

Statement on the use of animals in research

The Academy works in partnership with other research funders to offer grants for biomedical researchers. Our schemes support those on the clinical training pathway and those working in basic biomedical research. We fund high quality research to better understand disease and so improve health and wellbeing.

Our grants schemes fund different types of research, including the use of cells grown in a lab, tissue samples, computer models and when appropriate, animals. Awardees also conduct clinical trials with human volunteers. All of these approaches, including research using animals, play an important role in the research process.

We consider the use of animals to be essential in biomedical research in order to better understand the living body and what goes wrong in disease, and to develop safe and effective ways of preventing or treating those diseases

Research using animals has made an important contribution to advances in medicine and surgery, which have brought major improvements in the health of human beings and animals.

We do not take the decision to fund such research lightly. We use expert peer review to ensure that we fund only high-quality research where the benefits to people and animal health outweigh any harms to animals. We support the principle of using animals in research when there is no alternative that can be used to find out the same information without using animals.

High standards of animal welfare are important. These both minimise discomfort for the animals involved and enable researchers to get reliable results. We only fund research that complies with the law; all work is carried out in line with strict Home Office guidelines. We support the principle of the 3Rs to refine, reduce and replace the use of animals in research.

Our awardees are required to follow the ARRIVE guidelines (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) when conducting research using animals to improve the design, analysis and reporting of animal research, maximising information published and minimising unnecessary studies.

The Academy is working to address all aspects of animal research, from engaging in debate about how to regulate the use of animals in research, to efforts to improve the openness of organisations that are involved in animal research.

The majority of the public can accept that research using animals is necessary as long as there are no alternatives and suffering is minimised. We recognise that not everybody is comfortable with the use of animals in research. We work with our Fellows, and the researchers we fund, to promote public debate and dialogue regarding the use of animals in medical research.

For further information on the Academy's involvement in the use of animals in research please contact simon.denegri@acmedsci.ac.uk