



Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council



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21st November 2025

Dear Colleagues,

In recent years, it has become increasingly evident that the infrastructure and facilities supporting the use of animals in scientific research are facing a range of challenges. These include a decline in certain areas of research and an increase in complexity in others, both of which are contributing to growing economic pressures, resource constraints, and potentially skill shortages.

Whilst both the MRC and BBSRC acknowledge the significant progress that has been made in reducing and replacing animal use through the development of non-animal models, there remains a continued need for responsible animal research and appropriate facilities. As the UK life sciences sector continues to evolve and is a critical element of the government's strategy for growth, maintaining an innovative and forward-thinking animal research community is vital. Integrating the principles of the 3Rs with a strong commitment to animal welfare is key to ensuring that research remains both ethical and impactful.

To better understand the current landscape, the MRC and BBSRC have brought together a panel of experts from across the animal research field, chaired by Professor Nancy Rothwell. This group is leading a fact-finding initiative to assess the UK's capabilities, capacities, and future opportunities in animal research facilities and resources.

As part of this effort, we have prepared a questionnaire aimed at those responsible for the scientific direction, management, governance, supply and budgetary oversight of animals in research in the UK. Its purpose is to gather essential information that will help inform us on the current use, evolving need and future planning for animals in research. A changing landscape of animal use and escalating costs will inevitably put financial strain on the costing models of many individual facilities. Closer collaborations and shared efficiencies are likely to be required to secure value-for-money animal research delivering cutting edge scientific research.

Given the increasingly collaborative nature of our work, often spanning academic institutions, the biotech and the pharmaceutical industry, we strongly encourage everyone



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involved in work regulated by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act to take part. Your input will help shape the future of animal research in the UK.

We can assure you that high digital data security and confidentiality will be maintained. A final report will be made available publicly, however no institution/company will be identifiable, and your responses will be treated in confidence. More information is available on our websites.

Thank you for your responses. If you have any questions please contact ccora@ukri.org

Nancy

Anne

Patrick



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