

A Continuing & Sustainable Development

The International Partnership for Dogs and DogWellNet.com have come into being following a long history of efforts by many stakeholders to address dog health and well-being.

IPFD's development was inaugurated under the patronage of the Fédération Cynologique Internationale (FCI). The major contributors (in-kind and funding) since 2011 have included the Agria Animal Insurance-Swedish Kennel Club Research Fund, the Swedish Kennel Club, and the FCI, as well as other national kennel clubs (from Finland, The UK, France, Germany, Ireland, USA, Canada, The Netherlands, and Italy).

In the following pages is an abbreviated timeline of key developments highlighting the complexity of issues addressed by IPFD and DogWellNet and an acknowledgment of some of the many supporters and collaborators who have contributed directly or indirectly to this important work.

1994 - Present – Historical Underpinning:

- Collaborative work to develop and use the Agria Pet Insurance Database (Agria) to provide breed-specific statistics on disease and death in dogs
- Partnership with Swedish Kennel Club (SKK); material used by all Swedish breed clubs to develop breed-specific breeding strategy document (RAS), also used to support Breed Specific Instructions for judges program. Breed Updates also used in Denmark and Norway
- Many international presentations and workshops to various stakeholder groups: breeders, breed clubs and health committees; international veterinary and scientific congresses; human-animal interaction meetings; dog judges; government welfare committees, in addition to numerous publications in refereed scientific journals
- Leading national kennel clubs (KCs) and other stakeholders, including Agria Animal Insurance, Fédération Cynologique Internationale (FCI), the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA), and many professional, welfare, academic and other organizations own work on issues of health, well-being, and welfare of dogs; increasingly apparent that many important issues are truly international in nature, and many of these groups increase collaborations with others

From 2008...

- Kennel clubs (KCs) everywhere under pressure to improve and expand activities under almost all areas of their mandate (e.g., breeding, legislation, information technology, etc.); Two global examples:
 - Media and societal pressure about health, well-being, and welfare in dogs
 - Need to be more proactive in addressing issues and highlighting positives of dogs, in general, purebred dogs and shows/performance and breeding
- Regulatory issues, governments, etc., e.g., dangerous dog legislation, restrictions, guidelines for dog breeders (especially commercial)
- Similar efforts in many countries; poor synthesis of existing information, decisions not always evidence-based
- KCs, breeders, and other stakeholders need improved access to existing information and resources
- Many stakeholders/KCs have much to share; many resources difficult to locate, language may pose difficulties
- Once information is found or assembled, a need for synthesis and expert evaluation to promote guidance- and evidence-based decision making
- Issues affecting the health and welfare of dogs global in scope; international collaboration and co-operation needed

Fall 2011:

- Dr. Brenda Bonnett makes a proposal to develop a canine health and welfare information network, which is funded by Agria-SKK Research Foundation, to:
 - Capitalize on the strengths of the international cynological community through enhanced sharing of information and expertise and facilitation of on-going collaboration
 - Present a 'united front' (all KCs/stakeholders together for the good of dogs)
 - Build a sustainable model to accomplish goals/address needs. Specifically:
 - Create an Organization – i.e., The International Partnership for Dogs (originally 'Sharing and Caring for Dogs) – that will oversee development of the internet resource (DogWellNet.com) to facilitate partnerships and sharing of costs for long term functionality
 - Initially to be organized under the direction of the SKK due to its extensive experience with Information Technology (IT) development and a willingness to commit further resources to this development; other partners will be a key part of the development.
 - Enhance distribution of information to underpin decision-making
 - Develop and support international partnerships
 - Provide a forum for informed discussion by stakeholder experts
 - Present this initiative as part of the Dog Health Workshop in Stockholm in June 2012, underpinning development of international platforms
 - Agria-SKK Research Foundations directs project team to first meet with FCI, as a globally recognized leader in cynology, to determine if they are willing and able to take a leadership role in the development of this resource

A Continuing & Sustainable Development

Spring 2012 - December 2013:

- Work with/support from FCI:
 - Presentation of background and proposed structure for the information network, at that time called Sharing and Caring for Dogs, to the FCI General Committee (GC) in Vienna
 - GC decides the initiative is relevant and refers the project to the Working Group 2012 (originally called Back to the Standards)
 - Working Group presents a proposal to the GC in October 2012 (no decision from the FCI at that time)
 - At the end of March 2013, the GC allocates funds for a contract with an IT company to help further define the platform for the Information Network and to engage Dr. Bonnett to organize, support, and summarize that work; work overseen by Ulf Uddman of the SKK; presentation on the initiative to the General Assembly in Budapest in May
 - Summer 2013: FCI allocates further funds to continue development and authorizes Project Team to engage other potential partners
 - Fall 2013: Formal proposal submitted to the GC and presentation made (FCI decides not to take primary responsibility for this development)

- Parallel Development:
 - June 2012: Dog Health Workshop takes place in Sweden (organized by SKK with other partners, funded by SKK and other sponsors)
 - Over 20 countries represented by 120 geneticists, researchers, veterinarians, dog breeders, cynologists (many from FCI), judges, welfare organizations, government/regulatory representatives, and others; Sharing and Caring initiative and design seen as an appropriate platform to facilitate the international collaboration and distribution of knowledge, expertise and experience that all agreed was crucial to addressing issues related to health and well-being of dogs at a global level
 - In final summary session, participants collectively agreed on need for a collaborative structure, i.e., a foundation/organization that would bring together stakeholders in dog health and well-being; representatives of FCI, The Kennel Club (i.e., Steve Dean, Chairman), and various FCI member KCs (e.g., all Nordic clubs and Germany) indicated support and willingness to spearhead development of this organization; as needs/desired initiatives identified by stakeholders were similar to work started with Agria-SKK and FCI, it was decided to await developments on that front rather than possibly duplicating efforts

Project Team (2012 - 2013):

- FCI and SKK/Agria-SKK Research Fund supports ongoing development
- Many experts volunteer time and expertise
- Discussions ongoing with other potential partners (other KCs, etc.) who self-fund to attend meetings and support experts and staff to provide information and expertise, including The Kennel Club (UK), and the national KCs of Sweden, Norway, France, Germany, and Finland, among others

December 2013 - Spring 2014:

- Funding provided by Founding Partners to support basic web development by Dr. Brenda Bonnett, together with Topshare (IT company in The Netherlands)
- Continued meetings and communication with other national KCs to refine possible structure and function of the IPFD

June 2014:

- Confirmation of Commitment by the Founding Partners: The national KCs of Sweden, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, The UK, The Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (USA), and the Agria-SKK Research Fund

Our First Decade: Timeline

“ I’m truly excited to see what we can accomplish together as we move into the second decade of the International Partnership for Dogs! ”

— Marc Ralsky, CEO, International Partnership for Dogs

IPFD: A Vision Becomes Reality

- The first meeting of the Board of the International Partnership for Dogs was held 28 August at the Kennel Club in London. The Board is comprised of Pekka Olson (Chair, Sweden), Caroline Kisko (Vice Chair, UK), Eddie Dziuk (USA), Peter Friedrich (Germany), Jean-Pierre Genevois (France), Patricia Olson (USA), Kirsi Sainio (Finland). Brenda Bonnett (Canada) is Chief Executive Officer and Ulf Uddman (Sweden) is Chief Financial Officer.

A Community Takes Shape

- Launch of DogWellNet.com at the 2nd International Dog Health Workshop in Dortmund, Germany
- American Kennel Club joins as an Initiating Partner; Société Centrale Canine (French Kennel Club) agrees to host 3rd IDHW

A Community Growing Strong

- IPFD publishes IPFD Annual Report 2015: A Community Takes Shape
- Launch of the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs initiative
- First issue of DogWellNet Digest e-newsletter
- Launch of IPFD Summer Student projects with an outstanding veterinary student from Colorado State University

Building for the Future

- IPFD publishes IPFD Annual Report 2016: A Community Growing Strong
- IPFD Co-hosts the 3rd International Dog Health Workshop (IDHW) with the French Kennel Club (SCC) in Paris
- Engagement of first 17 Leadership Sponsor Genetic Test Providers/Labs for the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD) initiative; HGTD online resource enters Beta Testing phase
- Collaborating Partner, Canine Genetics and Epidemiology, publishes IPFD paper: Moving from information and collaboration to action: report from the 3rd International Dog Health Workshop, Paris in April 2017
- Second IPFD Summer Student project grows out of the 3rd IDHW, addressing issues of antibiotic resistance



August 2014



2015



2016



2017

Our First Decade: Timeline

Hitting Our Stride

- IPFD publishes IPFD Annual Report 2017: Building for the Future
- Launch of Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD) Quality Testing Database
- Engagement of additional HGTD initiative Leadership Sponsor Genetic Test Providers/Labs
- Planning continues for the 4th International Dog Health Workshop (IDHW) in the UK in 2019, co-hosted by the UK Kennel Club

A Growing Voice

- IPFD publishes IPFD Annual Report 2018: Hitting Our Stride
- The Canadian Kennel Club (CKC) joins IPFD as Contributing Partner
- Raad van Beheer (The Dutch Kennel Club) joins IPFD as Contributing Partner
- The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) changes status to IPFD Collaborating Partner
- IPFD and The Kennel Club co-host the 4th International Dog Health Workshop (IDHW) in Windsor, UK
- IPFD welcomes five new Board members: Bill Lambert, IPFD Vice-Chair, (UK); Dave Eikelberg (USA); Marty Greer (USA); Grégoire Leroy (France); and Barbara Thiel (Germany). Board Members transitioning out at the end of 2019 include: Caroline Kisko (UK), Jean-Pierre Genevois (France), and Patricia N. Olson (USA)

A Year Like No Other

- IPFD publishes IPFD Annual Report 2019: A Growing Voice
- Report on the 4th IDHW is published in the online journal Canine Medicine and Genetics
- New International Working Group on Extreme Conformation in Dogs (IWGECD), (prioritized in the Extremes theme at the 4th IDHW) is enacted
- IPFD launches Get a GRIHP! on Breed Health Initiative, a series of articles on the Big Picture of health and welfare for specific breeds
- Collaborating Partner, The World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA), begins publishing Dog Breeds: What You Need to Know, a new regular feature in their online news section
- IPFD welcomes new Collaborating Partner, The Black Russian Terrier Club of America (BRTCA), the AKC Parent Club for the Black Russian Terrier



2018



2019



2020

Our First Decade: Timeline

A World of Change

- IPFD publishes IPFD Annual Report 2020: A Year Like No Other
- New Key Comment feature for the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD) highlights tests with important information related to the relevance of the test for searched breed
- Updates improve the look and feel of HGTD searches by displaying simplified paw-print Breed Relevance Ratings (BRRs), as well as beautiful illustrations of the breeds and links to more breed resources.
- IPFD hosts its first virtual workshop on 28 September, with more than 35 Genetic Test Providers, kennel club and IPFD representatives, and other experts from across the globe discussing and sharing information around challenges relating to standardizing genetic reports
- Dr. Brenda Bonnett steps down as CEO on 31 October and continues as IPFD’s Veterinary Science Officer
- Katariina Mäki joins IPFD as Business and Project Coordinator in August, 2021 and assumes the role of Acting CEO as of 1 November, 2021
- IPFD publishes new Globally Relevant Integrated Health Profiles (GRIHPs) for 7 breeds including: Golden Retrievers, Bernese Mountain Dogs, Black Russian Terriers, Pugs, Finnish Spitz, Rhodesian Ridgebacks, and Rottweilers
- Supported initiative out of the 4th International Dog Health Workshop (IDHW): the creation of the International Collaborative on Extreme Conformation in Dogs (ICECDogs), an independent group supporting national multi-stakeholder organizations.
- IPFD contributes information for eight breeds in the WSAVA Bulletin in 2021
- Jenni Uski (Finland) joins IPFD as a Content Assistant to assist in the creation of new GRIHPs, development of the Health Strategy Database for Dogs, and updates to our Pedigree Breeds database

A New Chapter

- IPFD publishes IPFD Annual Report 2021: A World of Change
- IPFD hosts second virtual workshop on Genetic Diversity
- Founding CEO Dr. Brenda Bonnett retires from IPFD
- IPFD publishes new Globally Relevant Integrated Health Profiles (GRIHPs) for breeds including: Whippets, Belgian Shepherds, English Bulldogs, Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terriers, and Dalmatians, with more to follow.
- Marc Ralsky joins IPFD as new CEO on 3 October

A Decade of Collaboration

- IPFD publishes IPFD Annual Report 2022: A New Chapter
- IPFD hosts third virtual workshop on Parentage Profiling for Kennel Clubs
- IPFD welcomes Italy’s national kennel club, ENCI – Ente Nazionale della Cinofilia Italiana, as Contributing Partner
- IPFD launches Health Strategies Database for Dogs (HSDD)
- Ongoing creation of Get a GRIHP! articles for breeds
- IPFD and Orivet host virtual workshop, Breeding for Health and Purpose (Oceania Region)
- IPFD and Finnish Kennel Club announce details of 5th International Dog Health Workshop (IDHW): Helsinki, 13-15 June 2024
- IPFD and Embark host virtual workshop, Breeding for Health – Supporting “Whole Dog” Health from Planning to Pregnancy
- Dino Muto (President, ENCI) is elected to the IPFD Board



2021



2022



2023

Looking Ahead: 2024 & Beyond

2024 promises to be an exciting, busy year for the International Partnership for Dogs. Here's a look at some of the key initiatives and project updates planned for this year and beyond.



5th International Dog Health Workshop, Helsinki, Finland

A diverse group of stakeholders will gather in Helsinki from 13-15 June to gain insights from some of the dog world's foremost experts, set action plans for collaborative efforts, and celebrate IPFD's 10th Anniversary. More details on the 5th IDHW are provided later in this report.



DogWellNet.com: New & Improved Website

IPFD's Consulting Team and IT consultants are working to re-design and streamline DogWellNet.com, with the first phase scheduled for completion in time for the 5th IDHW in June.



IPFD Breeder Program

IPFD is working toward the rollout of a searchable, international database to identify participating breeders and their individual dogs, with the goal of describing both a minimum and ideal standard of genetic testing for dogs – based on available research to reduce the risks of testable, known inherited diseases; improve identification/heritage traceability; and support breeders, kennel, and breed clubs in improving canine health.



Virtual International Dog Health Meetings

First introduced as a measure to facilitate discussion of key issues during the pandemic, IPFD's Virtual Dog Health meetings have proven popular among key stakeholders around the world. We're currently in talks with our supporters to host more online talks in the latter half of 2024.



Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs

IPFD continues to expand the content and features within the Harmonization of Genetic Testing for Dogs (HGTD), in conjunction with the re-design of DogWellNet.com. Recruitment of new participating Genetic Test Providers and HGTD project sponsors is ongoing.



Strategic Partnerships

In 2024, IPFD's consulting team will continue its work to strengthen existing relationships and establish new partnerships to support IPFD ongoing projects and to fund new initiatives such as the IPFD Breeder Program.