

UK DRI Animal Research Policy

Position statement

Background

In order to develop treatments for dementia and neurodegeneration of the human brain researchers use a range of methods including tissue culture, computer modelling, analysis of human tissue and clinical trials. In situations where these methods are not suitable for a specific research question, animal models are often used. Research involving animals has resulted in some of the most important findings to date in modern medicine.

Our position

We continue to need animal experiments to make progress in our field of research. The animal research policy of the UK DRI is guided and informed by the principles of the 3Rs from the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs) to replace, refine and reduce animal studies. It is aligned with the policies and position statements of our founding funders Medical Research Council (MRC), Alzheimer's Research UK (ARUK) and Alzheimer's Society. We support the AMRC's position on using animals in research adhering to the principles of the 3Rs to replace, refine and reduce animal studies.

Policy and governance

1. All UK DRI funded research must comply with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA), amended 2012 and any further embodiments. UK DRI centres and award holders are responsible for ensuring that all appropriate establishment, personal and project licenses required under the Act have been granted by the Home Office, including gaining approval via their centre's local ethical review process. All UK DRI funding is made on the absolute condition that no work that is controlled by the Act will begin until necessary licenses have been obtained.

2. UK DRI researchers planning to use animals in their research must make themselves aware of the 3Rs, the principles of appropriate experimental design and the ARRIVE guidelines and ensure that their proposed investigations are designed in accordance with these principles, so that:

- a. Alternatives to using animals have been fully explored.
- b. If there is no alternative the simplest possible (or least sentient) species is used and its use is fully justified.
- c. The number of animals used in a programme of work is minimised, for example by careful scheduling of breeding or experiments.
- d. That the number of animals used in an experiment is the minimum sufficient to answer the question posed.
- e. The experimental design and planned statistical analyses are appropriate, reducing the impact of bias.
- f. Pain, suffering, distress and lasting harm are avoided and when not possible are minimised to maintain a high standard of welfare and ensure that the severity of procedures is kept to a minimum.
- g. Opportunities to refine the animal study to reduce harm have been explored and implemented where practicable.

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h. Opportunities to reduce animal use by sharing data and resources (e.g. tissue) have been explored and implemented where practicable.

3. If practicable, outsourcing of animal research to organisations based outside of the UK Home Office jurisdiction should be avoided. Special cases may be considered for international collaborative research in which the researchers, local University ethical board and UK DRI Animal Models Programme committee are satisfied that the welfare standards at the non-UK location are consistent with those required under UK APSA legislation. In accordance with MRC policy, all applications involving animal research conducted overseas are required to submit a signed statement to confirm that this research would be conducted in accordance with regulatory systems in the UK (and applicable regulation in the host country).

4. All project applications involving rabbits, cats, dogs, pigs, goats, sheep, horses and other less common research animals or non-human primates will be subject to an additional level of ethical review carried out by an independent body such as NC3R or bespoke review panels depending on the model species in question.

Further reading

- UK DRI Animal Research [Guidance](#)
- Details of UK DRI Animal Models Programme Committee – Updated information will be available on the [Animal Models page of the UK DRI Portal](#)
- NC3R: National Centre for the 3Rs, guidance on the 3R principles and training opportunities.
 - Principles of the 3Rs - <https://nc3rs.org.uk/the-3rs>
 - Experimental design resources - <https://nc3rs.org.uk/experimental-design>
 - ARRIVE Guidelines - <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines>
 - Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research - <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/responsibility-use-animals-bioscience-research>
- Alzheimer’s Society animal research policy - <https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/about-us/policy-and-influencing/what-we-think/use-animals-research>
- ARUK animal research policy - <https://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org/about-us/our-influence/policy-work/position-statements/animal-research/>
- MRC animal research guidance and policy - <https://mrc.ukri.org/research/research-involving-animals/>

Version	Date	Updated by	Approved by	Notes
1.0	18/06/2020	Aoife Kiely	Board / Committee	Due for revision 18 June 2021
2.0	29/09/2020	Aoife Kiely	Board / Committee	Refinement of list of animals involved in research – Due for revision 29 September 2020

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