



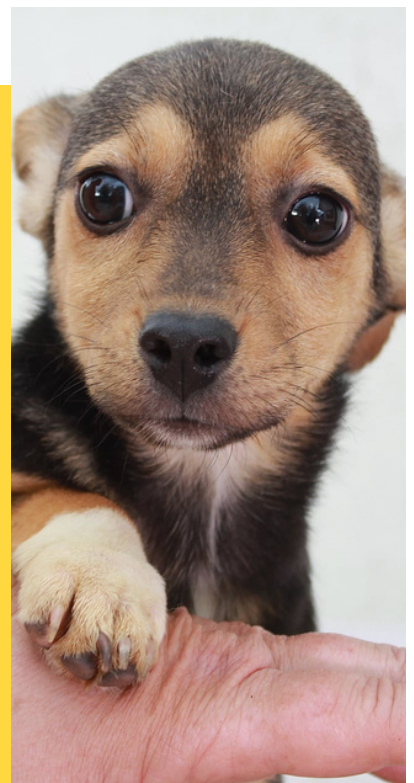
PRIORITIES 2030



Our Story

ROLDA is a charity that helps abused, neglected, and unwanted animals in Romania using a responsible, efficient, and humane approach. Our programs also serve pets with financially troubled owners such as senior citizens, retirees, and unemployed people. Since the war started in Ukraine, ROLDA has actively helped local rescuers to save animals in danger.

ROLDA's roots can be found in a small band of animal lovers established in 1999, in response to the explosion of the stray dog population across the country. As the Soviet Union – and their heinous methods of keeping the stray population in check – retreated from Romania, many homeless took refuge in the huge, concrete industrial complexes they abandoned. With no Russian death squads and newfound breeding grounds, the stray population has skyrocketed to current estimates of millions.



ROLDA was founded by Dana Costin who proudly leads the charity to this day. Dana's eyes were opened to the desperate situation facing so many vulnerable dogs by Printz, a German Shepherd Dana found abandoned – and gravely injured – in a park following an illegal dogfight.

However, what began with Dana and Printz in their tiny apartment has blossomed into an international organization, recognized and registered across Europe, the **UK** and as far away as the **USA** and **Australia**.

To date, we are proud to say we have helped over 40,000 animals; each with a story to tell.

Our Scope approx.



Our 2030 Ambitions, An Overview

- Affect a substantial and sustainable change in the number of animals born unwanted, and homeless
- Tackle the root causes of pet abandonment
- Educate the local community to be responsible pet owners
- End animal cruelty in public shelters and the community across Romania
- Support animal welfare initiatives
- Continue to rehome responsibly
- Improve current sheltering facilities
- Begin construction of the PawzUp state-of-art care facility and community hub



Our Mission

We currently operate two shelters for **dogs** and one shelter for **senior** and **disabled cats**, all offering a sanctuary to hundreds vulnerable animals, where they are cared for and loved.



Our Vision

ROLDA is working towards a world free from unwanted animals that suffer terribly on the streets and in the wild; a world where each dog and cat has the opportunity to live out their lives in comfort and happiness with their human companions.

Our Ultimate Goal

Our ultimate goal is to one day achieve a homeless animal population of nil, with every pet appropriately microchipped and added to the national registry, enforcing the legal responsibility between pet and owner.



Whilst this objective may take decades to achieve, we will never give up. In the meantime, we do everything we can with the resources we have to improve the quality of life of those animals in our care and those living wild.

Our Core Beliefs

We believe humanity has an incredible gift of sharing our world with amazing creatures that inspire, in any decent human being, a profound sense of affection and wonder. We believe humanity has a moral responsibility to act as guardians of the natural world and all the wonderful creatures with which we are lucky to share.

Rescued in Romania - Loved all over the World: Adopt! Romanian dogs are like every other dog. They are wholly innocent and ask only to love and be loved. We believe they share the same right to life, safety and happiness as any human being.

Both ROLDA and the RSPCA agree:



Animals and people both benefit from healthy interaction but cannot ever justify abuse, neglect, cruelty or exploitation.



Every animal life is important in itself.



Animals possess emotions, feelings, memories and rights.



Animals enrich and improve our lives.



Every animal has the right to life and to live without suffering.



Every animal has the right to die humanely and with dignity.



Every person should reflect on how their decisions and behavior affects animals.



No one should handle an animal without knowledge of how they may react to human interference.



Every person can and should play their part in making a better world for both humans and animals.

Our Major Milestones

1999

Dana established ROLDA, the first group of animal rescuers in Galati (Romania's 5th-largest city located in the southeast of the country).

2003

ROLDA purchased land in the village of Smardan (near Galati) in order to build what it is today, the first small sanctuary.
The same year, ROLDA completed the first kennels inspired by British wood model dog sheltering.

2004

Construction of the small sanctuary began: the first block of 10 kennels was built, inspired by the British model (with insulated indoor areas, outdoor areas and running spaces) and a small house for operational staff and volunteers.

2006

In February, the ROLDA Foundation became a registered NGO in Romania. On the 4th of July, ROLDA became an incorporated charity in the United States under the name Romanian League in Defense of Animals, Inc.
The same year, ROLDA purchased the land where the large dog sanctuary is today.

2010

4 more paddocks were finished at the large sanctuary, reaching a total of 12 paddocks (120 kennels).
Dana was invited as a speaker at a public event organized in Switzerland for ROLDA. There she met Lolita Morena, a celebrity animal activist who had and continues to have a profound impact on ROLDA activity.

2012

After Romania and the United States, we opened a new branch in Norway, under the name ROLDA – Gatehunder fra Romania. A team from NRK TV (National TV from Norway) visited both ROLDA sanctuaries.

2014

ROLDA opened branches in Switzerland (Association ROLDA Suisse), Sweden (Association ROLDA Sverige) and Australia (ROLDA Inc).

2015

ROLDA started a new branch in the UK (ROLDA UK)

2017

ROLDA started the renovation of the small house from the small sanctuary (which is used as an administration office, recovery area for dogs, isolation for the rescued puppies, bathing and grooming area for the dogs etc)

2021

ROLDA celebrated 15 years since it was officially registered as a charity in Romania and in the US.

2022

ROLDA coloring books were distributed in schools across Romania.

March: Days after the war started in Ukraine, ROLDA expanded its rescue campaigns for the first time outside the Romanian border, helping abused and neglected animals affected by bombs and bullets in the neighboring country.

November: The construction of the first sanctuary for senior and disabled cats has been completed.

2023

Summer: The small shelter turned green, using solar panels to reduce the cost of using conventional electricity.

Our Challenges

Environmental

- Milder winters are more hospitable for bacteria and parasites
- Warm nights and long summers are perfect breeding conditions for mosquitoes who carry deadly diseases like Dirofilaria
- Securing alternative heating/lighting for the

Societal

- COVID restrictions impede adoption and volunteering
- Lonely, isolated people need animals for moral support
- People should be better educated to understand that animals play a vital role in our daily life

Technological

- How we live, work and interact has changed in the past 30 years
 - Highlight the good aspects of social media (e.g. fast spreading messages and alerts) but also negative aspects (superficiality)
- Highlight other technologies which ROLDA is testing to benefit animals e.g. crypto donations
- <https://cryptoforanimals.org>

Economic

- Rising fuel, electricity and utility prices
- Animal abandonment for financial reasons are on the rise



Our Goals

Reduce the animal over population by sterilizing a minimum 1500 pets per year

It is only recently that sterilization became part of the national debate in Romania as a solution to tackling the homeless dog crisis. It is the only humane way of affecting real and lasting change in the number of dogs born and living wild.

In 2016, the short-sighted Romanian government, under public pressure to reduce the number of stray dog incidents, made rescuing, neutering and returning illegal. Safely neutering, vaccinating and releasing healthy dogs back into their territory and sheltering/treating those in need was how ROLDA was achieving real progress in reducing the stray population.

While the Romanian government persists with its foolish policy, ROLDA has refocused its efforts to neuter pets living in poor rural communities because this is where pets give birth to litters that families cannot afford. To date, ROLDA has humanely sterilized almost 20,000 dogs and the success of our campaigns has earned international support.

After focusing on our work in Galati for 20 years, we decided to extend our programs – as funds allow – to neighboring counties. ROLDA has identified 2 potential collaborators: one located across Danube river, in the county of Tulcea, and another in the city of Caracal, in the county of Ilt. We hope to begin working closely with them at the earliest opportunity, and to unite our resources and manpower.

Reduce animal abandonment by 50%

Animal abandonment continues to remain the principal cause of overpopulation and whilst the practice is tragic and abhorrent, it must be understood to be stopped.

Romania is one of Europe's poorest countries and – especially in rural areas – people live extremely harsh lives. Sometimes – heartbreakingly – people have to choose between feeding their families or feeding their pets

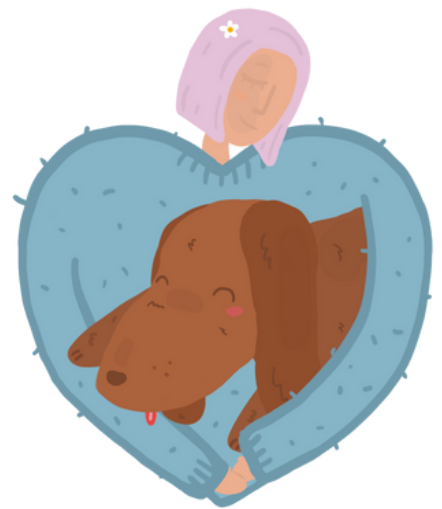


ROLDA is tackling abandonment in the spirit of compassion, not punishment. We provide food aid and emergency medical support for impoverished families who otherwise cannot afford to keep their pets.

Another key factor contributing to abandonment is the lack of education. People often mismanage their pets and the situation becomes mutually unlivable. Inspired by a British model, we created a National Study to communicate with owners who need help to understand better their pets, address issues healthily and live a happy life. If all other avenues of prevention have failed, we do the best we can to take unwanted pets in danger of becoming homeless, at the owners' request.

Educate the community to be responsible pet owners

Responsible pet ownership doesn't have a strict definition but is a combination of common sense, respecting the applicable laws, and considering the animals changing needs and their environment. A dog that barks continuously might disturb the neighbors. Poop left in park alleys and walking with a dog off the leash in busy places is also rude. Failing to make frequent visits to the vet to make sure the pet stays healthy is wrong, and keeping animals chained because of a tradition is cruel.



Continue to shelter & rehome responsibly

Once an animal arrives with our rescue team and any wounds are treated, they undergo a quarantine period in which they're kept safe, well-fed, and as comfortable as possible whilst receiving broad-spectrum vaccinations. This procedure is necessary to protect both the welfare of the animal and those already in our care. It also helps prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

Once cleared, they go on to join our community within one of our shelters, where they can be physically and emotionally rehabilitated and recover from any illness or injury. They will stay with us until a new home can be found. Some may stay with us for the rest of their lives due to behavioral problems or being unfit to travel.

Support other animal welfare initiatives

Expand support to other activists in Romania and through them support animal lovers who cannot afford to pay vet bills and assist them in organizing sterilization campaigns



Stop illegal animal smuggling

Animal trafficking happens everywhere. Animals are subjected to brutal conditions that cause them unimaginable suffering with many of them dying before they reach their destinations.

One of the driving forces behind the wildlife trade is the desire to own exotic pets, such as tigers, alligators, and bears. These animals are separated from their families - usually at birth - and wrenched from their habitat, forced into a distressingly unfamiliar environment.

Another driving force behind the illegal wildlife trade is traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). TCM has helped drive some animal species to the brink of extinction. Despite the advances Western modern medicine has made, TCM remains popular today even though its efficacy has been widely disproven.

Though ROLDA's focus is and will remain the rescue and rehoming of stray animals in Galati, we are actively involved in advocating for the end of wildlife trafficking worldwide. We lend our voice and support to animal activists and organizations fighting for its full and final end.

Close down illegal public shelters

The boom in Romania's stray dog population has created a new market for public shelters that are financed by public funds: money that comes from the Romanian government who pay them according to how many dogs they can 'remove' from the streets.

They do not care about the welfare of animals, they euthanize at any opportunity and there are no regular/unannounced inspections to hold them to account. The management does not care if the shelter has become a cesspit within which starvation, disease and violence are common.



ROLDA adopts whenever possible from public shelters as life inside them is worse than in the wild. As often as we can, ROLDA takes dogs away from that nightmare into our shelter and searches for a loving new home.

Every year this number represents only 5-10% of the dogs ROLDA rescues. It is essential that dogs are removed from this toxic atmosphere as soon as possible.

The longer they spend in these awful places the longer they are exposed to violence and disease. The experience many dogs suffer in public shelters impacts them for life in the form of lifelong psychological scars.

These dogs require much more time and resources to rehabilitate – it can cost thousands in specialist care – and some never recover to the degree they need to, in order to be suitable for rehoming. Because of this, many remain in our care.

End live animals captive for tourists

In Romania, animals such as wolves, snakes, bears, monkeys, and lions are illegally owned by individuals for hobby and profit. These animals have been smuggled into the country or trafficked further abroad without regard for their wellbeing.

One of the most deceptive and profitable businesses involving captive animals is wildlife tourism.

Wildlife tourism exploits animals from birth until they are either euthanized or abandoned once they are no longer considered “valuable” by their owners. These animals endure years of suffering at their owners’ hands, who use cruel training methods to teach them to perform for tourists.



End the culture of animal cruelty

There is still a way long to go before authorities to take animal cruelty seriously. The newly established Animal Police Division is still far from the level of the inspectors from the RSPCA. Many animals are still on their own and the only chance they have is if every one of us, the citizens, take action and report cruelty, and be a voice for the voiceless.

Respond to animal emergencies

We are aiming to be prepared to help local charities located in Eastern Europe who struggle to survive natural disasters, or unsafe situations caused by people like in the case of the Ukrainian war. Using current logistics, ROLDA can take some animals into our shelter, send humanitarian aid to neighboring locations, and also distribute small grants where rescuers need us the most.

To achieve ambitious goals we need to

Increase community engagement

To encourage community involvement, we encourage supporters to **become ROLDA Ambassadors** with the relevant pack, which people can order directly on our website. It is a different pack each year and the items are designed to raise awareness around ROLDA's achievements and goals.

We created the **National Study**, to work with owners of dogs with behavioral issues, to identify the root of the problem, and to help them to better communicate with their pets, therefore preventing abandonment.

ROLDA is acutely aware of the importance of investment into educating children with regard to animal welfare to ultimately create more knowledgeable and compassionate generations.

To this end, we created the **ABC** online to help kids understand the basics of caring and safely interacting with animals and help them recognize the value of animal life. Likewise, in collaboration with a local talented student, we created a coloring book to be distributed for free in rural areas to communities that need support to learn basic animal care skills as well as topics such as respecting animal rights. Our approach does this in a fun and engaging way.

Partner with other individuals, communities and organisations to create a united front of animal welfare response in Romania

We have reliable organizations like Swiss Animal Protection, SPCAI, Lady Free Thinker and others that support our work and we also have some Romanian companies as sponsors. We received a grant for sterilizations from Nestle Romania and created a presentation to reach more companies. International corporations can match the gifts made by their employees via **Benevity**.

Strengthen our international network

We created a website dedicated to **volunteers** to highlight their important role within our charity, to have periodic discussions with branch representatives to adjust the strategy (communication, fundraising), to create posts and web articles in native languages to address supporters from Norway, France, Sweden, Germany etc.

Conclusions

Strays were declared a national safety matter, when both people and animals lost life (vulnerable people: kids, seniors killed by dogs bites, or mass murder of innocent dogs), these tragedies will continue unless we realize that we have a common goal (no matter whether we love animals or not) to not see these dogs on streets. For organizations like ROLDA to use existing logistics (shelter) to take these dogs from the streets, we need funds. It is our duty to be transparent but it's the duty of society to get involved to solve its own problems.



Next steps

#give hope



improve small shelter facilities for dogs



deepen our relation with ROLDA supporters



Begin construction of the PawzUp state-of-art care facility and community hub



Strengthen our international branches network

Priorities



Rescue and care for each dog who needs us



**Prevention: sterilization, vaccination,
disease control management**



**Advocacy: against PS, anti-chain, wild animals
captive for dogs amusement, smuggling/illegal
live animals transport**



**Support: grow support from international
community, increase Romanian animal lovers'
involvement, increase the overall income which
will enable us to expand services and help more
animals in need, create and grow fundraising
groups, marketing for micro-websites, use the
power of social media channels to increase
support, accept modern tools to generate income**



Help senior and disabled cats have a safer future

