

WE ANIMALS

2026-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN



03	Message From Leadership
04	What's New
05	Who We Are
06	Our Three Strategic Pillars
07	Our Approach
09	Strategic Plan 2026-2028
15	How Will We Measure Success
16	Join Us
17	Thank You
18	Appendix
	• Our Sparks
	• Strategic Plan-at-a-Glance
	• Our Team
	• Photo Credits

CONTENTS



MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

In early 2025, the We Animals leadership team and board of directors came together to articulate our Theory of Change. Our facilitator, Neysa Colizzi, began with a simple icebreaker: **“What brought you here today?”** She asked us to map our journeys into animal advocacy on a timeline. As we shared and reflected, a theme quickly emerged. Nearly every timeline included a piece of storytelling that had propelled us into this work, catalysts we came to refer to as “sparks.” Each was different: a children’s book, a lecture series, a YouTube video, a biopic, a photograph, a single podcast episode, the message from an advocacy campaign. For some, the spark appeared in childhood; for others, much later in life. Some of us experienced many sparks before the fire caught; for others, just one.

Without meaning to, the exercise reminded us just how central storytelling is to who we are, both as individuals and as part of the We Animals team. Each of us could point to a moment when animal stories changed us.

“If it worked for us, it can work for others” may not sound like rigorous evidence for a Theory of Change (and we promise, we are deeply engaged in measurement, evaluation, and learning—more on that later!). But time and again, we hear from people inside and outside the movement who have been inspired, moved, and transformed by animal stories. Maybe you’re one of them.

This is the heart of what We Animals does, and what we have done since 2019 (and long before, through the work of our founder, Jo-Anne McArthur). We tell animal stories. We expose their lives when they

are hidden within human systems. We educate the public about the realities animals face and the ways our choices shape those realities. We empower advocates, journalists, and organizations to tell stronger stories that drive awareness, empathy, and change. We continue to be amazed by how far our visuals travel and the advocacy they support: from humane education classrooms in Kenya to global corporate campaigns in Japan, from university lecture halls in the United States to exhibits at the European Parliament, and in international news outlets. The images and videos created by our global network of photographers and shared with our followers, NGO partners, and stock site users are used in countless ways to champion animals.

Our 2026–2028 strategic plan sharpens our focus on what we do most powerfully: storytelling and movement support through visual resources. Within these pages, you’ll see new initiatives we’re excited to test, projects we’re undertaking for the first time, and our continued commitment to sustaining the work that has carried us this far.

The challenge of building a safer world for animals is immense, but so are the opportunities ahead. There are many sparks to ignite, and we must be deliberate: focusing on our strengths, enabling others to lean into theirs, and carrying the torch together. With gratitude,



Executive Director, We Animals

P.S. Want to know more about our sparks? Check out the appendix.

WHAT'S NEW IN 2026–2028

Subsidized Assignments: Supporting NGOs and advocates in underrepresented regions with free or low-cost photojournalism.

Flagship Storytelling & Communications Projects: Investing in ambitious, high-impact campaigns that bring together our photojournalism, editorial, and digital marketing teams to tell transformative animal stories and reach new audiences worldwide.

Expanded APJ Network: Cultivating relationships with new photojournalists for coverage in every priority region while deepening our existing network through mentorship and skill-building opportunities.

AI Integration Plan: Anticipating shifts in media and technology to safeguard the future of ethical storytelling and maintain We Animals' leadership in the visual advocacy space.

Distinctive Donor Experience: Strengthening relationships through personalized storytelling, transparency, and a deepened sense of community connection.

WHAT CONTINUES

- Our primary focus remains on animals in industrial food systems.
- Producing powerful animal photojournalism that sparks change.
- Collaborating with advocates and organizations to amplify their impact.
- Providing free and accessible visuals for campaigns and education.
- Maintaining transparency, compassion, and excellence in all we do.



WHO WE ARE

We Animals was founded in 2019 by photojournalist Jo-Anne McArthur, building on two decades of her work documenting the lives of animals hidden within human systems. What began as one photographer's mission has grown into the world's first nonprofit photojournalism agency dedicated to animals, with a unique focus on farmed animals and supported by a global network of photographers.

Our [stock site](#) houses a curated collection of more than 40,000 images and videos, which are free for non-commercial use and accessed by advocates, journalists, educators, and organizations worldwide. They are used daily to inform campaigns, news coverage, and public discourse. In addition to curating and sharing visual resources, we tell our own stories through original investigations and partner with organizations on assignments that bring animal issues into the public eye.

OUR VISION

A world in which all animals live free from human harm.

OUR MISSION

We advocate for animals through photojournalism. We create ethical and cultural shifts in society and empower human capacity for compassion and change.

OUR PURPOSE

We believe that animals have inherent rights. Anyone who can perceive and feel should not be harmed or subjugated.



OUR THREE STRATEGIC PILLARS



PILLAR ONE

Tell Impactful Animal Stories

We reveal the lives of animals hidden within human systems and share their stories through photography, films, and partnerships that inspire empathy and action.

PILLAR TWO

Support the Global Movement

We equip advocates, journalists, and educators worldwide with visuals, mentorship, skill-building opportunities, and partnerships that amplify campaigns and advance animal protection.

PILLAR THREE

Operate with Excellence

We build a resilient, ethical, and future-ready organization that ensures animal photojournalism continues to thrive for generations to come.

OUR APPROACH

At We Animals, our work begins with a deep commitment to truth and service. We believe that how we work matters as much as what we achieve.

Collaborative: We partner with NGOs, educators, journalists, and media outlets worldwide to ensure animal stories reach diverse audiences.

Ethical: We adhere to the highest standards of integrity—never staging, interfering, or sensationalizing our subjects. Our storytelling is driven by the animals' experience.

Global: With photographers and videographers on every continent (except Antarctica!), we prioritize representation and visibility across cultures, regions, and contexts.

Evidence-Based: We continually learn from data, partner feedback, and audience insights to refine our storytelling and maximize our impact.

Through this approach, we bridge the worlds of advocacy, journalism, and public awareness to make animals visible and valued.



THEORY OF CHANGE

Our Theory of Change is rooted in a simple but powerful belief: **when people truly see and understand the lives of animals, a spark is lit, perspectives shift, and meaningful change becomes possible.**

We believe that ongoing exposure to animal images, stories, and education can catalyze personal change, ultimately inspiring wider societal change to improve the lives of animals.





2026-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

PILLAR 1: TELL IMPACTFUL ANIMAL STORIES

Stories shape how people see the world. By documenting the lives of animals, often hidden within human systems, we reveal truths that shift perspectives and spark compassion on both individual and societal levels. Through photography, films, and collaborations, we bring animal stories into mainstream conversations, challenge cultural norms, and inspire action.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Engagement Beyond the Bubble. We will connect with new audiences through digital and in-person storytelling, expanding our reach and ensuring that at least 25% of our stories highlight voices and perspectives from Latin America and Asia, regions where demand for animal products continues to rise and visual coverage remains limited.

Create Unique High-Impact Stories. We will deliver flagship global projects and experiment with innovative formats that push the boundaries of animal photojournalism, raising the profile of our work and reinforcing We Animals as a leader in the field.

Leverage Media to Increase Visibility. We will expand our presence in outlets worldwide, securing high-profile features and increasing impressions with diverse audiences beyond the animal advocacy movement.

SPOTLIGHT: OUTSIDE THE BUBBLE

To create lasting change for animals, we must reach people beyond the animal advocacy movement. **New audiences — from students and journalists to cultural institutions, like-valued groups in adjacent sectors, and everyday consumers in key regions — are where perspectives can shift and compassion can grow.**

We're experimenting with fresh formats and spaces to meet people where they are. From launching exhibits in galleries, museums, and universities to guest podcast appearances, collaborations with mission-aligned organizations, reaching farther into the photography world to ensure all animals are represented, and targeted outreach in Latin America and Asia, we're carrying animal stories into mainstream conversations.

*By 2028, We Animals will be recognized globally as **the definitive source of animal photojournalism**. Our stories will reach many more millions, inspiring empathy, strengthening advocacy, and shifting how animals are perceived and treated around the world.*



2026-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

PILLAR 2: SUPPORT THE GLOBAL MOVEMENT

A thriving animal advocacy movement needs powerful visuals, strong partnerships, and skilled storytellers. By equipping NGOs, educators, journalists, and photojournalists worldwide with the resources and education they need, we help amplify campaigns and spark change on a larger scale. Our role is to empower others so that animal stories reach farther and achieve greater impact.

Strategic Directions

Forge Long-Term Strategic Partnerships. We will deepen collaborations with NGOs across Asia, Latin America, and the USA, securing multi-year partnerships, maintaining strong renewal rates, and driving campaign wins that advance animal protection.

Empower Advocates with Visual Resources & Skill-Building Opportunities. We will equip advocates to maximize the impact of our visuals through knowledge-sharing, subsidized assignments, and improvements to our stock platform—ensuring broader reach, greater usability, and increased adoption in key regions.

Expand & Strengthen our Animal Photojournalism (APJ) Network. We will continue to grow and professionalize the APJ network, ensuring global coverage, providing mentorship and ongoing skill-building opportunities, and developing investigation strategies that expose animal abuses worldwide.

SPOTLIGHT: SUBSIDIZED ASSIGNMENTS

Some of the most pressing animal stories go untold because advocates and grassroots groups don't have the resources to commission professional photography or videography. Subsidized assignments close this gap, ensuring that campaigns have access to powerful visuals that can spark meaningful change, especially in underrepresented regions.

Beginning in 2026, we will provide free or low-cost photojournalism assignments to NGOs and advocates, prioritizing projects in Latin America and Asia. These collaborations connect our network of animal photojournalists with local campaigns, generating high-quality visuals that strengthen advocacy, elevate partner voices, and illuminate hidden realities. [If your organization would like our support, please apply here.](#)

By 2028, We Animals will be an essential ally to advocates worldwide. Our visuals, educational resources, and partnerships will help drive tangible campaign wins for animals, expand the reach of animal stories in Latin America and Asia, and strengthen the global network of animal photojournalists.





2026-2028 STRATEGIC PLAN

PILLAR 3: OPERATE WITH EXCELLENCE

To deliver on our mission, we must ensure that We Animals is resilient, forward-thinking, and financially secure. By preparing for emerging challenges and building a loyal community of supporters, we will safeguard the future of animal photojournalism and its global impact.

Strategic Directions

Future-Proof for Emerging Challenges

We will anticipate and adapt to shifts in technology and media, developing an AI integration plan and ensuring our work remains vital, ethical, and impactful in a rapidly changing world.

Anchor Our Future with Loyal Donors & Long-Term Funders

We will cultivate a distinctive donor experience that connects and delights supporters, grow our community of monthly and major donors, secure legacy gifts, and build relationships with anchor funders who can sustain We Animals for the long term.

SPOTLIGHT: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI is rapidly reshaping how stories are created, shared, and trusted. For We Animals, it's critical to anticipate both the opportunities and risks AI presents. Future-proofing our work means engaging with these shifts now.

We will launch a working group to research, test, and guide how We Animals integrates AI responsibly. This team will explore practical applications, from archiving and metadata to creative collaborations, while safeguarding the integrity and credibility of our photojournalism. Their insights will inform an organizational AI integration plan that keeps us ethical, adaptive, and effective in a changing media landscape.

By 2028, We Animals will be a resilient and future-ready organization with a diverse and loyal base of supporters. With long-term funding secured and capacity to adapt to new challenges, we will continue to strengthen our role as the world's leading animal photojournalism agency.



HOW WE WILL MEASURE SUCCESS



Over the next three years, we will track progress against the following goals. Additional details are available in the Strategic Plan at-a-Glance section of the appendix. We are grateful to be working with The Mission Motor, a nonprofit dedicated to helping animal advocates measure and evaluate their impact. As an awareness-raising and movement-support organization, it can be difficult to directly attribute outcomes to our work. But we know **our storytelling, visuals, educational resources, and partnerships help achieve impact at scale.** We track both the reach of our outputs and the difference they make, using quantitative metrics and qualitative insights to understand how change happens.

We will review and share progress annually through public impact reports and partner feedback, ensuring ongoing learning and accountability.

What does success look like?

Broader Reach

Our visuals are used more widely, with 20% growth worldwide and 30% growth in audiences across Latin America and Asia.

Deeper Impact

Our resources help secure at least two major campaign wins and strengthen partner advocacy.

Organizational Resilience

We secure 3–5 multi-year anchor funders and diversify revenue streams for long-term stability. (Psst... could this be you?)

Thought Leadership

Led by We Animals, animal photojournalism is further established as an essential, lasting genre of documentation.

JOIN US

The stories of animals deserve to be seen, and you can help make that happen.

Whether as a partner, advocate, or donor, your support fuels our ability to uncover hidden realities, equip the movement, and be the spark that inspires change.

Partner

Collaborate with us on investigations, campaigns, and storytelling projects that amplify impact.

Advocate

Use and share our visuals to bring animal stories into public discourse and inspire compassion.

Donate

Invest in animal photojournalism and help ensure our work remains free and accessible to advocates worldwide.



THANK YOU

Every image we release, every story we tell, and every campaign we strengthen is powered by you. To the donors who fuel this work, the partners who amplify it, the advocates who carry it forward, and the photojournalists who risk so much to make animals visible: Thank you. Your support lights the spark and makes the unseen seen. Together, we are building a world where animals are no longer hidden.

OUR SPARKS

BOOKS

Animal Factories — Jim Mason & Peter Singer. Investigative book revealing industrial farming's effects on animals, workers, and the environment.

Animal Liberation — Peter Singer. Foundational 1975 text that launched the modern animal rights movement.

Beautiful Joe — Margaret Marshall Saunders. Canadian novel told from a dog's perspective; raised public awareness about animal cruelty.

Eating Animals — Jonathan Safran Foer. Investigative memoir exploring the moral, cultural, and environmental impacts of meat consumption.

How Fletcher Was Hatched — Wende & Harry Devlin. A children's book about friendship and transformation.

Rondo One-Eye: A Seal's Story — Niall McKillop. Children's novel highlighting empathy for marine wildlife.

The Unheeded Cry: Animal Consciousness, Animal Pain, and Science — Bernard E. Rollin. Examination of animal consciousness and ethics of scientific research.

Why We Love Dogs, Eat Pigs, and Wear Cows — Melanie Joy. Introduces Joy's theory of carnism and our cultural assumptions about animals.

FILMS & DOCUMENTARIES

Born Free. True story of Elsa the lioness's return to the wild.

Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret. Investigates animal agriculture's environmental impact.

Dominion. Hidden-camera and drone exposé of systemic animal exploitation.

Earthlings. Documentary examining humanity's use of animals across industries.

Gorillas in the Mist. Story of primatologist Dian Fossey's conservation work.

The Witness. Documentary about New York fur salesman turned animal advocate.

MUSIC & VIDEO

Open Your Eyes — Goldfinger. Music video containing early factory-farm footage.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Allowed to Grow Old — Isa Leshko. Portraits of elderly farm animals celebrating individuality and resilience.

Death by Clubbing — Jo-Anne McArthur. Iconic image documenting violence against pigs.

Factory Farm Footage — Various. Undercover images and videos documenting industrial agriculture.

PODCASTS

Animal Voices. Radio program exploring animal advocacy and vegan issues.

Paw and Order — Animal Justice. Canadian podcast covering animal law, legislation, and policy.

Spud Fit Podcast — Andrew Taylor. Explores habit-change, simplicity, and personal transformation.

The Case Against Pet Ownership — Vox Conversations. Episode examining the ethics and contradictions of companion-animal ownership.

YOUTUBE & ONLINE CONTENT

"Meat the Victims" — Leah Doellinger. Direct-action movement taking the public into factory farms.

"The Bite-Sized Vegan" — Emily Moran Barwick. Educational content explaining animal-rights concepts.

"You Will Never Look at Your Life in the Same Way Again" — Earthling Ed. Viral talk about ethics, empathy, and everyday choices.

STRATEGIC PLAN AT-A-GLANCE

PILLAR

STRATEGIC DIRECTION (SDs)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE (SOs)

Pillar 1: Tell Impactful Animal Stories

We will create powerful visual storytelling that deepens public understanding of animals, reaches new audiences, and elevates the realities of animals in human systems into mainstream conversation.

SD1: Engage Audiences Beyond the Animal Advocacy Bubble

Reach and activate audiences who shape cultural discourse, public opinion, and institutional decisions but do not yet see animal stories as relevant to their work.

SD2: Amplify Global Narratives Through Ambitious Flagship Content

Produce distinctive storytelling that influences global conversations, equips advocates, and positions We Animals as a leading voice in documenting animal systems.

SD3: Leverage Media to Increase Visibility of Animal Stories

Ensure that visuals reach influential platforms and inform how media reports on animals, food systems, climate, and beyond.

SO1: Achieve a 15% increase in reach and engagement across our core communication channels year-over-year, with specific growth targets for audiences working in related sectors so that animal stories circulate more widely in fields that shape public perception (environment, food systems, justice, journalism, academia).

SO2: Deliver 6–10 in-person engagements (talks, panels, workshops, exhibits) annually to deepen connection with new audiences and generate follow-up opportunities that amplify the visibility of animal stories.

SO3: Ensure at least 25% of stories published focus on Latin America and Asia to strengthen global relevance and support equitable representation of under-covered regions where animal industries are expanding per year.

SO4: Produce 2 major global storytelling projects that function as signature initiatives to shape key public conversations on animal issues and expand international distribution and influence.

SO5: Pilot 1 new storytelling format annually to diversify how audiences encounter animal stories and stay responsive to evolving content trends.

SO6: Raise the profile of Animal Photojournalism (APJ) within the global photography and visual journalism ecosystem.

SO7: Secure 1 or more We Animals-led features each year in a high-reach media outlet to ensure the realities of animal systems enter mainstream reporting cycles.

SO8: Increase regional visibility of animal photojournalism in Asia and Latin America through consistent placements in niche or regional media, supporting local advocacy and storytelling ecosystems, with estimated coverage growing by approximately 10% year over year.

SO9: Increase media impressions in North America and Europe by 10% year-over-year to sustain visibility and ensure animal stories remain part of public dialogue.

Pillar 2: Support the Global Movement

We will strengthen the effectiveness of advocates around the world by providing visual evidence, skills, and long-term partnerships that lead to meaningful progress for animals

SD4: Forge Long-Term Strategic NGO Partnerships

Build strong collaborations that generate sustained advocacy impact and support collective wins across key regions.

SD5: Empower Advocates with Visual Resources & Skill-Building Opportunities.

Capture/distribute high-quality evidence and build capacity of advocates to communicate compellingly and credibly.

SD6: Expand & Strengthen the International Animal Photojournalist Network.

Increase global coverage of exploitative practices related to animals by equipping diverse APJs to document stories that would otherwise go unseen.

SO10: Secure 3 multi-year partnerships in Asia, Latin America, and the United States to create stable, high-impact collaborations aligned with shared campaign goals.

SO11: Maintain a two-thirds renewal rate or higher with returning NGO partners to ensure continuity, trust, and long-term progress.

SO12: Achieve 2 measurable shifts (e.g. policy, corporate commitments, public engagement) with partner organizations in three years to ensure our work is having a positive impact on the lives of animals.

SO13: Deliver 8–10 high-quality skill-building opportunities over three years to strengthen NGO storytelling capacity and influence.

SO14: Provide 3 free or subsidized assignments annually to expand visual evidence in under-resourced regions and support partners who lack funding for documentation.

SO15: Continuously improve stock site usability, regional relevance, and access so advocates can find the visual content they need.

SO16: Increase stock site usage in Latin America and Asia through targeted outreach and content development to support advocacy in regions with an immense number of animals involved in large-scale industries and the rapidly growing public awareness and legal advancements within these regions.

SO17: Ensure consistent APJ coverage in priority regions (Latin America, Asia, United States) to increase coverage in regions with rapid growth of industrialized animal farming combined with potential for public awareness and legislative change.

SO18: Provide 6 APJ development opportunities over three years to strengthen technical and editorial skills within the network.

SO19: Develop and implement a comprehensive supply-chain investigation strategy to deepen reporting on global systems and create evidence that supports long-term structural change.

Pillar 3: Operate with Excellence

We will support a resilient, future-ready organization that can adapt to technological and media shifts, scale responsibly, and secure long-term financial stability.

SD7: Future-Proof Operations for Emerging Challenges

Equip WA to navigate technological and media shifts with integrity and strategic clarity.

SD8: Anchor Financial Future with Loyal Donors & Long-Term Funders

Build a stable funding structure capable of supporting long-term financial health.

SO20: Develop and implement an AI integration roadmap for internal operations to improve the quality, speed, and security of our work while maintaining our values and ethical standards.

SO21: Establish an AI and APJ task force to evaluate opportunities, risks, and requirements for responsible use of AI in photojournalism and produce clear recommendations for 2027–2028.

SO22: Continuously build distinctive supporter experiences to deepen donors' connection to We Animals' mission.

SO23: Grow our We Animals Allies community to increase sustained monthly support for our work, allowing for long-term planning and lasting impact.

SO24: Secure 3–5 multi-year anchor funders to strengthen long-term sustainability.



OUR TEAM

Photo Credits

- 01 Lukas Vincour / We Animals
- 04 (top right) Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals (middle) Mako Kurokawa / Sinergia Animal /
We Animals (bottom right) Andrew Skowron / We Animals
- 05 Havva Zorlu / We Animals
- 06 Lukas Vincour / We Animals
- 07 James Gibson / We Animals
- 08 (bottom left) Beth Lily Redwood / We Animals (top right) Lukas Vincour / We Animals
(bottom right) Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals
- 10 (left) PhotoAdvocacy / We Animals (top right) Andrew Skowron (bottom right) Louise Jorgensen
/ HIDDEN / We Animals
- 12 Jo-Anne McArthur / The Ghosts in Our Machine / We Animals
- 14 (left) Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals (top right) Lilly Agustina / Act For Farmed Animals /
We Animals (bottom right) Rebecca Cappelli Loviconi / 269 Libération Animale / We Animals
- 15 Bridget Laudien / We Animals
- 16 Havva Zorlu / We Animals

PHOTO CREDITS



WEANIMALS.ORG