



LORD DOWDING FUND
FOR HUMANE RESEARCH

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A NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF ANIMALS IN EXPERIMENTS

A proposal prepared by:

**The Lord Dowding Fund for Humane Research
and
The Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research**

National and European legislation regulating animal experimentation demands that non-animal methods be sought before recourse to the use of animals whenever possible. In the UK project licence applications require full consideration of refinement, reduction and replacement (the Three Rs) of animal use.

Public opinion in the UK and across Europe strongly favours the use of non-animal approaches to research wherever feasible. A 1999 MORI opinion poll showed that 91% of those polled wanted more research into alternatives to animal experiments.

One of the recommendations of the House of Lords Select Committee on Animals in Scientific Procedures recently was that a "Centre for the Three Rs be set up, consisting of a small administrative hub which co-ordinates research units embedded in existing centres of scientific excellence". The Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research and the Lord Dowding Fund for Humane Research strongly support the concept of a national centre for replacement, in order to stimulate, support, and communicate non-animal approaches to pressing research questions.

A major feature of the Centre would be its transdisciplinarity - bringing a suite of relevant approaches from nationally and internationally recognised research groups to scientific questions without recourse to animal experiments.

The objectives and mission of such a Centre within science are, in summary:

* To encourage, fund, and stimulate high-quality research in the UK with the aim of finding suitable replacements to the use of animals in research. Such non-animal approaches have the potential to be more appropriate and provide more clinically relevant data.

* To train in, advance and disseminate knowledge of, research without the use of animal experiments.

The structure and function of the constituent parts of a Centre would comprise a 'hub' and constituent 'spokes'. We recommend that the hub could consist of a Director with a small, qualified support staff, with strategic advice from an Executive Council. This would form the necessary motive force for the major function of the hub - to provide motivation and co-ordination as well as being responsible for collating, distributing and operating the funding of the research undertaken in the spokes.

We also recommend that the spokes comprise laboratories or research groupings having a nationally or internationally recognised level of expertise within an area of biomedical speciality or methodology and that they collaborate across disciplines.

Funding would come from stakeholders, including humane research organisations, Government departments, medical research charities and other interested partners.

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