the Best Friends Animal Society's online grant portal.

New Users: Please click on "Create New Account" to complete the registration process and create your logon credentials.

Existing Users: Please enter your credentials and log in. If you forgot your password, please use the "Forgot your Password" link to the left to reset your password.

Please note, that being a Network partner does not automatically create an account in our grant portal. Your organization will only have an account if you have applied for grant with us since 2019.

Not Sure? If you think that you or someone at your organization has already registered in the system, do not create a new account. Please contact our Grant Administrators, at networkgrants@bestfriends.org to receive your username.

The Rachel Ray Save Them All Grants and The Rachael Ray No-Kill Excellence Grants

The letter of intent window for the Rachael Ray Save Them All grant, and the Rachael Ray No-Kill Excellence grant is now open!

The deadline to submit your letter of intent is **Tuesday, September 16, 2025 at 11:59 PM EST.**

See More



Opens

08/11/2025

 Preview

How do you apply?

- [Click here](#) to access the login page

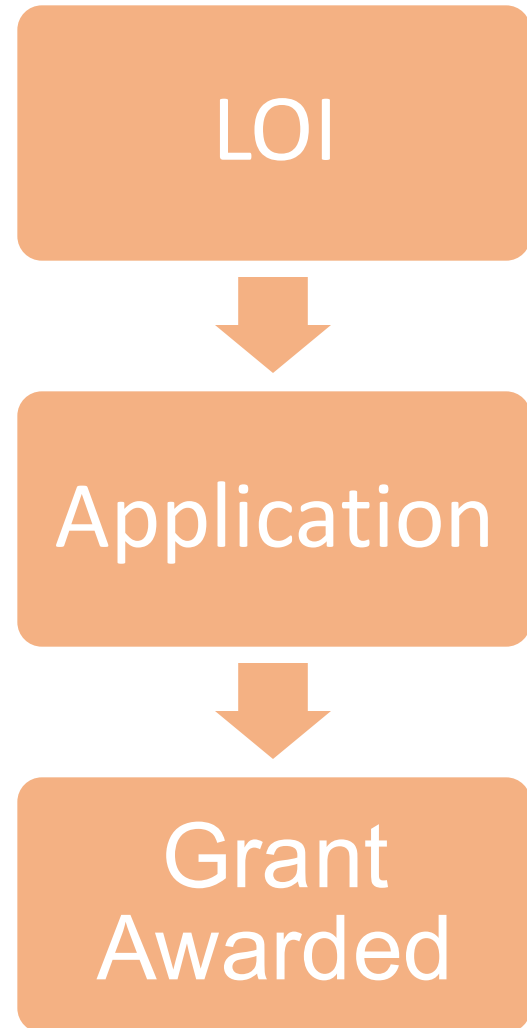
Not sure which grant to apply to?

- [Grants Menu](#)



LOI and Application

- **Identify the lifesaving gap.**
- **Identify the tactics.**
 - How will your project close that gap?
- **Quantify** your impact.
 - How many pets?
 - What kind of pets?
 - Where are they located?





Requirements

Best Friends Network Partners:

- [Click here](#) to see if your organization is already a Network partner.
- Not a Network partner yet? [Click here](#) to apply!

Data Sharing:

- Shelter Pet Data Alliance for eligible organizations
 - [Click here](#) to create/log into your SPDA account
- Community data for non-SPDA eligible organizations
 - [Click here](#) to submit your 2024 annual stats



Key Dates

- August 11: LOI Opens
- September 16: LOI, Network Partner Application, and Data due
- Early October: LOI decisions sent
- November 3: Application due
- Early December: Final decisions sent
- December 19: Contracts due
- January 2: Checks sent and projects start

Q+A



Best Friends[®]

Network Partners

BFNetwork@bestfriends.org