



Information about animal research for the media

Understanding Animal Research aims to achieve understanding and acceptance of the need for humane animal research in the UK, by maintaining and building informed public support and a favourable policy environment.

Media resources

Understanding Animal Research welcomes approaches from the media. We encourage balanced reporting on the issue of animal research. We help journalists interested in any aspect of animal research or the debate. We can:

- Provide news and comment about current issues in animal research
- Supply background and information
- Help with media research, including access to resources including books, animal rights literature, press cuttings, radio/TV clips.
- Negotiate access to animal facilities
- Find individuals for interviews, debates, documentaries and opinion pieces
- Provide high resolution images and video of laboratory animals from our online libraries

Contact: Chris Magee, Media and Public Affairs Manager on cmagee@uar.org.uk, 020 7685 2678 or 07771 615072 (out-of-hours)

See also our links, right, for further information sources.

Media guidelines

Understanding Animal Research works with journalists to provide background, information, images, and comment.

We are also able to negotiate access for the media to scientists, vets and doctors who work with animals, and access to animal research facilities. To help us in this, we ask that journalists with whom we have not worked previously:

- Provide some credentials, for example name of commissioning/senior editor or producer.
- Provide details and links for similar stories you have written or produced – preferably relating to animal research or a health/science topic.
- Provide a synopsis of the story and/or the news angle.
- Tell us what other leads you are following for the story.
- Respect any requests for anonymity.

Other sources of information

Home Office Provides information about the legislation and the numbers of animals used in the UK. Press office (contact news desk for animal research): 020 7035 3535

NC3Rs The National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research is an independent scientific organisation funding 3Rs research. Press office: media@nc3rs.org.uk 020 7611 2233

Association of Medical Research Charities Provides information and guidance to improve public dialogue about research and science on behalf of its member charities.

RSPCA UK charity which helps promote best practice in laboratory animal welfare but believes that replacing the use of animals must be the ultimate goal. Press office: 0300 123 0244

BUAV Antivivisection group campaigns to “create a world where nobody wants or believes we need to experiment on animals”. Press office: fleur.dawes@buav.org 020 7619 6978

Animal Aid Animal rights group established in 1977 to campaign peacefully against all forms of animal use. Press office: 01732 364546

Science Media Centre An independent venture to promote the voices, stories and views of the scientific community to the national media. Contact: smc@sciencemediacentre.org, 020 7670 2980

Published by Understanding Animal Research, Charles Darwin House, 12 Roger Street, WC1N 2JU, t 020 7685 2670 f 020 7685 2684 e info@uar.org.uk



Media fast facts

Why are animals used in research?

- Four **main reasons**:
 - To advance **scientific understanding**
 - As models to **study disease**
 - To develop and test **new medical treatments**
 - To protect the **safety** of people, animals and the environment
- Animals are needed to find out **what happens in the whole, living body**, which is far more complex than the sum of its parts.
- Most **major medical advances** have depended in part on the use of animals in research.

Are there alternatives?

- Most biological and medical research uses **non-animal methods**. While these are sometimes regarded as **alternatives**, they are normally used alongside animals to answer different research questions.

How is animal research regulated?

- **The law requires** animals are only used when the information cannot be obtained in another way, and the results will be sufficiently important to justify the use of animals.
- The UK is the only country in the world to have both local and national controls running at the same time.
- The Home Office is responsible for the **regulation of animal experiments in the UK** and the independent **Animal Procedures Committee** advises the Home Secretary.
- Three separate licences are required for animal procedures. Researchers adhere to ethical, scientific and legal guidelines, requiring that laboratory animals are treated well and used in minimum numbers.
- **Inspectors** from the Home Office, all qualified vets and doctors, make regular visits to all animal facilities, usually without warning.
- Recently, the **European Directive** which governs the use of animals in research was revised, and this legislation is currently being adopted into UK law.

How many animals and what type of animals are used?

- In 2010, **3.72 million animals were used in scientific procedures** in the UK. This does not include invertebrates such as fruit flies or worms, or animals which are killed only for their tissue.
- Most the animals used are **rodents or fish**.
- **Cats, dogs and primates** such as macaques and marmosets make up less than 0.5% of the animals used. Great apes have not been used in the UK for over 25 years.

Opinions and ethical stances

- **Opinion polls** consistently show that around three-quarters of the UK public agree that animal research is necessary to advance medicine.
- All major scientific and medical **organisations around the world agree** that animal research is crucial for our understanding of the body in health and disease and for the development and testing of new medical treatments.
- **Antivivisection groups and animal rights extremists** share an ideological opposition to any use of animals in research, but use different tactics.
- **Animal rights extremists** use criminal tactics to frighten researchers into stopping their work. Most of the extremists in the UK have now been jailed for their campaigns of harassment and intimidation.

**For more information go to our website
FAQ and Myth & Fact page**

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