

Annual Report 2018



International
Partnership
for Dogs



Overview

The International Partnership for Dogs (IPFD) is a non-profit organization, registered in Sweden, initiated by a group of independent stakeholders in dog health, well-being, and welfare. It was officially launched in August 2014.

International Partnership for Dogs

Vision

An enduring global collaboration enhancing dog health, well-being and welfare, and human-dog interactions.



Mission

The mission of the IPFD is to facilitate collaboration and sharing of resources to enhance the health, well-being, and welfare of pedigree dogs and all dogs worldwide.

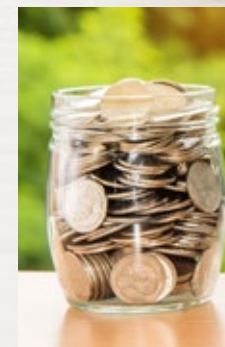
Values

- Dog health, well-being, and welfare, and human-dog interactions contribute to the quality of life for both species.
- The world is a better place because we share it with dogs.
- Dog issues are important around the globe, and international sharing and cooperation are needed.

Goals

The general goals of the IPFD are to:

- Enhance the health, well-being, and welfare of dogs, and enrich human-dog interactions.
- Facilitate the sharing of knowledge, information, experience, and resources across stakeholders, e.g., kennel clubs, veterinary and other professional organizations, health foundations, and others, to improve health and well-being of purpose-bred dogs.
- Provide structure, evaluation, and interpretation of information to support the actions of stakeholders in dog health, well-being, and welfare.
- Facilitate specific actions to improve health and well-being of dogs, e.g., supporting globally relevant breed-specific breeding strategies.
- Run the web platform, DogWellNet.com.
- Bring the dog community closer together through DogWellNet.com.



Did you know?

The bulk of our financial resources are allocated to maintain a small but dedicated team that manages our modest resources and facilitates the activities of our stakeholders.

Image courtesy of Pexels

From the CEO



Dr. Brenda N. Bonnett, Chief Executive Officer

The IPFD and our internet platform, DogWellNet.com, came into being following a long history of efforts to address dog health and well-being by many stakeholders – among them our Partners – who continue to demonstrate leadership. These Partners see the benefit of the resources produced by the IPFD for their own members and stakeholders, but beyond that, they have continued to support the goal that these resources be free and open the global dog community. As long as we have such broad-minded stewards of dog wellness, this will continue. The IPFD is always looking for more committed Partners to make this a sustainable reality.

In 2018, our fourth full year of operation, we focused our efforts on key initiatives, including launching the Quality Testing Database for the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD) in May 2018. The HGTD project has received enthusiastic endorsement from many genetic test providers, kennel clubs, the research community, animal industry, and the veterinary community. Our efforts to support robust genetic testing, and appropriate application of such tests, will be expanded to consider the whole spectrum of health concerns within breeds. This will be supported in 2019 with development of our Health Strategies Database for Dogs (HSDD) – a perfect complement to the HGTD.

Another major emphasis for us has been on planning for our bi-annual signature event, the 4th International Dog Health Workshop (IDHW), co-hosted with the Kennel Club in Windsor, United Kingdom, in May 2019. Significant international actions have been underway since the 3rd IDHW, including many developments and resources related to challenges in dogs with extreme conformation (brachycephalics), tools to support breed-specific health strategies, socialization of dogs, and much more. There is no question that the IDHWs have influenced and encouraged actions in many countries and across various stakeholder groups. DogWellNet.com serves as a hub for many of these ‘Hot Topics’. The

themes for the 4th IDHW reflect ongoing and emerging issues in the global dog world.

On DogWellNet.com, we expanded our Breeds Database and engaged breed clubs from numerous countries, health representatives, and experts in providing content and expanding existing resources. Our communications expanded with eight issues of our free online newsletter, *DogWellNet Digest*, and increased presence on Facebook and Twitter.

As IPFD CEO, it has been my honor to meet with many members of the broader international dog community, especially throughout North America and Europe. In 2018, I made presentations to breeders, breed clubs, veterinarians, and others. It is wonderful to share the incredible joy that people have in their varied and rich interactions with dogs.

What also stood out for me in 2018 was the complex nature of the challenges facing us. For example, the increasing global awareness of health and welfare issues in brachycephalic breeds raises challenges to long-held perceptions, with emotional and personal impacts for breeders and owners and highlighting conflicts for veterinarians. Issues of supply and demand for dogs are challenging authorities, organizations, and individuals; decisions made on tackling these problems will have

wide-ranging impacts, and even well-intentioned actions may have unintended consequences.

The IPFD has an expanding role to serve as an independent voice in the often-controversial world of dog health and welfare. We are able to provide a balanced, big-picture view without any organizational agenda other than to enhance dog health, well-being, and welfare, and to support human-dog interactions, worldwide. It is our continued belief that these challenges are best met by coordinated and informed international efforts involving all stakeholders, and with the continued support of our current and new Partners, we will continue this work in 2019.

From the Chair

Like many of our IPFD Board members, who are well-respected leaders in the world of dogs, I wear several hats. In my roles as Chair of the IPFD, President of the Swedish Kennel Club, serving on the Faculty Board of the Swedish Agricultural University (home to the veterinary college), working within the animal insurance industry, co-chair of the major Swedish dog shelter organization, and in many other activities, it is very rewarding to be involved with many individuals and organizations that share a love of animals and a commitment to their health and well-being.

As Brenda said earlier, I too have seen many contrasts in 2018. The phenomenal commitment of dog owners to their animals is seen in their participation in events as diverse as 'dog dancing', to hunting, to field trials, to obedience and conformation shows. We have celebrated with many individuals who have devoted their entire lives and careers to dogs. But I have also seen frustration, sadness, and other emotions as people try to deal with considerable health issues at a personal, local, and international level.

I must echo the CEO's sentiments that the role and contributions of the IPFD are needed now even more acutely than ever. The vision of the founding and initiating Partners has been proven out, and we must seek an increasing body of like-minded organizations and individuals to sustain this work.

The potential for the HGTD and HSDD to collate and disseminate international breed-specific information is incredibly exciting. The potential for the IPFD to assist researchers and veterinarians in helping breeders and owners deal with inherited conditions is crucial.

For a small organization with modest resources, IPFD has flourished in the last four years...and the future is bright.



Photo by Johan Strindberg

Dr. Pekka Olson, Chair

Did you know?

Pekka's dog (pictured above) is a Basset Fauvre de Bretagne.



**SVENSKA
KENNELKLUBBEN**

"The IPFD has flourished in the last four years...and the future is bright."

— Dr. Pekka Olson, IPFD Chair

"The IPFD has an expanding role to serve as an independent voice in the often-controversial world of dog health and welfare."

— Dr. Brenda Bonnett, IPFD CEO

2018 IPFD Board of Directors

The [IPFD Board](#) is comprised of individuals with respected international reputations, who represent a broad array of stakeholders in dog health, well-being, and welfare, and who bring a range of backgrounds and abilities that support the goals and mission of the organization. They sit on the Board as individuals with commitment to the mission, vision, and goals of the International Partnership for Dogs.

Pekka Olson
DVM, Dr. hc
Chair, Sweden

Peter Friedrich
PhD, Professor
Germany

Patricia Olson
DVM, PhD, DACT, DACAW
USA

Caroline Kisko
Vice Chair, UK

Jean-Pierre Genevois
DVM, PhD, Professor Emeritus
France

Kirsi Sainio
PhD
Finland

IPFD Officers

Brenda N. Bonnett
DVM, PhD
Chief Executive Officer, Canada

Ulf Uddman
Chief Financial Officer, Sweden

[View Officer Bios](#)

Consultants

Aimee Llewellyn-Zaidi
HGTD Project Director

Ann Milligan
Content Manager

Dave St. Louis
Communications Specialist

James Skinner
Recording Secretary
(Time provided courtesy
of The Kennel Club, UK)

Robert Simons
Web Manager

Michael Edwards
IT Development

Provisionists
Web Hosting/Support

2018 Contributing Partners



2018 Collaborating Partners



*Sponsors of the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs initiative are listed on page 19.
[Read more about our Partners and Sponsors on DogWellNet.com](http://DogWellNet.com)*



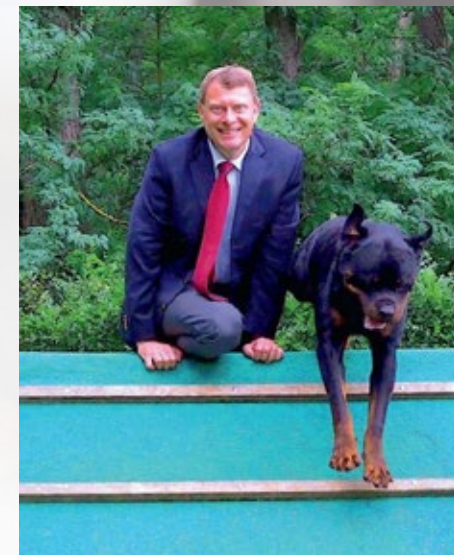
Jean-Pierre Genevois, DVM, PhD, IPFD Board

In 2018, Dr. Genevois was named Honorary Professor, small animal department, Lyon Veterinary School.

He co-authored two papers related to early measurement of hip-joint laxity, and he also wrote several papers related to hip dysplasia, elbow dysplasia, and lumbosacral transitional vertebrae (LTV), which were published in a number of breed club magazines.

Prof. Dr. Peter Friedrich, IPFD Board

In 2018, Prof. Dr. Friedrich continued his work to address the health and welfare implications of exaggerated interpretations of the Rottweiler breed standard, which he summarized in the article: [Questionable Phenotypic Traits in the Rottweiler](#), available on DogWellNet.com.



Kirsi Sainio, IPFD Board

Kirsi continues her efforts for healthy dogs through her research at the University of Helsinki, ongoing roles with the Finnish Kennel Club and the Nordic Kennel Union, as Chair of the FCI Scientific Committee, judging assignments, and with her own dogs.



Dr. Patricia Olson, IPFD Board

In 2018, Dr. Olson joined the board of directors for the Animal Assistance Foundation, a foundation dedicated to advance animal welfare through charitable, scientific, and educational means.

In 2019, Dr. Olson will be chairing the Animal Welfare Advisory Board for the Dog Aging Project at the University of Washington. With a goal to enroll 10,000 dogs and follow them throughout their lifetimes, the Dog Aging Project will assess causes for chronic diseases in older animals. The study is supported by the National Institutes of Aging.

Dr. Pekka Olson, Chair, IPFD Board

In February, Dr. Olson chaired a mandatory conference for show judges in Sweden. The conference theme was *Sustainability of Dog Breeds*, and featured a special session on the brachycephalic breeds.

Pekka also attended the FCI General Assembly, that amended its statutes to, among other things, more clearly point out the importance of health and welfare of dogs in their *Aims* paragraph.



Photo by Johan Strindberg



Dr. Brenda Bonnett, CEO, IPFD

Dr. Bonnett continues to address a wide group of international stakeholders. In 2018, her speaking engagements included seminars with breeders, vets, and welfare community in Ireland, as well as the French Bulldog Club of America (Brenda has [written about this seminar](#) in her blog on DogWellNet.com).



Ulf Uddman, CFO, IPFD Board

As CEO of the Swedish Kennel Club, Ulf oversaw a number of notable SKK accomplishments. Among them:

- A complete revamp of the SKK's member publication, *Hundsport*, which won 1st Prize among magazine producers for the biggest change of the year.
- The SKK's market share (dogs with a pedigree from the SKK) reached 67% – an increase from 62% in 2012.

Ulf is also Chair for Hundstallet (the largest dog shelter/relocation service in Sweden, run by the Swedish Dog Protection Association), which took care of approximately 500 dogs in 2018.



Photo by Chris Wellstead

Caroline Kisko, Vice Chair, IPFD Board

Caroline has kept a pack of pedigree Siberian Huskies for many years, but she is now reducing the numbers (natural wastage only!). Despite this, she managed to compete in the UK Sprint Racing Championship last winter, finishing with the Silver Medal in the three-dog class with homebred girls Laurel and Locket and borrowed dog Ciric.

A GROWING GLOBAL RESOURCE: DogWellNet.com

Our online platform functions as an information hub, providing links, documents, and additional resources to breeders and other stakeholders in the dog world.

8 Ways DogWellNet.com Became Even Better in 2018:

1 Launch of HGTD Quality Testing Database

The database catalogs data provided by genetic test providers (GTPs) to help consumers find the right genetic test provider & testing information for their dogs.

2 8 Issues of DogWellNet Digest

We published eight issues of our free online newsletter, DogWellNet.com Digest.

3 Online Donations

IPFD now accepts online donations in support of overall IPFD activities or HGTD specifically.

4 New Videos Feature

We added a new Videos section featuring clips from IPFD & other stakeholders focusing on important issues & topics in the dog world.

Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD)

About IPFD

Hot Topics

5 Breeds Database

We expanded our Breeds Database to 161 breeds, engaged breed clubs from numerous countries, health reps, & experts to provide new & updated content.

6 Expanded Global Reach

DogWellNet.com continues to expand its global reach with users in 165 countries.

7 New Language Tools

In June, we added new language tools, including translated navigation labels & tips for translating entire pages using popular web browsers.

8 GDPR Compliance

In May, we updated our privacy policies to comply with the new GDPR legislation in the UK.



FROM
AFFENPINSCHER
— TO —
YORKSHIRE
TERRIER

PEDIGREED BREEDS DATABASE

The Breeds section of DogWellNet.com provides information on Pedigreed Breeds, Native Breeds, & Additional Breed Resources.

Each breed listing includes breed-specific information such as:

- Breed Descriptions
- Breed Standards
- Breed-Specific Stats (e.g., Agria Insurance Data)
- Breeding/Health Strategy Docs
- Breed Clubs

...and much more!

IPFD's Pedigreed Breeds Database continues to grow, thanks to the efforts of stakeholders including Breed Experts, Health Committee Reps, & numerous Breed/Kennel Club contributors.



161 Total Breeds

From some of the most popular breeds to some of the rarest, our database provides a wealth of breed-specific information.



3 New Breeds

In 2018, we added new entries for the Canaan Dog, Cesky Terrier, & Russian Toy.



39 Updated Breeds

We updated breed listings for 39 breeds, from the Afghan Hound to the Swedish Laphund.



Native Breeds

We showcase Native Breeds by country - currently offering articles on the native breeds of Norway, Sweden, & Finland.



Additional Breed Resources

Look here for everything from breed names in different languages to breeds with Swedish Insurance Data from Agria Animal Insurance.

Coming Soon!



Health Strategies Database for Dogs (HSDD)

An important complement to the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD), the HSDD will consider the whole spectrum of health concerns within dog breeds.

IPFD Online

IPFD ONLINE: MAKING CONNECTIONS

IPFD relies on three key digital channels to stay connected with its vast network of Members, Partners, & other stakeholders around the globe:



DogWellNet.com



IPFD Social Media



DogWellNet Digest



- 28K Users in 165 countries
- 129K Pageviews
- 39K Sessions

Detailed information & links to resources for popular & rare breeds



Extensive resources on dog health, well-being, & welfare



More than 1000 page likes & followers on Facebook

A growing number of followers on Twitter



Informative videos on IPFD's YouTube page and handy links to Partners' video resources



A collection of the latest news from IPFD & DogWellNet.com

Free and available to the public on DogWellNet.com



Sent directly to our Members via email

THE BRACHYCEPHALIC ISSUE

For the health, well-being, and welfare of dogs and to support human-dog interactions

Why?

WHY are there literally 100s of articles, links, blogs, statistics, and more on DogWellNet.com on issues of health and welfare related to exaggerations of conformation?

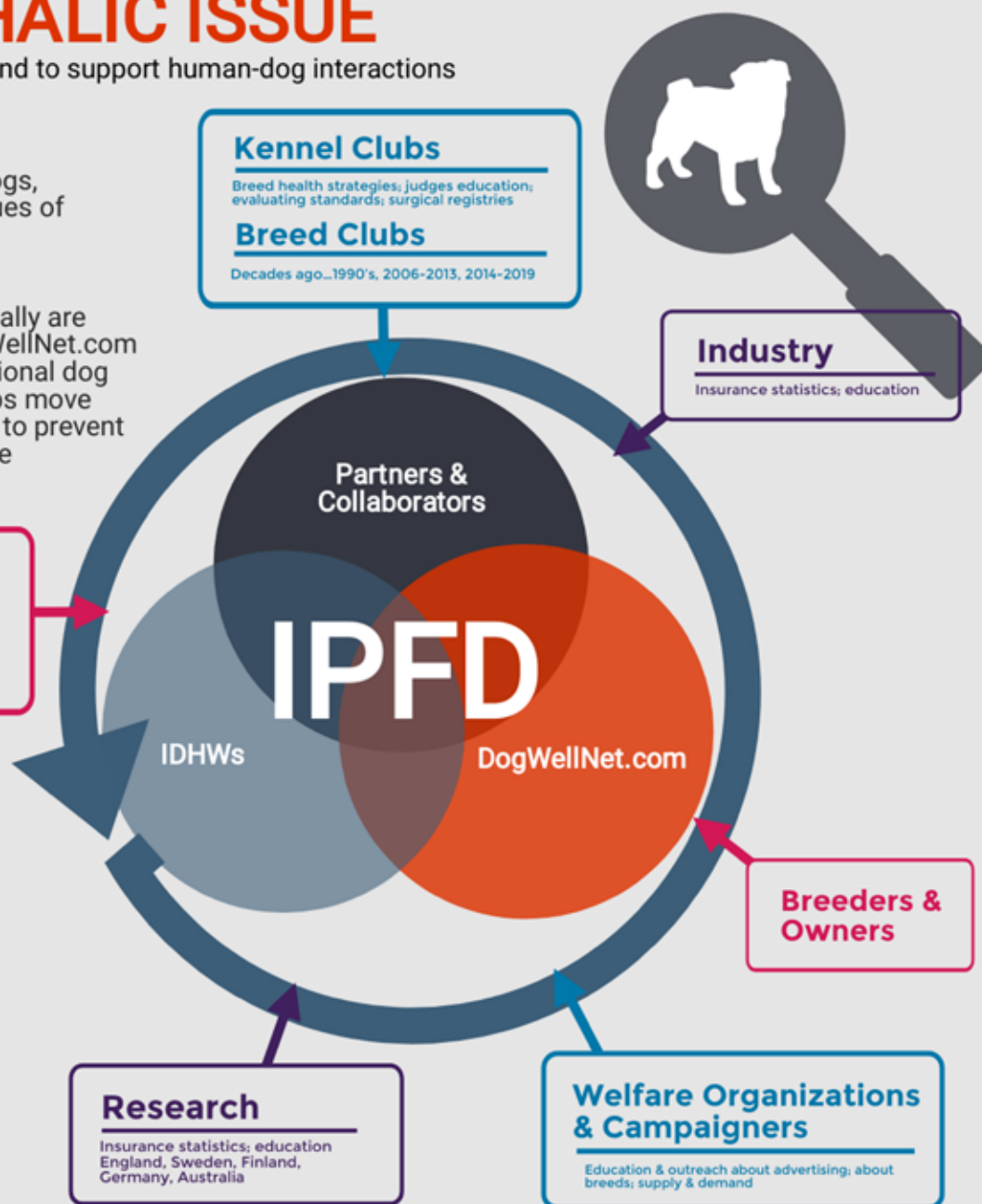
WHY? Because essentially all stakeholders globally are addressing these concerns. IPFD, through DogWellNet.com and the IDHWs, is a hub connecting the international dog community – to help multiple stakeholder groups move from information and communication to action; to prevent redundancy; to maximize efforts; and to promote collaboration and coordinated efforts.

A Hot Topic

The Brachycephalic Issue demonstrates the complexity of many challenges for health and welfare in dogs: human-dog interactions; emotional and personal considerations; conflicts and intricacies across stakeholder groups; effects on individual dogs and breeding decisions and whole breed populations; and challenges in communication.

Promoting healthier dogs and limiting welfare concerns requires a global effort, and IPFD is committed to assisting stakeholders in achieving their individual and collective goals.

DogWellNet.com and the IDHWs connect the international dog community – to help multiple stakeholder groups move from information and communication to action; to prevent redundancy; to maximize efforts; and to promote collaboration and coordinated efforts.



See a listing of our brachycephalic resources: articles, videos, breed data, blogs, and links:
<https://dogwellnet.com/content/international-actions/extremes-of-conformation-brachycephalics/>

International Dog Health Workshops:

The IPFD International Dog Health Workshops (IDHWs) bring together a wide range of stakeholders in dog health, science, and welfare to improve international sharing of information and resources, provide a forum for ongoing collaboration, and identify specific needs and actions to improve health, well-being, and welfare in dogs.

We continue to see the dividends of the important work done at the previous three IDHWs:

1st IDHW:
Stockholm, Sweden, June 2012
Hosted by the Swedish Kennel Club

**doghealth
workshop.com**
BREEDING HEALTHIER DOGS -
FROM ATTENTION AND AWARENESS TO ACTION!

2nd IDHW:
Dortmund, Germany, February 2015
Co-hosted by the German Kennel Club



3rd IDHW:
Paris, France, April 2017
Co-hosted by The French Kennel Club



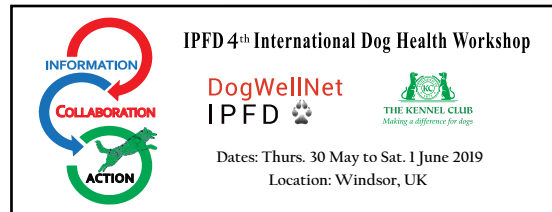
Following the 3rd IDHW, working groups were set up to create tools to help breed clubs accelerate the implementation of breed-health strategies, review aspects of extreme conformation, and share useful information on behavior.

The meeting also heralded the development of an online resource of relevant information describing quality measures for DNA testing – now known as the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD).

Outcomes from the 3rd IDHW have been summarized in the paper, [Moving from information and collaboration to action - report from the 3rd International Dog Health Workshop - Paris in April 2017](#), which was published in the prestigious journal, *Canine Genetics and Epidemiology*.



O'Neill et al. Canine Genetics and Epidemiology (2017) 4:16 DOI 10.1186/s40575-017-0054-4

4th IDHW:**Windsor, UK, May 2019***Co-hosted by The Kennel Club***Program Overview**

A major goal of the IDHWs – sharing of information and resources – occurs before, during, and after the workshop, in sessions and with posters.

The majority of time is spent interacting. Limited plenary talks have been chosen to highlight and cross-over Themes, and most time is spent in smaller group breakout sessions. In plenary sharing sessions, Theme Coordinators present results of discussions within the breakout sessions, including key issues, priorities, gaps, and challenges, as well as action plans and steps for moving forward.

In the final Summary session, we look to identify convergence across Themes; to confirm priorities for ongoing work; and to, wherever possible, have associated with actions, the names of individuals and/or organizations agreeing to take on a role.

Breakout Sessions

The breakout sessions are meant to engage all participants in discussion, and to some extent, the issues and priorities are driven by participants. However, Working Groups (WGs) identify some possible discussion points and outcomes.

4th IDHW Themes

- *The Concept of 'Breed'*
- *Supply and Demand*
- *Breed-Specific Health Strategies*
- *Genetic Testing for Dogs*
- *Exaggerations and Extremes In Dog Conformation*

General Goals and Outcomes - All Themes

By the conclusion of the workshop, participants will leave with a clear sense of:

- Key decisions on priorities/needs within the Theme.
- Remaining gaps, challenges, and controversies.
- List of specific tasks/actions to be undertaken over the next two years, together with names of individuals and organizations who have agreed to assist.
- Personal commitment to participate, how they will help achieve the desired outcomes.

Online IDHW Resources

[Pre-and post-workshop resources](#) from all IDHWs (as applicable) are available on DogWellNet.com.

Pre-Meeting Materials

- Programs
- Speaker Lists
- Theme Resources
- Reading Material

Post Meeting Materials

- Speaker Presentations
- Posters
- Reports (workshop outcomes, etc.)

Did you know?

140 decision leaders from 23 countries attended the 3rd IDHW in 2017.



Image courtesy of Ichigo

***"Dogs are not our whole life,
but they make our lives whole."***

— Roger Caras



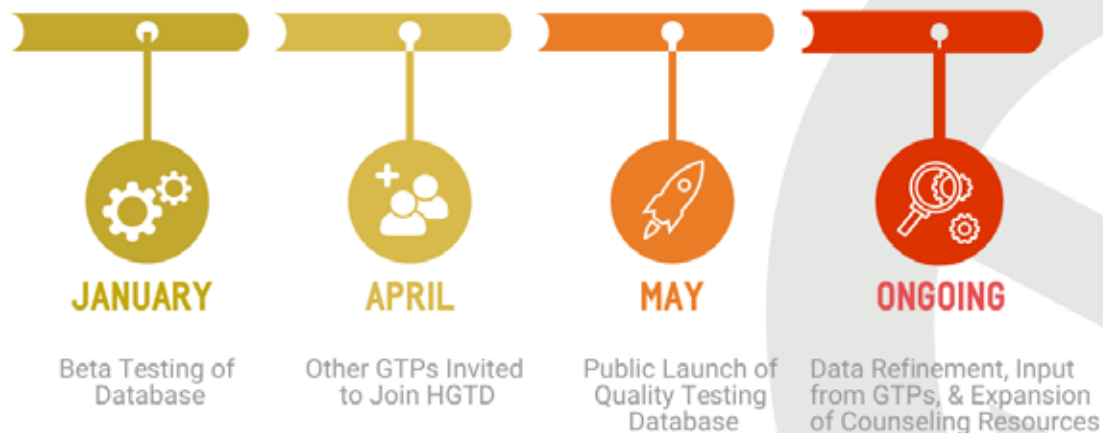

 View HGTD Resources
 online at:

<https://dogwellnet.com/ctp/>

HGTD GOAL:

Improve standardization of, & access to, robust genetic testing to support health improvements & a sustainable future for healthy dogs; Serve as a portal for information on Genetic Testing Providers (labs), genetic tests, & tests by breed.

2018 MILESTONES



2 KEY HGTD COMPONENTS


 Quality Testing
 Database

 Genetic Counselling
 Resources

HGTD QUALITY TESTING DATABASE (as of 31 December 2018)

59 GTPs

List of 59 academic & commercial genetic test providers (GTPs) in 17 countries


26 Participating
 Test Providers

Info on accreditation & tests for 26 collaborating GTPs


300+

Phenotypes/tests across all breeds/types in searchable database

HGTD in the News

The HGTD was [featured in coverage from a number of publications](#), including *Nature*, *The Atlantic*, *Animal Law Update*, *WBUR Boston (NPR)*, *Science*, *Koiramme*, and *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association (JAVMA) News*.



"Pet Genomics Medicine Runs Wild": IPFD Joins Genetic Testing Conversation
In the *Nature* commentary, "[Pet genomics medicine runs wild](#)" (published 25 July 2018), the authors described the myriad challenges related to genetic testing in pets. Although the authors of the commentary justifiably called for this segment to have some controls, there is no regulatory body that has the authority to impose standards on this burgeoning and unregulated industry - especially not on an international basis or in a timely fashion. In fact, their concerns reflect those underpinning the HGTD, which was not mentioned in the article.

IPFD's Response

We published a response, "[Genetics and Genomics for Dogs: Balancing daunting challenges and great potential](#)" (posted on DogWellNet.com 26 July 2018 and updated 30 July), which acknowledged the cautions being raised in the *Nature* commentary and subsequent articles (*WBUR* and *Science*), while also recognizing the many good quality Genetic Test Providers and availability of tests with the potential to support individual dog health and/or breed population health.

IPFD's response also included an overview of the HGTD initiative and the efforts of its diverse group of stakeholders to address the challenges of pet genomics, while providing a practical and effective tool to support consumers, veterinarians, and researchers in ensuring the health and well-being of dogs.

On 03 October 2018, IPFD Collaborators Gregoire Leroy and Katariina Mäki, as well as IPFD CEO Brenda Bonnett, published a [short reaction to the previous commentary](#), in *Nature*: Leroy, et al, *Nature* 562, 39 (2018).

We are grateful for the ongoing interest in this important area of genetics and genomics, and for the coverage we have had for the HGTD across various sectors.

We welcome additional participant GTPs, more collaborators from any stakeholders concerned with dog health and welfare, the advice of experts, the participation of breed clubs and other consumer groups. And we stand ready to provide more information to ongoing discussions.

Please feel free to contact us as we work together for healthy dogs and to support those who breed and own them.

Did you know?

You can make a donation to support the HGTD on DogWellNet.com?



2018 HGTD Contributing Leadership Sponsors

Agria Animal Insurance
American Kennel Club
AKC Canine Health Foundation
Finnish Kennel Club

German Kennel Club
Irish Kennel Club
International Partnership for Dogs
Norwegian Kennel Club

Société Centrale Canine
Swedish Kennel Club
The Kennel Club

2018 HGTD Leadership Genetic Testing Providers



2018 HGTD Leadership Collaborators

University of Sydney OMIA

Vetstream

WSAVA

How You Can Support the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs:

- **Genetic Testing Providers (GTPs)** recognizing the importance of supporting breeders, veterinarians, and owners in accessing robust genetic testing can visit DogWellNet.com for more information or contact us directly.
- **Organizations** that wish to promote health improvements and a sustainable future for healthy dogs can contact us to learn more about sponsorship opportunities.
- **Individuals** can make an online donation to support HGTD on DogWellNet.com.

HGTD Contacts: Project Director, [Aimee Llewellyn-Zaidi](#) | IPFD CEO, [Dr. Brenda Bonnett](#)

"The Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs represents one small step for IPFD & its Partners...one giant leap for dogkind."

***– Aimee Llewellyn-Zaidi,
HGTD Project Director***



IPFD: A TRULY "PEOPLE DRIVEN" ORGANIZATION

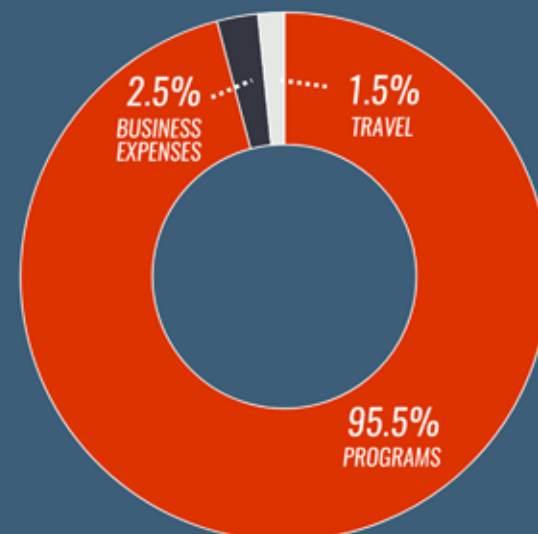
We allocate the bulk of our financial resources to maintain a small but dedicated team to manage our modest infrastructure & facilitate the activities of our stakeholders, with the aim of achieving our collective goals.

2018 INCOME OVERVIEW



TOTAL INCOME
€ 192,445

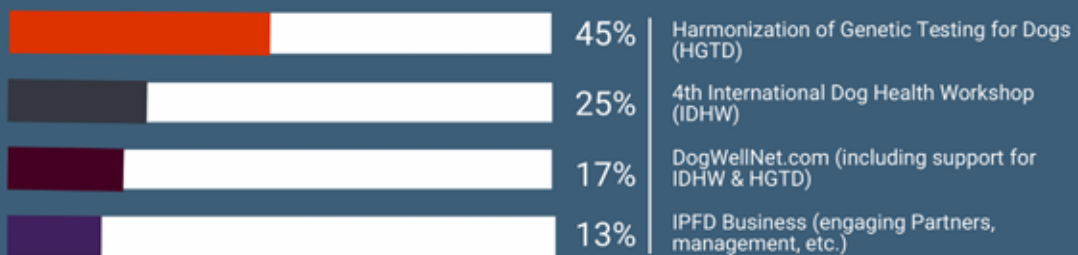
2018 EXPENSE SUMMARY



TOTAL EXPENSES
€ 192,390

PROGRAMS BREAKDOWN

Approximate distribution of effort within Programs in 2018.



ADMINISTRATION NOTES:

Total Assets (end of 2018): €125,874

Auditor: BDO International

We thank the Swedish Kennel Club (SKK) for providing bookkeeping & accounting services.

All Administration figures approximate.

Positive Progress ...and More to Do



The brachycephalic issue is one requiring actions from multiple stakeholder groups.

The Brachycephalic Issue

In November 2015 – toward the end of the first year of DogWellNet.com – our CEO, Dr. Brenda Bonnett, posted a blog entitled, [The Brachycephalic Issue: Evidence, Emotion and Challenged Beliefs](#). It was written in response to the increased focus on health and welfare in brachycephalic dogs from many sectors of the dog world and society, in general. It was written especially because of the intensity of discussions – at professional meetings, online, on social media – within and across stakeholder groups.

Three years later, the brachycephalic issue (as described previously in this report) remains an example of a complex subject, one requiring actions from many groups, and yet, one where

opinions, experience, and intentions are not consistent within or between groups; one rife with emotions. It is a topic where the best for dogs and their people will be achieved by coordinating multi-stakeholder, international work, eliminating redundancy and building on the experience, and expertise of all stakeholders. The IPFD, through DogWellNet.com and the International Dog Health Workshops (IDHWs), is supporting these efforts while providing a broad view, based on reporting activities, and providing resources and balanced communication.

An added complexity for this topic relates to the history of efforts and how it differs across stakeholder groups. The [World Small Animal Veterinary Association \(WSAVA\)](#) raised this issue as early as 1967. However, although included as breeds with exaggerated features, brachycephalics were not the main focus, because at that time, the breeds were not common. The explosion in interest and proposed actions from the veterinary world since 2015, reflects, among other factors, that concerns are increased because of the skyrocketing numbers of these breeds (for examples, see [Brenda's blog and presentation to the FBDCA](#)).

On DogWellNet.com, we have amassed breed-specific resources pertinent to brachycephalics highlighting how kennel and breed clubs have been addressing

issues in these breeds since as early as 1991 ([see interview from Germany](#)). For the 4th time, the IDHW (May 2019) will include a theme on issues of exaggerated conformation. A focus will be on outcomes, i.e. for all the attention, how far have 'we' come in improving the health and welfare of these breeds? As we move forward, how will we know our actions are having the desired effects? The startling increase in popularity of brachycephalics clearly reflects a failure of communication efforts directed at educating consumers. Why? This will be part of discussions in more than one theme, including "Supply and Demand" ([see 4th IDHW program](#)).

Genetic Testing

Many other challenges and opportunities are also facing the international dog community – many complex, many rapidly evolving. Genetic testing was called out this year as being unregulated and running wild. The IPFD was able to



The IPFD has become an important voice on the issue of Genetic Testing for Dogs.

present a more balanced view that stressed not only challenges but great potential, again together with [Partners, Collaborators, and Sponsors](#). With the [Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs \(HGTD\)](#) initiative, we are bringing together genetic test providers to be transparent about their practices, to support balanced genetic counselling, and to be open to best practices. The HGTD and our efforts received lots of positive [press coverage](#) in 2018. We are engaging the research community to maximize their potential to promote robust genetic testing for the good of dogs and their people.

Health Strategies Database

New in 2019 will be the Health Strategies Database for Dogs (HSDD), which will be similar in function to the HGTD, but which will also include all conditions for which any health strategy provider (kennel club, breed club, veterinary organization, etc.) has made recommendations/requirements for health monitoring in a breed. With the global sharing of dogs and their genetic material, it is crucial that those evaluating and planning within their country are able to easily see what issues are occurring in other locations.

This resource will reduce redundancy of efforts and allow owners, breeders, and those counseling them to have easy access to the 'Big Picture' for breeds so that all relevant conditions are

considered, not simply those for which a genetic test is marketed.

Other IPFD developments, such as the Expert Panel initiative, will further support informed decision making.

Final Thoughts

In closing, there have been remarkable steps forward for the IPFD and our stakeholders. The IPFD is grateful for the interest and support from all our [Partners, Collaborators, Sponsors](#), members, and followers; [the media](#); and the dog world in general. The brightest future depends on a sustained commitment from the international dog community to sharing resources and coordinating efforts. The IPFD is dedicated to continuing to help our stakeholders to address their priorities.

With the continued and expanding participation of those 'on the front lines', including kennel and breed clubs, genetic test providers, veterinary, welfare and academic groups, industry, and others, the IPFD is poised to do all in our power to enhance the health, well-being, and welfare of dogs – and to support human-dog interactions.

"Purebred dogs, sometimes to their misfortune, are dependent on humans, and it is therefore down to mankind to demonstrate moderation in all things."

– Prof. Raymond Triquet, renowned judge, dog fancier, and trailblazer for over 50 years

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