

# Ambassador Animal Evaluation Tool

Below is a list of common criteria that multiple institutions evaluate a species or individual animal against to determine if a species or animal will be a good fit for animal programs usage. Each individual institution should select the criteria that are most important for consideration and place the criteria in the decision tree in order of that determined importance.

Institutional Collection Planning/Regulations	Scoring Guide (-16 to 12 points)		Score
Is this species/appropriate individual available?  <i>Consider things like population levels, if hand reared animals are required for success, if there is a SSP which might influence ability to acquire, etc.</i>	Easily acquired	2 pt	
	Some effort to acquire or find correct individual	1 pt	
	Not easily acquired or lots of effort to find correct individual	0 pt	
Is there display value for this species (if applicable)	Yes or N/A	2	
	No	0	
Consistent with institutional philosophy and AZA recommendations.  <i>Primates and cats for example.</i>	Yes	2 pts	
	No	-16 pts	
Can the animal be transferred easily if it does not work as a program animal?	Yes, there is a developed back up plan	2 pts	
	It may be able to be transferred but not sure	0 pts	
	It will be hard to find a placement for the animal	-2 pts	
Is there research potential?	Yes or N/A	2 pts	
	No	0 pts	
Is there a significant cost to acquire, train staff to use or special equipment that must be purchased?	Costs are included in budget	2 pts	
	Moderate costs or could potentially be covered	0 pt	
	High costs or funding would not be available to provide for required purchases	-2 pts	
<b>Total Score for Institutional Collection Planning/Regulations (out of 12 points)</b>			

Conservation Education Messaging	Scoring Guide (0 to 8 points)		Score
Has a strong conservation message.	Strong conservation message and/or related to Zoo projects	2 pts	
	Conservation message unrelated to Zoo Projects	1 pt	

	No conservation message	0 pt	
Has other desirable educational messages.  <i>For example, it is from a particular part of the world or does it have special adaptations. Also evaluate if these messages fit into existing programs if applicable.</i>	Has many applicable educational messages and connections to programs	2 pts	
	Has some desirable educational messages and some connections to programs	1 pt	
	Has limited messages and connection to programs	0 pt	
Can be used in a variety of program situations.  <i>Consider things like small or large programs, on and offsite, formal training demos, etc.</i>	Can be used in most settings, high level of versatility	2 pts	
	Can be used in some settings, moderate versatility	1 pt	
	Can only be used in limited settings	0 pt	
Guest experience value.  <i>Consider things like the potential for close encounters, if it is a popular species with visitors, if it a touch opportunity.</i>	High value for guest experience	2 pts	
	Moderate value for guest experience	1 pt	
	Low value for guest experience	0 pt	
<b>Total Score for Conservation Education Messaging (out of 8 points)</b>			

Animal Health and Welfare	Scoring Guide (-4 to 10 points)		Score
Space available for animal through entire life.	Ample space for entire life	2 pts	
	Space allocation meets minimum requirements or ample when young, meets minimum requirements when full size	1 pt	
	Not enough space or enough space when young only	-2 pts	
Appropriate housing available	Housing available without need for purchase or modification or there are budget exists for these expenses	2 pts	
	Housing available but requires modification	1 pt	
	Housing must be purchased or built	0 pt	
Can meet environmental requirements (temperature, humidity, ventilation, filtration)	Simple environmental requirements/already available in current housing or budget exists to modify	2 pts	
	Some modification needed to meet requirements	1 pt	
	Major modification needed to meet requirements	0 pt	
Can fulfill behavioral/enrichment requirements	Easy to meet enrichment needs and/or plenty of resources to provide it	2 pts	
	More involved enrichment needs and/or some resources available	1 pt	
	High level of enrichment needs and/or limited resources to provide it	0 pt	

Are there additional welfare concerns, beyond housing and enrichment, associated with utilizing this species for program?  <i>Consider things like appropriate social groupings, animal's ability to choose to participate in programs.</i>	No	2 pts	
	Yes	-2 pts	
<b>Total Score for Animal Health and Welfare (out of 10 points)</b>			

<b>Taxon Specific Protocols: Behavioral Husbandry, Logistics and Staff Training</b>	<b>Scoring Guide (-2 to 14 points)</b>		<b>Score</b>
What investment in time is required to train/socialize?  <i>Consider what level of conditioning will be required – from socializing to perch/crate training all the way to show behaviors.</i>	Time is not a limiting factor and had been budgeted for all needed training	2 pts.	
	Time is somewhat limited but budgeted for all needed training	1 pt.	
	Significant ongoing time that exceeds current resources is required for successful program use	0 pt.	
Staff training skill set assessment – do staff that will be working with this animal/species possess the required skills in training?  <i>Consider the skill level of all handlers working with this species both with initial training and ongoing usage.</i>	Staff exceed training skills requirement	2 pts.	
	Staff meet training skills requirement	1 pt.	
	Staff do not meet training skills required	0 pt.	
Species is tractable or widely considered easily handled once desensitized	Yes, confident that this species will be able to be handled and remains so through its life	2 pts.	
	Maybe, some institutions use this species as a program animal, but no direct experience with or may not remain tractable through life	1 pt.	
	Not likely or unknown if species is tractable throughout life	0 pt.	
What range of behaviors can this species/individual demonstrate?  <i>Consider how many and how complex of behaviors can be expected and how impactful these behaviors may appear to audience.</i>	Multiple behaviors or behaviors that are highly educational or inspirational	2 pts.	
	Simple behaviors or limited number of behaviors	1 pt.	
	Very little possibility for trained behaviors	0 pt.	
Transportation to program.	Straightforward to transport using normal carriers and vehicles	2 pt	
	May require specialized/modified carrier that is more difficult to transport	1 pt	
	Requires large, specialized transport carriers and/or difficult to move without more than one person	0 pt	

Expected frequency of usage.	Potential for multiple uses per day (usually domestic animals or highly socialized exotics)	2 pt	
	Potential for multiple uses per week	1 pt	
	Limited use or preparation for use required (diet management limitations)	0 pt	
How many potential handlers will be able to use this species?	Most handlers will be able to use this species	2 pts	
	Some handlers will be able to use this species (reached mid-level handling)	1 pt	
	Few handlers will be able to use this species (reached advanced level handling)	0 pt	
	Only paid staff will be able to handle this animal in volunteer driven program	-2	
<b>Total Score for Taxon Specific Protocols (out of 14 points)</b>			

Human Health and Safety	Scoring Guide (0 to 4 points)		Score
Potential risk of injury.	Low risk, animal is not likely or is unable to inflict serious injury	2 pts	
	Medium risk, animal is more likely or may be able to inflict serious injury in unusual situations	1 pt	
	High risk, animal is likely to or has the capacity for serious injury in many situations	0 pt	
Disease transmission issues.	Low risk for zoonotic disease transmission and/or rabies vaccination is NOT required for handlers	2 pts	
	Some risk for zoonotic disease transmission and/or rabies vaccination is required for handlers	1 pt	
	High risk of zoonotic disease transmission	0 pt	
<b>Total Score for Staff/Handling/Program Suitability (out of 4 points)</b>			

**Place each section in priority order, 1 being the highest priority:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Institutional Collection Planning/Regulations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Conservation Education Messaging
- \_\_\_\_\_ Animal Health and Welfare
- \_\_\_\_\_ Taxon Specific Protocols: Behavioral Husbandry, Logistics and Staff Training
- \_\_\_\_\_ Human Health and Safety

	<b>Write in your Criteria in Priority Order from Above</b>	<b>Total Points for that Criterion</b>
<b>Level 1 Criterion (highest priority)</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score above 50%</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score below 50%</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;">RECONSIDER</div> </div> </div>	____ out of ____
<b>Level 2 Criterion</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score above 50%</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score below 50%</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;">RECONSIDER</div> </div> </div>	____ out of ____
<b>Level 3 Criterion</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score above 50%</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score below 50%</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;">RECONSIDER</div> </div> </div>	____ out of ____
<b>Level 4 Criterion</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score above 50%</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score below 50%</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;">RECONSIDER</div> </div> </div>	____ out of ____
<b>Level 5 Criterion</b>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score above 50%</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 45%;">Score below 50%</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;">RECONSIDER</div> </div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%; text-align: center;">↓</div> </div> <div style="margin-top: 10px; text-align: center;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 100px; margin: 0 auto;">Good species for acquisition</div> </div> </div>	____ out of ____