

## **Our policy on using animals in research**

Our mission is to kick-start the life-saving cancer research advances of the future by sowing the seeds of new discoveries today. We sit at the very start of the research journey, backing brand new ideas and supporting scientists to ask big, challenging, new questions about how cancer works.

To achieve this, we support pioneering, innovative research that aims to find new and better ways of preventing, diagnosing, and treating cancer. Much of this research is carried out without involving animals. In certain areas, however, laboratory animal research remains an essential tool to translate ground-breaking discoveries into new tests or treatments for cancer that could save millions of lives.

This is why we believe properly regulated animal research is both necessary and justified when there is no other alternative.

Worldwide Cancer Research is committed to ensuring the animal research we fund is as robust and reproducible as possible, and that the highest standards of laboratory animal welfare are met. We therefore recognise the importance of the principles of the 3Rs ([Replacement, Reduction and Refinement of animals in research](#)), and actively support their implementation.

1. As a UK-based charity Worldwide Cancer Research is guided primarily by UK legislation and practice in this area. As a member of the UK's Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC), we fully support the [AMRC's position statement on the use of animals in research](#).

Therefore:

- a) Throughout this policy the term 'animal research' refers to research that uses species protected under the UK's [Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986 \(ASPA\)](#). Broadly this means any living non-human vertebrate (except man).
  - b) Worldwide Cancer Research will consider research on mammals with special protection under UK law (cats, horses, dogs and non-human primates), subject to the clauses below. Such proposals will undergo an additional layer of external peer review by the UK's [National Centre for the 3Rs](#) (NC3Rs) for an [expert assessment](#) of the proposed animal research.
  - c) Worldwide Cancer Research will not fund research that clearly would not be licensed in the UK, for example research involving great apes, endangered species or very severe experimental procedures.
2. Worldwide Cancer Research will only fund research using animals when

- a) There are no feasible alternatives and all reasonable efforts have been made to replace, reduce and refine the use of animals.
- b) The chosen animal model is appropriate and relevant to the proposed research.
- c) The research has a strong scientific rationale and robust study design which will help to deliver benefit for people affected by cancer.
- d) The research will be conducted in strict compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, guidance and ethics committee requirements, and welfare standards.
- e) The research meets the UK's high standards as outlined in the cross-funders guidance: [Responsibility in the Use of Animals in Bioscience Research](#) and [NC3Rs Guidelines: Non-Human Primate Accommodation, Care and Use](#)

3. Our policy on using animals in research is applied via

**Our grant application process** - all applicants who request funding for research involving animals are asked to explain (referring to the principles of the 3Rs) why there is no alternative to using animals in the research, why the species/model and the number of animals is justified, state that the severity level for all procedures is the lowest possible and provide information on animal welfare standards.

**Our peer review process** – we obtain expert assurance on the value and design of proposed animal research in our grant applications. Independent external peer reviewers are asked to consider carefully the information the applicants have provided on any proposed research involving animals and comment on whether the applicants have followed the principles of the 3Rs as set out in the guidance above. This advice is then used by our Scientific Advisory Committee in their funding decisions.

If a research proposal requests the use of mammals with special protection under UK law, an additional expert review is required from NC3Rs. The applicants will then be asked to respond to any concerns raised by NC3Rs and this response will be considered by a senior Worldwide Cancer Research panel including the CEO and the Research Strategy Committee (a sub-committee of the charity's Board of Trustees) before any funding is awarded.

Worldwide Cancer Research reserves the right to amend this policy at any time. Questions about this policy should be addressed to the Research Funding team: [grants@worldwidecancerresearch.org](mailto:grants@worldwidecancerresearch.org)

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