



Proposal of Activities

- Research taster days. We propose a series of inclusive and accessible research 'taster' days. These will consist of timetabled days where veterinary students spend time with academics in small groups, gaining relevant research skills in that discipline and an opportunity to meet potential supervisors. These new events for this round, build on the success of laboratory training run as part of round 4, with improvements based on experience and feedback. The activities will span across multiple disciplines (e.g. laboratory practice, pathology, epidemiology (including digital innovation), clinical research) to increase the breadth of research topics, and widen the opportunity to more students. Recognising that the barriers for many students to consider careers in research are inadequate awareness and opportunity, these days will raise motivation and promote research active academics as role models. Taster days will also help in managing expectations, aid recruitment, and enhance commitment in students and supervisors considering the studentships.
- Studentships. Veterinary students are able to spend up to six weeks of their extramural studies (EMS) undertaking research activities but only a small proportion take up this opportunity. Feedback suggest that funding and awareness of opportunities are key limitations for those students wishing to undertake research as part of EMS. To that end, continuing and improving on activities in round 4, we propose to offer funded studentships of four to six weeks duration, to be undertaken during summer vacation. These awards would be competitive, with a list of projects proposed by academics and partners and also the option for students to propose their own projects either within the University or externally with partners of the school. Recognising that these activities will be of great benefit but only to a limited number of students due to the cost, it is important that the opportunity is communicated to all, and all students have equal opportunity to apply and those that are selected are well motivated and have realistic expectations. This makes the taster days a crucial part, and attendance on taster days will be encouraged as part of the selection process. Studentships will be promoted and communicated to all students, working closely with the student representatives to use the most appropriate channels (e.g recorded content distributed via social media).
- Inspiring research careers. An annual careers fair has become a key part of the school's approach to enhancing student employability, but research careers are underrepresented. Continuing the success of a previous research career session supported by INSPIRE round 4, we aim to enhance the exposure of students to possible research careers by supporting the careers fair and inviting research



active vets and veterinary scientists. These potential role models will be invited to give formal and informal talks, and join the networking events with the students.

- Research focus in Veterinary Society special interest clubs. The University of Surrey Veterinary Society is now in its fifth year, and has six active special interest clubs (Farm Animal, Equine, Companion Animal, Behaviour and Welfare, Zoology and Pathology). In round 4, it was decided that inspiring students into research would be best done through these special interest clubs (SIC)s rather than add an additional 'research' special interest group. This decision has been vindicated by the success of these SICs over the past two years with over 15 external speakers attending student run events in 2017-2018, each attended by up to 50 students. We aim to use INSPIRE round 5 to continue to support these groups to attract research-active speakers, and enhance attendance at these events, subsidising the costs of refreshments and room bookings and paying for speaker's expenses.
- Student Bursaries. Bursaries and travel grants will continue to be offered to give students the opportunity to present their research at external research related events and conferences (for example National Veterinary Student Research Conference, BSAVA, BVZS). Bursaries have proven an effective way of encouraging attendance at conferences, giving students experience of presenting research, the opportunity to listen to the research of others, and to network with relevant people in their field of interest. Nine students have been awarded bursaries as part of INSPIRE award round 4, and all presented research either as a talk or poster, with several winning prizes for their work and having their work published in peer reviewed journals. Bursaries are competitive and evaluated by a sub-panel of the School's Research culture committee. New for round 5, we will engage with the student Veterinary Society to enhance the promotion and communication of this opportunity to all students, using recorded short advertisements distributed via social media. INSPIRE bursaries will be complemented by bursaries provided through philanthropic funding.
- National Veterinary Undergraduate Student conference. All the UK veterinary schools have agreed to collaborate to run an annual National Veterinary Undergraduate research conference. As a new activity as part of round 5, each veterinary school applying for INSPIRE funding has included funds for a block registration to support that attendance of 10-15 students at a conference that will rotate between the Schools. The School of Veterinary Medicine at University of Surrey has offered to host the National Veterinary Undergraduate Research Conference in 2021. Holding this prestigious event at the School will not only inspire those attending, but also other students on the programme through the

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profile, publicity and networking with visiting students. The School has a track record of hosting similar successful events with a large CPD programme, and as the host of multiple national and international conferences with up to 250 attendees.

- vHive Student Innovation Club. The Veterinary Health Innovation Engine (vHive), was launched in April 2016 as an initiative to bring innovative digital solutions to animal health challenges. It is a joint initiative between the School, the 5G Innovation Centre and the Centre for the Digital Economy and has received investment from the University, eM3 local enterprise partnership and Zoetis. Student engagement with vHive is an essential part of the School's aim to prepare veterinary students for a changing world, equipping them with skills in innovation and big data. Opportunities for research are numerous, and as part of Inspire round 4, there were three undergraduate projects, two students undertook internships and one extramural studies in vHive demonstrating demand. As a new activity for round 5, our intention is to launch a Student Innovation Club to deliver a foundation in all the key methodologies and skills demonstrated by entrepreneurs and innovators. Research and innovation are closely linked, and the skills and experience promoted by the club- including practical training in entrepreneurship, understanding value chains, success and failure in start-up companies, are all relevant to research careers. Furthermore, industry researchers invited to speak as part of the club will act as potential role models for students. The club will be led and supported by vHive staff but managed and coordinated by the student body.
- Widening participation. A new innovation for round 5, we propose widening the opportunity for inspiring an interest in research, beyond the confines of the University. We aim to engage and inspire secondary school pupils considering studying veterinary medicine, to the opportunities in research. The School already contributes to a Widening Participation summer school in veterinary medicine, aimed at attracting and enabling students who might not otherwise apply. This summer school, in collaboration with four local secondary schools, is currently focussed on clinical careers. With modest investment to develop additional teaching materials, an additional half day session can be added to this annual summer school, focused on research and non-clinical careers in the veterinary profession. The intended benefit is twofold- not only inspiring an interest in research in school pupils already committed to studying veterinary medicine, but also widening the appeal of the summer school . If successful (measured by student feedback and the number of applicants to the summer school) we hope this activity will be sustainably incorporated into the summer school.

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