



Animals in Research, Development and Innovation Policy

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	1.0	25/04/2024	Creation	1year	25/04/2025	Research, Grants and Awards
	1.1	03/06/2025	Points of clarification: international funding, reference to concordat, reference to ARRIVE, reference to diverse study design including using both sexes, Academy contact details process addition: Fellow review step. Meeting.	2years	25/04/2027	Research, Grants and Awards

Document Control					
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1.0 Introduction/Purpose

The Academy acknowledges that, at present, the use of animals remains the only way for some areas of research to progress. Research involving animals is regulated by comprehensive and strict legislation in the UK and must be conducted with a high regard for animal welfare. The Academy will fund research involving the use of animals where;

- there is no feasible alternative and applicants have provided sound scientific justification for the use of animals
- the research is being funded through a UK Higher Education Institute and is part of a large research grant programme.
- the research is conducted in full compliance with [Home Office legislation](#) and all relevant regulatory requirements
- the research complies with principles set out by the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research ([NC3Rs](#))
 - Replacement – looking for approaches that don't involve animals
 - Reduction – reducing the number of animals involved
 - Refinement – introducing ways to reduce any pain or stress experienced by animals

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all grant applicants, Academy grant holders and recipient organisations. The guidelines herein set out Academy expectations for the use of animals in research and are therefore also applicable to referees and Panel/Committee/Board members involved in reviewing research proposals on behalf of the Academy.

3.0 Policy Statement

Research involving animals in the UK is governed by the principles and legislation set out by the [UK Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986](#) and subsequent amendments, the [Home Office licensing procedure](#), local Animal Welfare Ethical Review Board (AWERB) requirements, [Non-human primate accommodation, care and use](#) and the [Responsibility for the Use of Animals in Bioscience Research guidelines](#) produced by the [National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research \(NC3Rs\)](#), BBSRC, DEFRA, EPSRC, MRC, NERC, Royal Society, Wellcome Trust, CRUK and other AMRC charities.

In alignment with these principles, in addition to obtaining all relevant licences and regulatory approvals, the Academy **requires** grantees to:

- Explain why there is no alternative to using animals in the research and the ethical implications of the planned experiments.
- Justify the number, species and sex of animals they will use, clearly describing how the planned experimental design is appropriate to give robust results.
- Embed diversity in the design of their studies including using both sexes in their experimental design and in line with [guidance](#) from MRC unless there is a strong justification in the research proposal for using a single-sex study design.



- Ensure distress and pain are minimized and the severity level for all procedures is the lowest possible.
- Develop their research design using [NC3Rs guidelines](#) in alignment with the principles of replace, reduce, and refine.
- maintain welfare standards consistent with the principles of UK legislation.
- for research involving macaques, grant holders must source them from the [MRC Centre for Macaques](#)

The Academy further **recommends** that researchers use the [Experimental Design Assistant](#), a free tool developed by NC3Rs to help with the design of their experiments and submit the report as part of their grant application. Researchers are also encouraged to use the [ARRIVE](#) guidelines for improving the reproducibility and reporting of research involving animals.

Academy funded research involving international partners, or work undertaken outside the UK, will not be allowed to engage in research involving animals as defined by the [UK Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986](#) unless explicitly stated in the call documentation. If your proposal does include animal experiments as part of an international collaboration and the call documentation explicitly allows for this then the experiments **must** be conducted in a way that meets the standards of the UK. This requirement applies whether or not the animals are to be purchased with funds requested within the proposal itself or through other supplementary funding. We recommend applicants contact us **before** beginning their application to discuss whether their proposal would be considered.

4.0 Procedures

Regulatory approval and licenses are not required at the point the grant application is submitted, but researchers must have all approvals in place before the research begins and a clear plan to achieve this at application stage.

Pre-application:

Guidance documents for Research, Development and Innovation schemes should link through to this policy.

At application:

For Research, Development and Innovation grants with the exception of programmes where this research type would be ineligible based upon the scope of the call, applicants will be asked to confirm whether their proposed research involves the use of animals.

If the response is no, the applicant will skip to the next section of the application, if yes, they will need to provide details on the following:

- The location of the research and the legislative requirements if outside of the UK
- Rationale for the use of animals and why there is no viable alternative and details on species, number, gender and design considerations.
- The plan and timing of acquiring all the relevant approvals and licenses
- Compliance with the Academy's policy.

They will also be able to upload their [Experimental Design Assistant \(EDA\)](#) report to support their application though this is not currently to be mandated.

At review:



Reviewers will assess the use of animals proposed in any application against the NC3Rs guidance and report any concerns in respect of these applications to their panel Chair or Academy staff. The Academy reserves the right to require additional information, evidence or to send details of the proposal to additional independent experts for review.

At contracting:

Applications recommended for funding and that involve the use of animals will be reviewed by an Academy designated Fellow to ensure that research is necessary and that approaches have been appropriately designed. The Academy reserves the right, in rare cases, to share details of the proposed animal use with Fellows from the Academy of Medical Sciences or the [NC3Rs](#) team should the Academy Fellow recommend this additional expert review..

The Academy's [standard terms and conditions](#) require all Awardees to ensure that grant activities are carried out in accordance with all relevant legislation, regulatory and ethical requirements and codes of practice, including but not limited to health and safety, data protection, bribery, and national security.

Specific clauses are also included within the contract to ensure compliance with relevant legislation including [UK Animals \(Scientific Procedures\) Act 1986](#) as well as the principles and aims of the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs) as set out in the [Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research](#) and the [Non-human primate accommodation, care and use](#).

Awardees are also required to inform the Academy of changes to project activities including changes to the use or number of animals in research.

During the length of the award:

Researchers must ensure that ethical oversight is maintained for the duration of the award and any changes to the research plans, including the numbers of animals in research are reported to the Academy.

The Academy reserves the right to see licenses and approval documents or ask for further evidence and information at any point during the grant and for a period of seven years after it has ended.

Requests for information:

Any and all queries with respect to animal research supported by the Academy should be directed to the Grant Operations team via grantops@raeng.org.uk

5.0 Related policies and relevant references

- [UKRIO Code of Practice for Research](#)
- [Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments](#)
- [Responsibility in the use of animals in bioscience research](#)
- [Animal Welfare Ethical Review Body](#)
- [Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK](#)