



Education and Training in Laboratory Animal Science & Welfare

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Understanding Animal Research News Feed

◦ World-leading research institute gets go-ahead

We are pleased to report that planning permission was granted last week for a new world-leading biomedical research institute in London. The UK Centre for Medical Research and Innovation - UKCMRI - is founded by the Medical Research Council, Wellcome Trust, Cancer Research UK and University College London. It will house 1250 scientists.

◦ Freedom of Information - judgement on confidentiality clause at a university

Recently, a tribunal ruled that under the Freedom of Information Act a university can be said to 'hold' project licences (irrespective of how they are actually stored at the university) and that section 24 of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA) would not prevent disclosure of information from the project licences.

An updated briefing document by UAR gives details of the long-running case, and is available on our Freedom of Information page. The university is considering its position and an appeal has not been ruled out.

◦ Animal instinct

Following directly from the Basel Declaration that we covered on Tuesday, an editorial in the science journal *Nature*, 9 December 2010, has urged German science to set up an organisation like Understanding Animal Research to engage the public on the medical benefits of animal research. We can't do better than quote the *Nature* editorial, called *Animal instinct*, directly:

'Germany does not have a national organization such as Understanding Animal Research to manage and maintain this public outreach. Now is the time that it should...'

◦ Basel Declaration calls for open dialogue

More than 50 top scientists working in Germany and Switzerland have launched a new Declaration about animal research. Meeting in Basel on 29 November, they pledged to be more open about their research, and to engage in more public dialogue. The Basel Declaration is subtitled 'A call for more trust, transparency and communication on animal research'

Understanding Animal Research welcomes the Declaration, which is still open to signatures. The organisers say they are going to send it to deans of medicine and other research leaders in Germany and Switzerland to garner support. They hope to go on to promote it internationally. 'The animal issue is never going to go away,' says Stefan Treue, director of the German Primate Centre in Göttingen. 'We need solidarity among all researchers.'

◦ Focus on fluorescent filming

In an improvement to fluorescence based imaging, scientists at Cambridge Research & Instrumentation Inc filmed the passage of fluorescence marked compounds through a mouse.

The technology could be especially useful for tracking how long cancer drugs remain active at their target before being metabolised and/or excreted.