

FALL 2025

WASHINGTON BRANCH AALAS



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AALAS National Meeting
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District 8 2026 meeting
"Work Smarter, Not Harder"
April 8th-10th 2026
Burlingame, CA

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CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

Volunteers Always Needed!



There are a lot of obvious benefits to volunteering with WBAALAS —a sense of accomplishment, giving back to the LAS community, gaining perspective, and meeting new people. But did you know that volunteering is a **RESUME BOOSTER**? In these times of slim budgets and limited promotions, volunteering with WBAALAS offers you the opportunity to build transferrable skills!

Here are 3 reasons volunteering with WBAALAS is a smart career move:

Develop new skills or sharpen existing ones. Volunteering can be a way to get training and practice in areas your current role doesn't provide.

- Project management: organizing events or fundraising efforts are highly desirable skills
- Communication skills: consistently ranked in the top ten desirable skills by employer surveys
- Managing a team: many projects require a group effort, and a leader to coordinate it
- Accounting skills: familiarity with accounting enables you to manage at higher levels in a company

Develop professional relationships. You never know who you'll meet volunteering with WBAALAS. Volunteering helps you develop new networks, through which you will hear about job openings, training opportunities, and networking events.

Add experience. Volunteer experience is professional experience, and it belongs on your resume. Using your time to gain new skills and help your professional community highlights your willingness to jump in, learn new things, and do more.

CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

Volunteers Always Needed!

Committee Positions:

- **Program committee:** Helps plan all branch sponsored meetings and activities (time commitment varies on activities).
- **Newsletter committee:** Disseminate information about the national, regional and local AALAS organizational affairs as well as any other pertinent information to the members via a newsletter. (10+ hours a month).
- **Social media:** Help update/post on WBAALAS Facebook and LinkedIn accounts.
- **Nominations and Elections Committee:** Solicit nominations, give instructions on voting in the elections, tally votes, give results to secretary.
- **Awards Committee:** Solicit nominations for each award and submit names of winners. Ordering award plaques.
- **Membership committee:** prepare reports of membership to the board of directors, maintain membership list, reports to secretary.
- **Management Information System Committee:** Maintaining and updating the branch website and email accounts.
- **Ad Hoc:** occasionally we will need other help, such as setting up or cleaning up after events, or someone to assist with registration/sign in, placing fliers etc.

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Join our private Facebook group to stay up to date on our HeroRAT, see events happening with WBAALAS, and share posts with others! Send an email to secretary@WBAALAS.org with the email you used to sign up for Facebook. You will receive an invite to join the private group!

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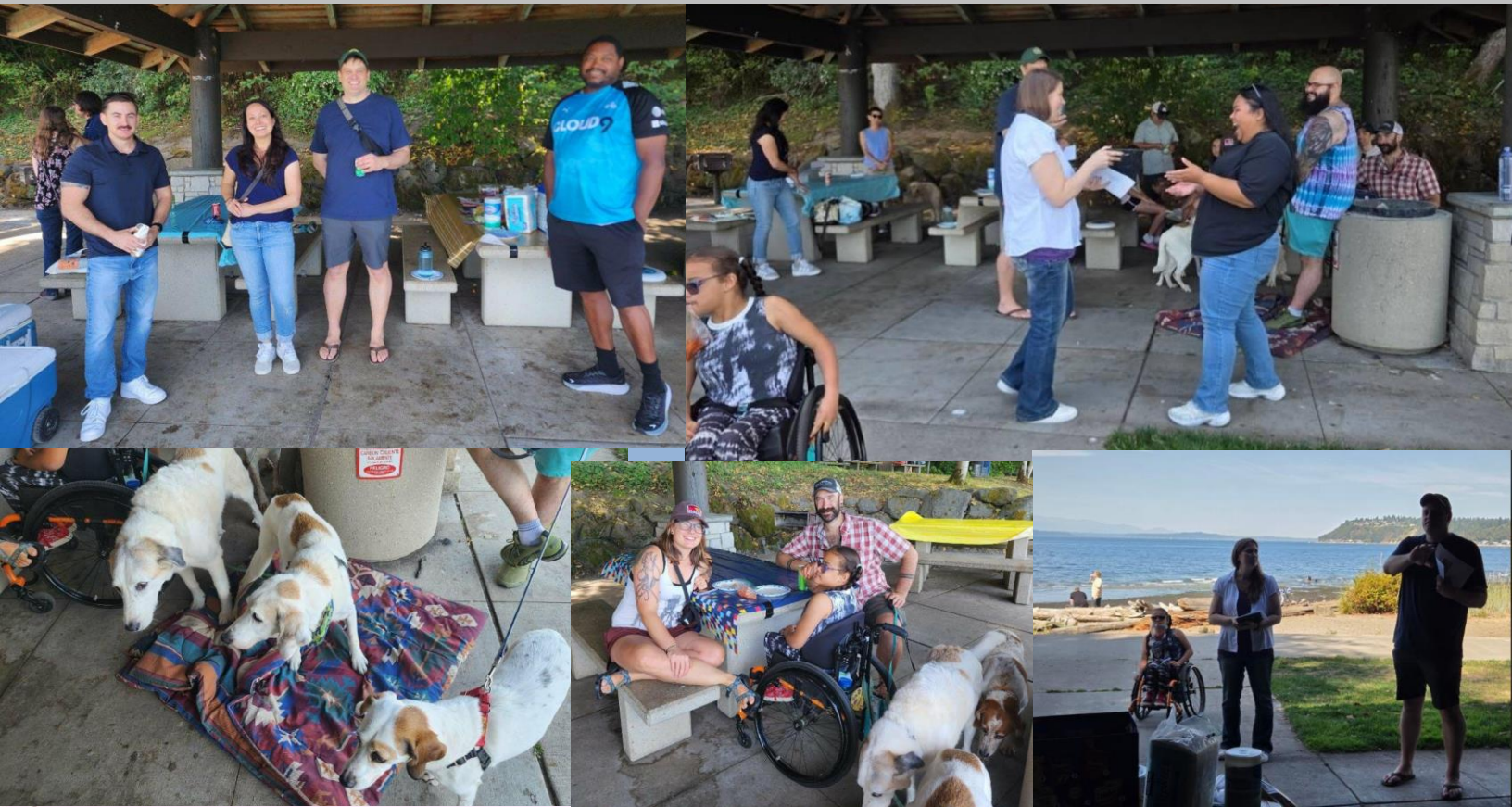
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Learning Library
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Exam Prep Courses
(Kizer Learning)

The AALAS Learning Library provides training that is essential for technicians, veterinarians, managers, IACUC members, and investigators working with animals in a research or education setting.

Washington Branch AALAS is proud to be able to offer free access to the AALAS Learning Library to all Branch members!

Research, husbandry, and veterinary staff can earn continuing education credits to maintain certification and licensure (**up to 34 courses approved by AAVSB for RACE CEs**). Check out the over 238 courses available by downloading the [course catalog](#).

ALAT, LAT, and LATG Exam Prep Courses

We've partnered with Kizer Learning to offer free enrollment in their innovative exam prep courses.

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AUG 19 • EPISODE 29 • 33 MIN

Episode 29 | New Agents in Anaesthesia: The Use of Grapiprant in Rhesus Macaques with Dr. Lauren Wierenga

The LAST Word: An AALAS Podcast

▶ Play

New agents in veterinary anesthesia are changing the game. In this episode, we explore Grapiprant, a groundbreaking nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) from the newer piroxicam class. We are joined by Dr. Lauren Wierenga, DVM, a staff veterinarian at Northern. We hear her elaborate on the importance of NSAIDs in treatment approaches, why and how she chose to tailor and design this PK study, and the findings and limitations of her work. She discusses how patient age may influence the drug's efficacy and also shares different aspects that surprised her during the process of the project. Dr. Wierenga also shares her final thoughts on the safety and effectiveness of Grapiprant and its potential role in a multimodal pain management approach.

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The Veterinary Consortium for Research Animal Care and Welfare Survey on Revisions to the Eighth Edition of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*

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The Veterinary Consortium for Research Animal Care and Welfare (VCRACW or Consortium) was established in 2019 to provide accurate information to the public, lawmakers, and the scientific community about the veterinary care and welfare of research animals. The consortium includes 2 representatives from 4 member organizations: AALAS, American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine (ACLAM), Association of Primate Veterinarians (APV), and American Society of Laboratory Animal Practitioners (ASLAP). As time for revision of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (*Guide*) approaches, the Consortium sought to conduct a survey of the animal research community with the goal of generating objective data and providing analysis that would identify priorities for updating the *Guide*. An initial survey was conducted of stakeholders from the 4 member organizations. “Chapter 3 Environment, Housing, and Management” was identified as most in need of revision. The “Terrestrial Housing” section was ranked most in need of revision, followed by the “Terrestrial Environment” and “Terrestrial Management” sections, all from Chapter 3. Of the top ten topics the respondents identified that needed revision, 9 were from Chapter 3. Open-ended questions asked respondents to describe key issues that needed to be revised and what new topics should be added, including references. Most responses (199) related to the revision of Chapter 3 and focused on space requirements and environment. New topics proposed for inclusion ranged from additional information on ferrets, agricultural species, and cephalopods to new sections on mental health for employees and study design and additional information pertaining to operations. As a follow-up to the original survey, 5 additional questions were posed to ACLAM diplomates and National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) members. These questions focused on topics that came from responses to and discussion about the original survey. These topics included the use of must, should, and may; inclusion of additional species; inclusion of mental health topics; future format; and funding source for the *Guide*. The results of both surveys are presented here. The Consortium believes that these data could be used to refine and revise portions of the *Guide* to ensure it remains the most current and relevant reference document for the care and use of research animals.

Abbreviations and Acronyms: ACLAM, American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine; AMP, Americans for Medical Progress; APV, Association of Primate Veterinarians; ASLAP, American Society of Laboratory Animal Practitioners; AWIC, Animal Welfare Information Center; FBR, Foundation for Biomedical Research; HVAC, Heating; Ventilation and Air Conditioning; NABR, National Association for Biomedical Research; NJABR, New Jersey Association for Biomedical Research; VCRACW, Veterinary Consortium for Research Animal Care and Welfare

DOI: 10.30802/JAALAS-JAALAS-24-149

The *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (*Guide*)¹ has been a primary resource for animal care in the United States for over 60 y and has been used by thousands of academic and

commercial entities to assure the humane care of animals used in research. The *Guide* has been revised 7 times over 60 y with each revision expanding the care of animals based on information available at the time. In some instances, the information used in previous editions lacked specific scientific support in areas such as terrestrial housing space, housing temperature, and environmental enrichment requirements among others. Past revisions were done on a variable basis and often addressed issues that were contemporary or brought up by members within the regulatory or research community. The process of revising the *Guide* has previously been directed by the Institute for Laboratory Animal Research and was financially supported by Federal organizations (NIH, USDA, and Animal Welfare Information Center [AWIC]), professional organizations (AAALAC International, American College of Laboratory Animal Medicine

Submitted: 02 Dec 2024. Revision requested: 03 Jan 2025. Accepted: 10 Apr 2025.

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Vol 64, No 4
Journal of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science
July 2025

[ACLAM], American Society of Laboratory Animal Practitioners [ASLAP], and Association of Primate Veterinarians [APV]), and other interested parties. Early editions of the *Guide* identified minimum requirements for facilities, housing, husbandry, and veterinary care, and later *Guide* revisions incorporated contemporary performance standards to allow professional flexibility to achieve care and use outcomes. The dichotomy of engineering and performance standards has led to challenges in the utilization of the *Guide* in some cases and contributed to difficulties in identifying the most critical aspects of the *Guide* that need revision.

The Veterinary Consortium for Research Animal Care and Welfare (VCRACW or Consortium) was established with the desire to develop a committee that could specifically advocate and represent the viewpoints of several laboratory animal veterinary organizations, including ACLAM, ASLAP, APV, and AALAS. Although these organizations have long supported biomedical advocacy groups including the National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR), Foundation for Biomedical Research (FBR), Americans for Medical Progress (AMP), New Jersey Association for Biomedical Research (NJABR), and other regional biomedical research organizations, the specific viewpoint of the laboratory animal veterinarian was sometimes missing. And, while there is strong support for what these biomedical advocacy organizations do on our behalf, they do not always specifically represent the laboratory animal veterinary perspective. Formal discussions began in July 2018 and draft guidelines were developed by an ad hoc committee, which were subsequently shared and accepted by the 4 parent organizations.

In 2021, as the 10-y anniversary of the eighth edition of the *Guide* approached, talk about revisions began to occur within the Institute for Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR; now Board on Animal Health Sciences, Conservation, and Research [BAHSCR]) and the animal research community. Past revisions of the *Guide* missed some opportunities for a comprehensive review of stakeholder needs to direct the focus of the document before revision. Given the importance of the *Guide* to the animal research community, and especially the laboratory animal veterinary community, the Consortium decided to survey the community with the primary goal of identifying areas of the *Guide* in need of revision. In August 2021, a survey was developed to inquire about which key areas of the *Guide* were most in need of revisions and distributed to the membership lists of the parent organizations.

Initial Guide Revision Priority Survey

The initial survey was designed based on the structure of the current version of the *Guide*. After initial multiple-choice questions about demographics, the structure of the survey was based on the table of contents of the current *Guide*: chapters, sections, and topics. Study data were collected and managed using Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) tools.^{2,3} REDCap is a secure, web-based software platform designed to support data capture for research studies. The initial survey was intended to identify the chapters, sections, and topics within the *Guide* that respondents felt were most in need of revision, identify any topics missing from the *Guide*, and organize results based on organizational membership and job role. Respondents were asked to identify which member organization(s) they were a part of and what their primary role was at their facility. The remainder of the survey was designed based on the structure of the *Guide*, asking respondents to rank chapters and sections in order of most in need of revision to least, followed by selecting all topics within

sections that needed revision. The survey also included 2 open-ended questions:

- (1) *Briefly describe the key issue(s) to be revised in each chapter. If appropriate, please provide page numbers from the 8th edition for reference. Please provide any publications or references that you think may be important for revision.*
- (2) *What new sections or topics would you like to see addressed? Please provide any publication or references that you think may be important for new sections of The Guide.*

The invitation to participate in the survey was distributed via email to the parent organizations ACLAM, APV, and ASLAP membership and was posted to the AALAS Community Exchange (ACE) to reach the membership of AALAS including nonveterinarian members. Individual members from ACLAM, APV, and ASLAP received invitations to participate in the survey via membership listserv emails. The invitation language detailed the reason for the survey, a link to voluntary participation, and a deadline for completion. Responses were collected for 71 days from March 22, 2022, through June 1, 2022. The web addresses for the initial survey and supplemental survey are provided in the reference list.^{4,5}

Initial Survey Results

The survey was initiated by 664 respondents and fully completed (all questions answered) by 179 individuals. Respondents indicated membership in the stakeholder organizations as indicated in Table 1. Estimated response rates for stakeholder organizations based on total membership numbers at the time of the survey were as follows: AALAS: 1%; ACLAM: 8%; APV: 5%; and ASLAP: 9%. Respondents were allowed to choose more than one stakeholder organization to represent membership in multiple organizations.

The response rate for AALAS was considerably lower than that of other stakeholder organizations. One suggested cause for the low response rate was the delivery method of the survey. A direct email was not used; therefore, the awareness of the survey was limited to the posting on the ACE. And although 17 of the respondents selected “none of the above” indicating that they were not members of any of the stakeholder organizations, they could have been members of other affiliated organizations. This question was multiple choice and did not allow respondents to expand upon their selection of “none of the above” to provide additional information on professional membership. Regardless, these responses were included in the survey results.

Respondents indicated their primary job role at their institution as shown in Figure 1. Respondents were asked to select from a list of job roles or choose “other.” Job roles were not formally defined in the survey. Veterinarian job roles are most often associated with clinical care and oversight of animals used at the facility. Program directors are responsible for the oversight of the entire program of animal care and use. Compliance roles are most often associated with ensuring compliance with federal

Table 1. Organizational membership for survey respondents

Organization	Response number	Membership response rate
AALAS	151	1%
ACLAM	139	13%
APV	47	12%
ASLAP	104	15%
None of the above	17	Not applicable

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JAALAS

VCRCW survey on revisions to the eighth edition of the *Guide*

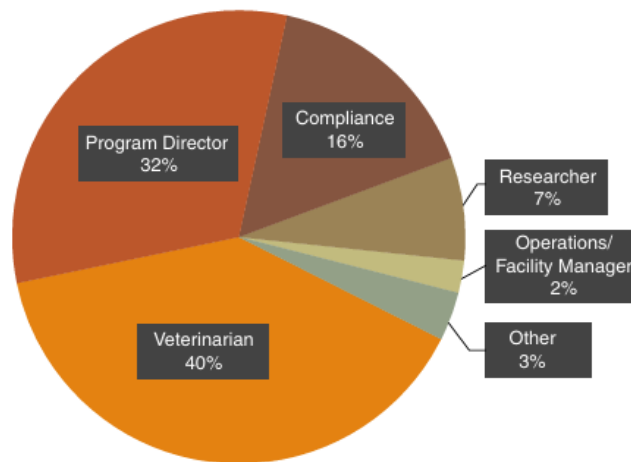


Figure 1. Survey respondents selected their primary job roles from a multiple-choice list: 40% Veterinarian, 32% Program Director, 16% Compliance, 7% Researcher, 2% Operations/Facility Manager, and 3% Other.

and local regulations and/or accreditations. Research roles are often associated with principal investigators, laboratory associates, or others primarily conducting research with animals. Operations/facility roles would be responsible for managing and maintenance of the research facility. Managers would be responsible for overseeing animal care staff, veterinary staff, or other staff associated with the care and use of research animals. If respondents chose "other," they were asked to enter their job role in an open field text box. Other job roles identified included toxicology pathologist, associate director, consultant, compassion fatigue professional, training manager, and technician.

Respondents were asked to rank chapters in order of most in need of revision to least. A weighted scale was used to determine the ranking order of chapters. Each vote for most in need received 5 points, second most in need received 4 points, third most in need received 3 points, fourth most in need received 2 points, and each vote for least received 1 point. This ranking system was used throughout the survey.

For example: Chapter 3 received 101 votes for most in need (101×5) + 35 votes for second most (35×4) + 13 votes for third most (13×3) + 2 votes for fourth most (2×2) and 3 votes for least (3×1) = 709 points total.

Chapter ranking results are shown in Table 2. "Chapter 3 Environment, Housing, and Management" was selected as the chapter most in need of revision by an overwhelming majority of respondents. The ranking of Chapter 3 as most in need of revision remained consistent regardless of organization or job role.

Respondents were then asked to rank the top 3 sections, as defined within the table of contents in the *Guide*, in order of most in need of revision to least. Any section could be selected, regardless of the associated chapter. A weighted scale was used

to determine the ranking order of sections. Each vote for most in need of revision received 5 points, second most 3 points, and third most 1 point.

Section ranking results are shown in Table 3. Four of the 5 top sections identified by the respondents in need of revision are from Chapter 3. The "Terrestrial Housing" section was overwhelmingly the section voted in most need of revision by survey respondents. "The Role of the IACUC" section from Chapter 2 was the fourth most in need of revision.

Within Chapters 3, 4, and 5 of the *Guide*, specific topics are outlined. The survey asked respondents to select any topics that they felt required revision. There was no limit to how many topics could be selected; no ranking of the topics was required. When analyzing the results of this question, the number of times a topic was selected by the respondents was totaled and topics were ranked based on that total. The top 10 topics selected by respondents in order are shown in Table 4. Nine of the top 10 topics identified by the respondents to be most in need of revision were from Chapters 3 and 8 of those topics related to "Terrestrial Housing," "Terrestrial Environment," and "Terrestrial Management." One topic, "HVAC," was from "Chapter 5 Physical Plant," the "Construction Guidelines" section.

Open-Ended Question Responses

Analysis of the responses to the open-ended questions was done by reviewing all responses as entered, creating common categories to group the responses, and creating themes based on those common categories. The themes varied based on the content of the responses for each question. An example of this process: responses to question one for "Chapter 1 Key Concepts" often referred to the definitions or use of the terms "Must, Should, and May." Therefore, any responses that discussed those

Table 2. Chapter ranking results

Rank	Chapter	Votes					Weighted total
		Most in need	Second most	Third most	Fourth most	Least in need	
1	Ch. 3: Environment, Housing, and Management	101	35	13	11	3	709
2	Ch. 2: Animal Care and Use Program	29	39	45	41	8	526
3	Ch. 4: Veterinary Care	12	39	50	37	17	457
4	Ch. 5: Physical Plant	12	39	39	43	26	445
5	Ch. 1: Key Concepts	11	11	11	21	101	287

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Table 3. Section ranking results

Rank	Section	Votes			Weighted total
		Most in need	Second most	Third most	
1	Ch. 3: Terrestrial Housing	32	21	15	238
2	Ch. 3: Terrestrial Environment	17	16	12	145
3	Ch. 3: Terrestrial Management	13	8	17	106
4	Ch. 2: Role of the IACUC	13	6	3	86
5	Ch. 3: Aquatic Housing	9	10	6	81

Table 4. Top 10 topics needing revision as selected by survey respondents

Rank	Votes	Topic
1	69	Terrestrial Housing: Primary Enclosure
2	68	Terrestrial Housing: Environmental Enrichment
3	60	Terrestrial Management: Behavior and Social Management
4	57	Terrestrial Environment: Micro- and Macro- environment
5	53	Terrestrial Housing: Space
6	49	Terrestrial Management: Husbandry
7	49	Terrestrial Environment: Temperature and Humidity
8	42	Construction Guidelines: HVAC
9	38	Terrestrial Environment: Ventilation and Air Quality
10	37	Aquatic Housing: Environmental Enrichment and Social Housing

terms were placed in the “Must, Should, and May” theme. In some cases, there were responses that did not share commonalities with other responses. These were placed into a theme titled “Miscellaneous.”

Question 1: Briefly describe the key issue(s) to be revised in each Chapter. If appropriate, please provide page numbers from the eighth edition for reference. Please provide any publications or references that you think may be important for revision.

For the first open-ended question, responses were grouped by Guide chapter. We reviewed the responses and sorted the data by themes that emerged from the text. There were 438 responses to this question.

There were 26 responses submitted concerning “Chapter 1 Key Concepts.” These responses primarily focused on the themes of “Must, Should, and May” and “3Rs/Ethics”

(Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement/Ethics). The themes for these responses are shown in Figure 2. One example of a response within the “Miscellaneous” themes was to compare the stress that animals experience during euthanasia to cage-change stress levels.

There were 76 responses related to “Chapter 2 Animal Care and Use Program.” Many of these responses were related to the IACUC and disaster planning. Themes for these responses are shown in Figure 3. An example of a response within the “Miscellaneous” themes was to provide guidance for scaling these guidelines for small rodent-only facilities compared with large facilities with a wide variety of species.

The overwhelming number of responses were related to “Chapter 3 Environment, Housing, and Management,” with 199 responses. The themes for these responses included housing space requirements and the environment. The questions relating to housing space and environmental requirements corresponded to the initial survey results identifying Chapter 3 as the most in need of revision and the “Terrestrial Housing” section as being most in need of revision. Among the 43 responses related to space requirements, responses called for updated references, more supportive data for housing space requirements, and additional considerations for environment complexity. In addition, refining social housing guidelines and development and use of performance standards were often included in the responses. Specific comments on space requirements for rodents and nonhuman primates were most common. Forty-one responses focused on the environment, specifically the humidity requirements, air changes/hour, and temperature ranges and that these requirements should be “refined and supported by current literature with modern housing schemes in mind.” Themes for all responses related to Chapter 3 are shown in Figure 4. An example of a response in the “Miscellaneous” themes was to provide guidance on how to develop deviations from the Guide.

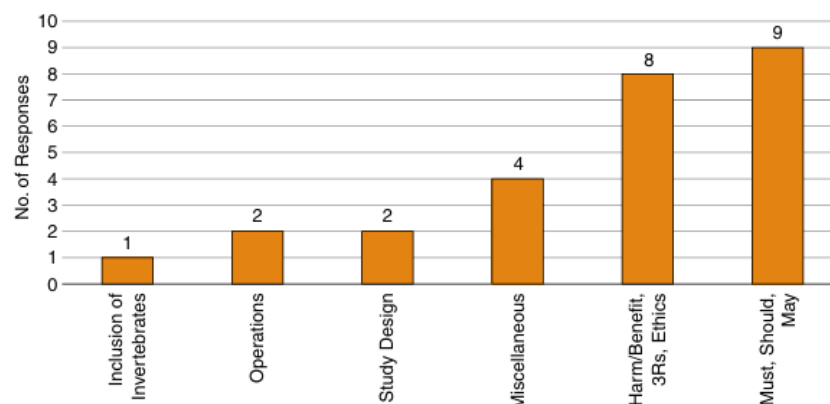


Figure 2. Open-ended response themes for “Chapter 1 Key Concepts”: 26 total responses: 9 related to Must, Should, May; 8 related to Harm/Benefit Analysis, 3Rs, and Ethics; 4 Miscellaneous; 2 Study Design; 2 Operations; and 1 Inclusion of Invertebrates.

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VCRCW survey on revisions to the eighth edition of the *Guide*

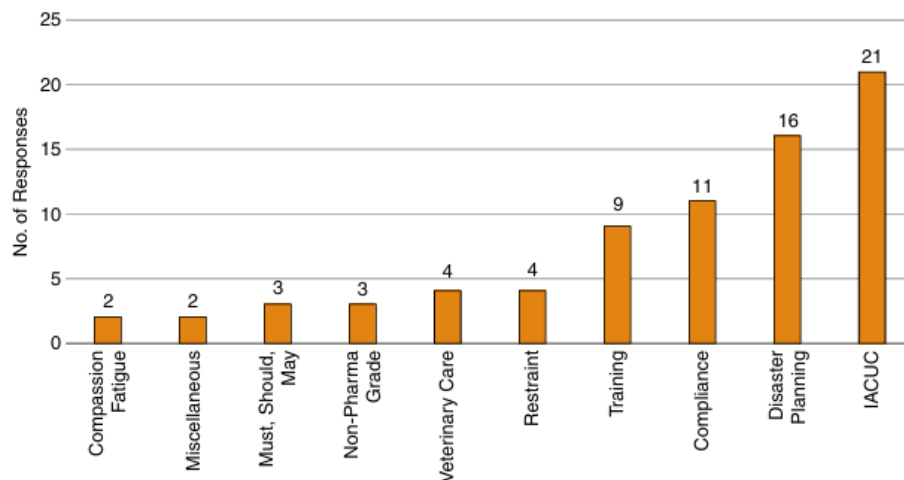


Figure 3. Open-ended response themes from “Chapter 2 Animal Care and Use Program”: 76 total responses: 21 related to IACUC; 16 to Disaster Planning; 11 to Compliance; 9 for Training; 4 Restraint; 4 Veterinary Care; 3 Nonpharmaceutical Grade Substance Use; 3 Must, Should, and May; 3 Miscellaneous; and 2 Compassion Fatigue.

There were 75 total responses related to Chapter 4. These responses most often concerned pain and distress. Response themes related to Chapter 4 are shown in Figure 5. An example of a response within the “Miscellaneous” theme was to strengthen wording around the attending veterinarian’s training, experience, and continuing education requirements.

The 62 responses related to “Chapter 5 Physical Plant” were difficult to place into themes because of the miscellaneous nature of the content within the chapter itself. Most responses were singular responses and so were grouped as miscellaneous. There were, however, 11 responses directly related to noise and vibration guidelines and 8 responses specific to lighting requirements. The themes for responses related to Chapter 5 are shown in Figure 6. An example of a “Miscellaneous” response from this question was to provide prescriptive guidance on drainage in facilities.

Question 2: *What new sections or topics would you like to see addressed? Please provide any publication or references that you think may be important for new sections of the Guide.*

There were 93 responses to the second question recommending additional topics to be included in the next edition of the

Guide. These responses were assigned to themes as was done for the first open-ended question. Sixteen of these responses were related to operational guidelines such as including environmental sentinel programs and individually ventilated cage management. The topic of mental health was also a common response, specifically the need for institutions to address the importance of employee mental health and develop compassion fatigue programs. Response themes are shown in Figure 7.

The open-ended responses in their raw form, as well as the list of references provided by respondents, were provided directly to ILAR at the conclusion of the survey. These data can be viewed upon direct request to the authors.

Supplemental Surveys

Based on the results of the initial survey, the consortium identified 5 topics to explore more thoroughly through a 2023 supplemental, multiple-choice survey. These 5 topics were the use of “Must, Should, and May,” additional species to be included, inclusion of compassion fatigue/mental health topics, format of the future versions, and what source of funding should be used for the *Guide* revisions. These 5 questions in

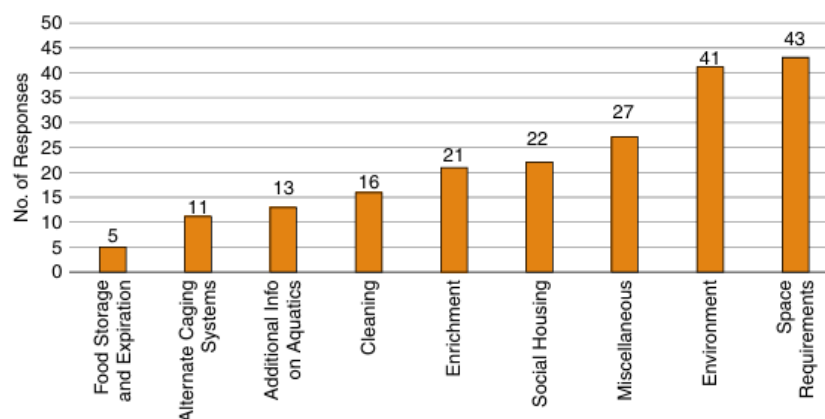


Figure 4. Open-ended response themes for “Chapter 3 Environment, Housing, and Miscellaneous”: 199 total responses: 43 related to Space Requirements, 41 related to Environment, 27 Miscellaneous, 22 Social Housing, 21 Enrichment, 16 Cleaning, 13 Additional Information on Aquatics, 11 Alternate Caging Systems, and 5 Food Storage and Expiration.

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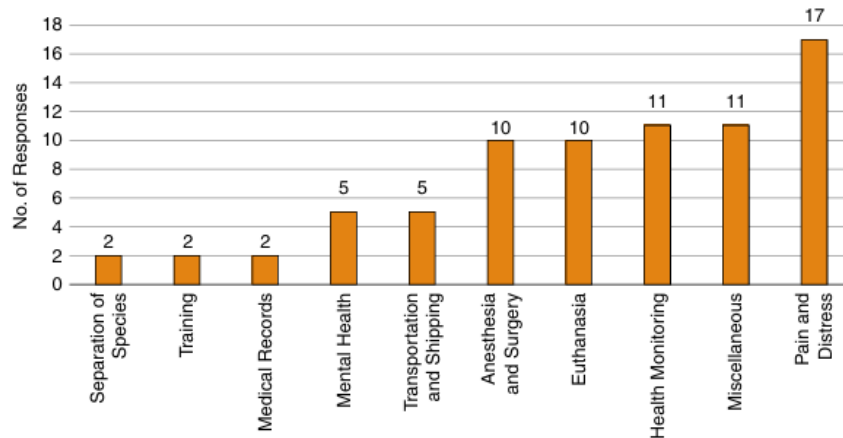


Figure 5. Open-ended response themes for “Chapter 4 Veterinary Care”: 75 total responses: 17 related to Pain and Distress, 11 Miscellaneous, 11 Pathogen Surveillance/Sentinels, 10 Euthanasia, 10 Anesthesia and Surgery, 5 Transportation and Shipping, 5 Mental Health, 2 Medical Records, 2 Training, and 2 Separation of Species.

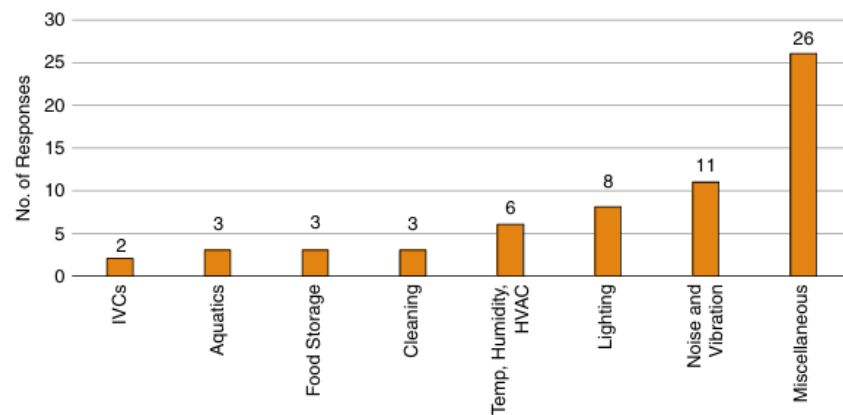


Figure 6. Open-ended response themes from “Chapter 5 Physical Plant”: 62 total responses: 26 Miscellaneous; 11 related to Noise and Vibrations; 8 Lighting; 6 Temperature, Humidity, and HVAC; 3 Cleaning; 3 Food Storage; 3 Aquatics; and 2 IVC usage.

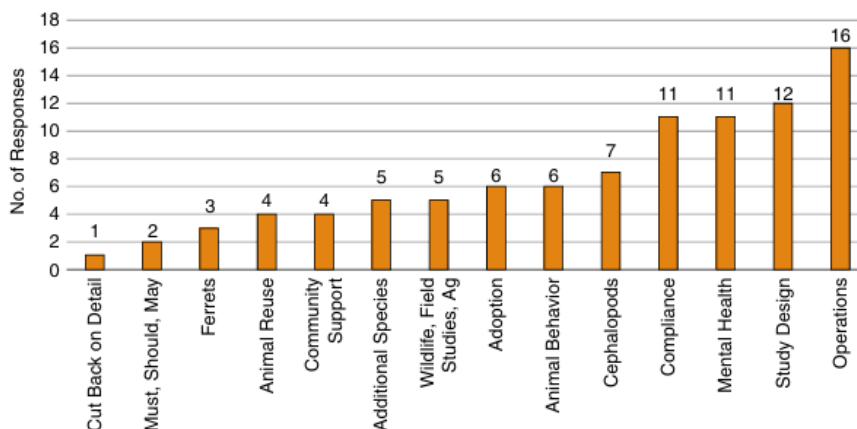


Figure 7. Themes for new topics to be addressed in the next version of the *Guide*: 93 total responses: 16 related to Operations; 12 Study Design; 11 Mental Health; 11 Compliance; 7 Cephalopods; 6 Animal Behavior; 6 Adoption; 5 Wildlife, Field Studies, and Agricultural Species; 5 Additional Species; 4 Community support; 4 Animal Reuse; 3 Ferrets Specifically Mentioned; 2 Must, Should, and May usage, and 1 Cut Back on Detail.

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VCRACW survey on revisions to the eighth edition of the *Guide*

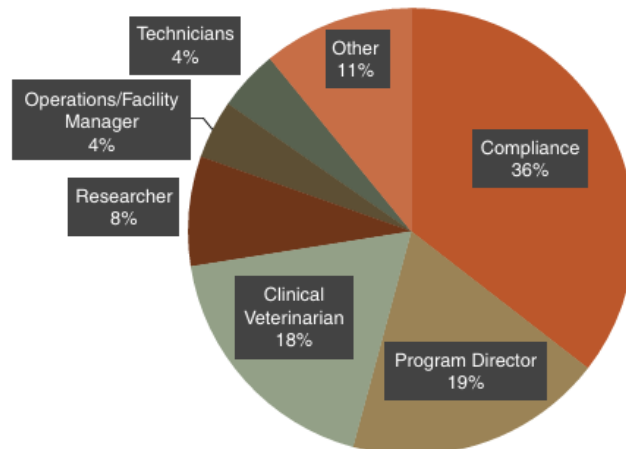


Figure 8. Primary job roles for supplemental survey respondents from the NABR community: 36% Compliance, 19% Program Director, 18% Clinical Veterinarian, 8% Researcher, 4% Operations/Facility Manager, 4% Technicians, and 11% Other.

the survey were asked as multiple-choice questions and each respondent was able to choose one response that best represented their answer.

This survey, also using the REDcap application, was distributed via email to ACLAM diplomates and the NABR community. In both cases, the Consortium was asked to present the initial survey results for these groups specifically at the ACLAM Forum and the NABR webinar series, respectively. The Consortium believed it would be beneficial to each of these organizations to have their members participate in the supplemental survey specifically to better understand the needs of their membership.

Data were collected for 53 days within the ACLAM diplomates group and 76 days for the NABR community. We received 327 responses from ACLAM diplomates and 138 responses from NABR members.

As with the original survey, we asked respondents from the NABR community to identify their primary job role at their institution. This question was omitted from the ACLAM diplomate survey as those respondents are board-certified laboratory

animal veterinarians. The majority of NABR respondents were compliance professionals, program directors, and clinical veterinarians. The full breakdown of job roles for NABR respondents is shown in Figure 8.

The use of the terms “Must, Should, and May” has been discussed by users of the *Guide* with suggestions of how the terms should be applied and adapted by the community. The *Guide* defines these terms in the following way:

“Must indicates actions that the Committee for the Update of the *Guide* considers imperative and mandatory duty or requirement for providing humane animal care and use. Should indicates a strong recommendation for achieving a goal; however, the Committee recognizes that individual circumstances might justify an alternative strategy. May indicates a suggestion to be considered.”¹

The first question of the supplemental survey asked respondents to select what terms should be used in the next version of the *Guide* in relation to “Must,” “Should,” and “May.” The majority of both NABR and ACLAM respondents selected “No

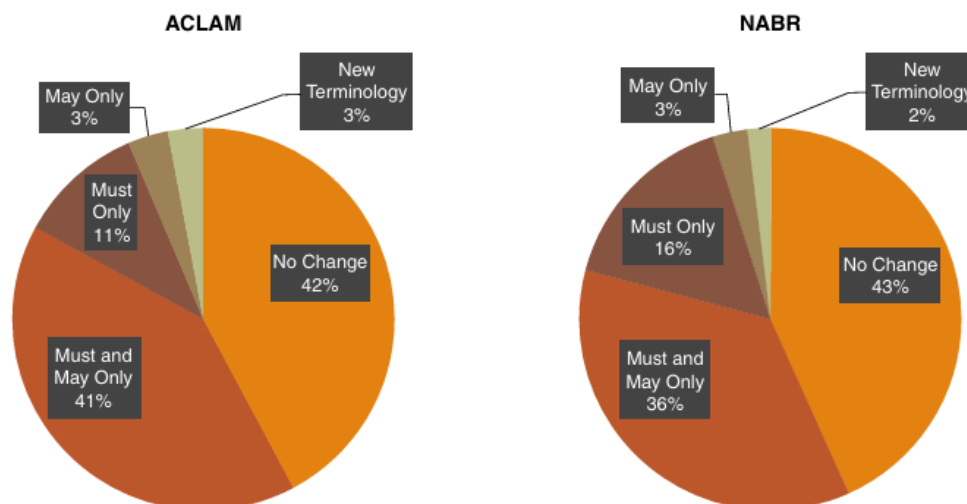


Figure 9. Results for question 1 from the supplemental survey: “Which of these terms should be used in the next edition of the *Guide*?” Results are shown for both ACLAM (left) and NABR (right) respondents. Results for both groups were very similar with “no change” having the majority for both.

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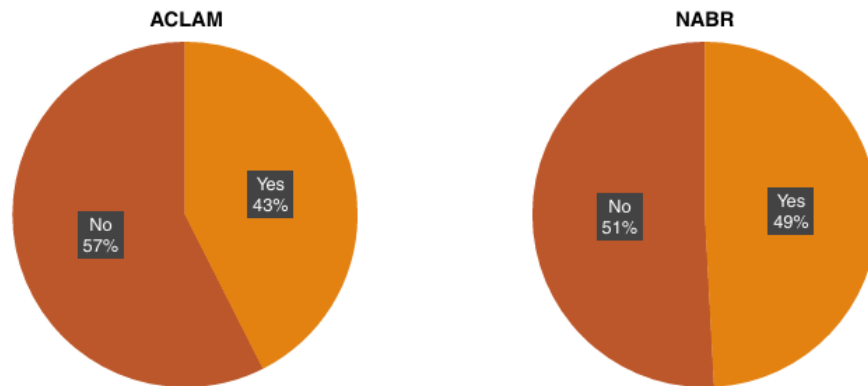


Figure 10. Results for question 2 from the supplemental survey: “Should specific guidance on mental health/compassion fatigue be included in the next edition of the *Guide*? Both groups responded with “No” as the majority response.

Change” to the terminology. However, options that remove the use of “Should” also accounted for a large percentage (55%) of responses from both groups. Responses are shown in Figure 9.

One topic that was identified multiple times in the original survey was the inclusion of mental health and compassion fatigue information in the new version of the *Guide*. The second question in the supplemental survey asked specifically if that topic should be included in the next edition. The narrow majority of both ACLAM and NABR respondents answered “no.” In discussions of these results during the ACLAM and NABR meetings, several of the responses were more accurately “no, but...” as many individuals feel that these are important topics that should be addressed but do not necessarily fit within the objectives of the *Guide*. Many felt that guidance on these programs should be provided in an occupational health document or similar regulatory guidance document. Respondents felt that defining the importance of mental health and compassion fatigue awareness could be mentioned within the *Guide*, but more specifically detailed programs could be addressed elsewhere. The results for this question are shown in Figure 10.

Based on many of the responses from the open-ended questions in the original survey, expanding the species included in the *Guide* was a common suggestion. The third supplemental

question asked which, if any, of these species should be included in the future version of the *Guide*. Most respondents from both ACLAM and NABR felt that cephalopods, wildlife species, and tertiary species should be included. ACLAM membership selected client-owned animals more often than NABR members. Client-owned animals were not formally defined within the survey but are commonly defined as privately owned animals participating in clinical trials, either in a veterinary teaching hospital or private practice environment. In follow-up discussions, many felt that this is not within the realm of IACUC oversight but should be covered in a document like the *Guide*. The results of this question are shown in Figure 11.

One of the major points of debate concerning the future of the *Guide* is the one surrounding the format. Many suggestions have been made ranging from a living document that is updated continuously to maintaining the current conventional textbook format. A majority of responses from both ACLAM and NABR were in support of a static document with regular defined review intervals. There was also support for a hybrid document that incorporates a static document and dynamic documents in “Wikipedia-like” format. An exclusive living document reviewed and continuously updated received the least votes. The results can be seen in Figure 12.

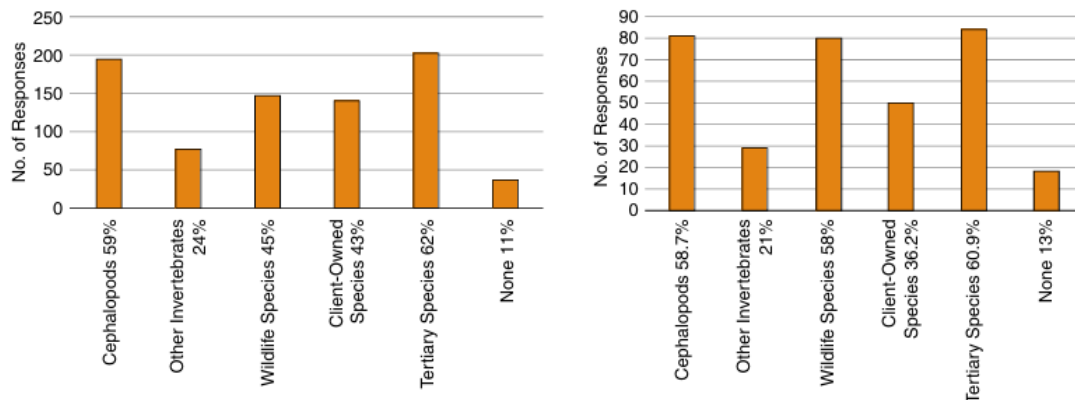


Figure 11. Results for question 3 from the supplemental survey: “Future versions of the *Guide* should be expanded to include new and/or additional guidance on the following specific species or topics (choose all that apply).” Most respondents from both ACLAM (left) and NABR (right) selected cephalopods and tertiary species. The majority of NABR respondents also selected wildlife species to be included.

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VCRCW survey on revisions to the eighth edition of the *Guide*

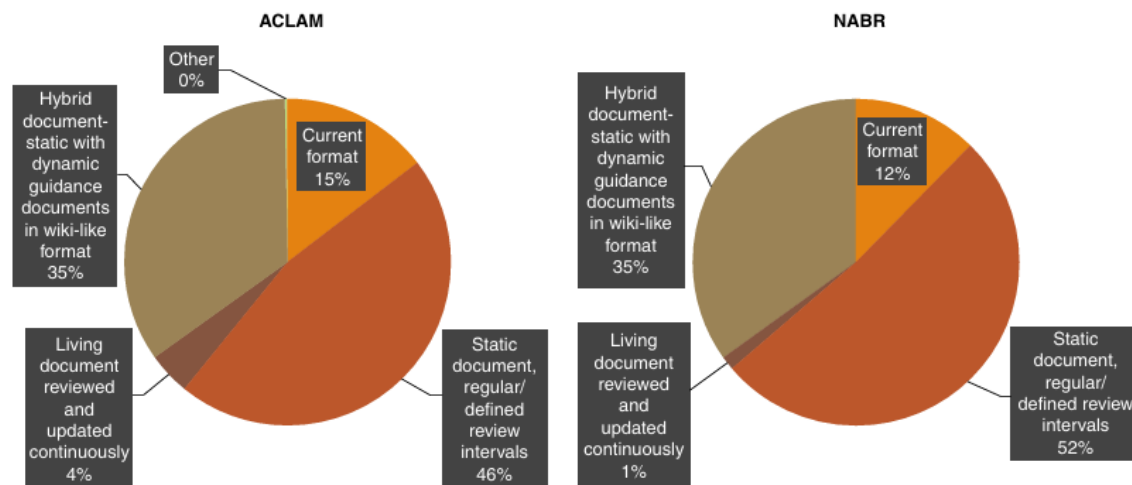


Figure 12. Results for question 4 from the supplemental survey: "What format should be used for the next edition of the *Guide*?" The majority of both groups selected a static document with regular/defined review intervals.

A final topic that warranted further attention in the supplemental survey was that of how future versions of the *Guide* should be funded. The most recent updates to the *Guide* were managed by the Institute for Laboratory Animal Research and funded by various organizations listed within the "Notice" section of the *Guide*. There are efforts to update the current version of the *Guide* by the National Academies and BAHSCR, and these activities as well as continued work to keep the document relevant will require investment similar to the financial support for previous revisions. We asked survey respondents from both groups to suggest what group(s) should fund ongoing updates of the *Guide*. An overwhelming majority of respondents from ACLAM and NABR selected federal funding. We also gave the option for respondents to provide other suggestions for funding. While many of the "other" responses were votes for federal funding with additional details, some of the truly "other" funding options included selling advertisement space within the document to vendors or requiring commercial entities to provide funds if they wish to be accredited and/or assured. Additional details were not given within these responses. The results of this question are shown in Figure 13.

Summary

The overriding intent of the Consortium surveys was to gather input from key stakeholders who use the *Guide* and to help focus on those areas most in need of revision. The results of the initial survey showed that most of the respondents identified issues associated with terrestrial environment, housing, and management as the most significant areas needing revision. This was supported by responses related to the topics most in need of revision with space, primary enclosures, micro/macroenvironments, environmental enrichment, and behavioral and social management identified as most in need of revision. Open-ended questions showed that the well-known and oft-discussed ambiguity of the terms Must, Should, and May was a concern for respondents. In addition, the 3Rs, harm/benefit analysis, and ethics of animals used in research and disaster planning were themes noted by respondents. Other than environmental concerns, significant areas in need of revision include the functioning of the IACUC, disaster planning, and issues associated with pain and distress in animals. New topics for future *Guide* revisions found that study design, compliance, and mental health of individuals in the field were important. The inclusion

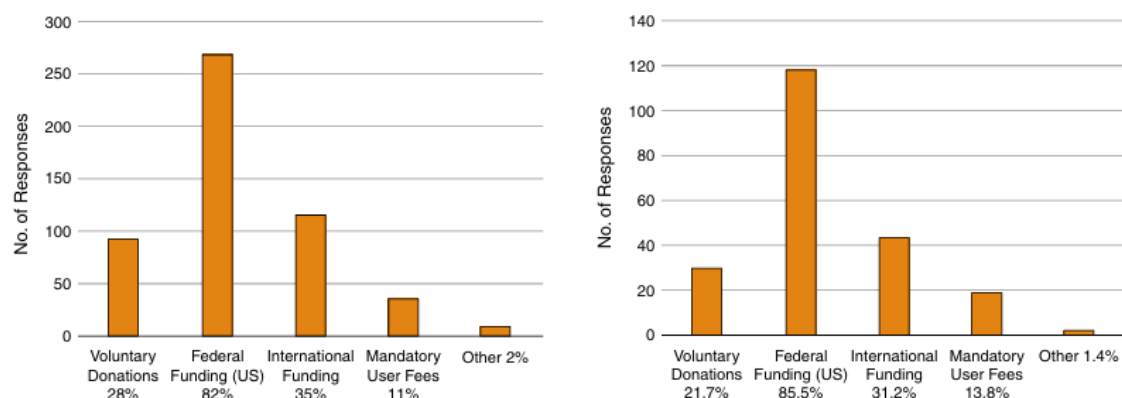


Figure 13. Results for question 5 from the supplemental survey: "How should future revisions of the *Guide* be funded?" The majority of respondents from both ACLAM (left) and NABR (right) selected federal funding (United States) as their response.

of cephalopods and tertiary species such as ferrets and species in wildlife and field studies were suggested for new topics. Admittedly, the survey participants consisted of a focused group of individuals representing the parent organizations, and the number of respondents for some groups was limited. However, the authors feel that overall, this was a fair representation of knowledgeable research community members who provided informed opinions.

The Consortium presented the results of the initial survey to the Standing Committee for the Care and Use of Animals in Research⁶ heading the efforts to update the *Guide*. In addition, the results of the initial survey were presented at the 2022 National AALAS Meeting. The ACLAM supplemental survey results were presented at the 2023 ACLAM Forum. All survey results were presented as a 2023 NABR Webinar and at the 2023 SCAW meeting. Most recently, these survey results were presented as a part of the Board on Animal Health Sciences, Conservation and Research Workshop "Future Topical Updates to the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals."

The Consortium has compiled these results and discussion points with the goal of continuing discussions around the importance of the *Guide*, how it is updated, and how it can be maintained as a relevant document for the research community. The hope is that these data will be used to refine and revise portions of the *Guide* to ensure it remains a current and relevant reference document for the care and use of research animals and that it can serve as the primary resource used by veterinarians, technicians, husbandry staff, investigators, and IACUCs to provide humane care and oversight of these animals.

Acknowledgments

The authors acknowledge and thank Printha McCallum, Senior Program Manager Division of Comparative Medicine Vanderbilt University Medical Center, for her tremendous data support, analysis, and organization during both surveys.

Conflict of Interest

There authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Funding

This work was internally funded.

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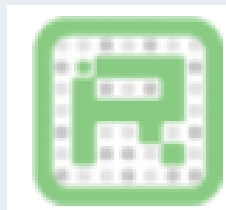
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