REPLACEMENT NEWS

July 2017: Issue 116

ANIMAL FREE RESEARCH UK

Inside

Profile - meet our scientists

Focus on breast cancer research – our new campaign

Help Make Britain Foie Gras-Free

Foie Gras is a 'delicacy' made from the diseased liver of ducks or geese who have been repeatedly force-fed. It is already illegal to produce Foie Gras in the UK due to the extreme cruelty involved. Leaving the EU provides us with the opportunity to ban its importation as well.

Please urge the Government to ban the importation of Foie Gras as soon as we leave the EU.

Sign the petition now at:

www.animalequality.org.uk/foie-gras

Charity No. 1168309 (England & Wales)

animalEQUALITY

Contents

Welcome	4
The impact of Brexit	5
Class of 2017: Summer Studentships	6
Meet our scientists	8
Our new campaign and research	10
Get involved	12
Current projects	14
Meet TeenVGN	15
Other replacement news	16
Doug Maw: Marathon Man	18
Fabulous friends	20

Animal Free Research UK

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Welcome to the summer edition of Replacement News!

It's been nearly three months since we launched our new name and brand and the positive response has been overwhelming from supporters, scientists and our volunteers. We absolutely love seeing photos of our volunteers and staff in our brand new t-shirts representing Animal Free Research UK up and down the country from stalls, to street collections, to festivals and scientific presentations.

We're still working on how we start to reach more people, to **raise awareness** of our **evidence led, ethical research**. We are committed to driving better science – for both humans and animals and we want to take more people on that journey with us. Partnership is a huge part of this and over the next year we are looking to work with similar organisations, with shared values, to highlight the need for better science and to support our growth through fundraising and awareness raising activities.

We are delighted to announce in this issue of Replacement News, our brand new partnership with **Breast Cancer UK (pages 10-11)** with whom we are collaborating on a project to raise £90,000 to support a new research project focussed on **preventing breast cancer.**

Partnership starts at any age and we're proud to be working with **TeenVGN (page 15)**, supporting the next generation of young people to understand the importance of animal free research and how it creates better science, drives creativity and supports scientists who 'think outside the box'.

As ever, our biggest partners are you, our readers, who allow us to keep doing what we do. **Thank you.**

Team Animal Free Research UK

The impact of Brexit

What impact will Brexit have on animal free medical research?

Our Grants Officer, Dr Alpesh Patel, explains.

On 22nd June 2016, the UK voted to leave the EU. Here at Animal Free Research UK we have started to outline what that means for scientific research in general as well as the for the future of human-relevant, non-animal research.

Science depends on scientists with specialist skills, and the free movement within the UK and the EU is likely to be impacted, affecting research. All of our funded research projects involve scientists from the UK, the EU and worldwide. Many of our former and ongoing projects have benefitted greatly from ongoing collaborations between institutes in the UK and Europe.

The greatest challenge to scientific research in the future will be the nature of access to funding from outside the UK. The UK is very successful at competing for, and receiving, EU research funding. Nearly a fifth (18.3%) of overall EU funding to the UK is spent on research and development and UK Universities get around 11% of their research funding from EU sources.

The UK currently leads the world in research productivity and in the development of non-animal based technologies to replace the use of animals. Our scientific sector is at the forefront of the drive to replace all animal use within the UK, the EU and worldwide. Whether the national funding for this type of research will still be available cannot be guaranteed, therefore it is even more important for you, our supporters, to help us fund this vital work.

Prioritising the advancement of human-relevant, non-animal research through increased funding from all sources, will ensure that the UK will remain a scientific world leader in driving the adoption of non-animal research.

animalfreeresearchuk.org/donate

Class of 2017: Summer Studentships

Our summer studentship programme aims to embed animal free research in the minds of early careers scientists.

This year's 15 summer students will be involved in cutting-edge, animal free, research projects into some of the most devastating diseases.

Alexander Lanz, at the University of Sheffield, will be developing a cell culture model of **osteoarthritis,** to replace current experiments on guinea pigs, rats and rabbits.

At Sheffield Hallam University, Oana Voloaca will use a novel gut tissue model to investigate the influence of bacteria in **gastrointestinal diseases,** such as Crohn's disease, to replace studies in rats.

A cell culture model will allow Evie Gruszyk at Sheffield Hallam University an opportunity to understand **colorectal cancer,** without the need to use mice.

Joy Girgis at the University of Hertfordshire will use human cell culture to develop novel testing methods in **lung disease** studies to replace rodent studies.

Joanitta Akpai from the University of Hertfordshire will be working on developing novel biomaterials from pasta to create 3D cell culture models to help in **vascular disease and cancer** research to replace the use of rodents in such studies.

Taleen Shakouri from the University of Hertfordshire will be developing a computer model of certain **toxicology** tests, which has the potential to replace many experiments currently conducted on primates and mice.

To replace the use of many animals in **prostate cancer** research and testing, Diliany Oliveira from the University of Portsmouth will be developing a non-animal based screening tool to detect cancer biomarkers.

Rachel Henderson at the University of Glasgow will conduct human-relevant research into **leukaemia**, without harming any mice.

Using Thiel-embalmed cadavers at the University of Dundee, Emma-Jane Macrae will develop a 'clot model' for **heart diseases** to replace the use of pigs.

Edward Nendick at the University of Edinburgh will be using one of the latest cutting edge, gene editing technologies, CRISPR-Cas9, in cell culture to further our understanding of **schizophrenia** without using mice.

Using advanced cell culture and proteomics (the study of the proteins of a cell), Lauren Richardson from Nottingham Trent University will be researching **Parkinson's disease.** This will help to replace the use of primates, rats and mice.

At Imperial College London, Sergi Fayos Villalta will be doing a computational modelling project looking at the development of **pressure ulcers** and soft tissue damage to replace the use of mice and rats.

Shreya Asher will be working at Queen Mary University of London on a skin cell culture model to better understand **skin cancer,** without having to conduct any experiments on mice.

Stephanie Lunt will be working at Queen Mary University of London using patient cancer samples to identify biomarkers in **skin cancer** (melanoma) to help replace the use of mice.

Using explant cell culture to replace mice studies, Bronte Munro at the University of East Anglia will investigate the causes of **aopic dermatitis and psoriasis.**

Our summer studentship programme is entirely due to your generosity. The average cost of a Summer Studentship is **£1,940.** If you are interested in sponsoring a student next year, please do get in touch.

Follow their progress at: facebook.com/animalfreeresearchuk

Meet our scientists

Helen McLeod is a Research Assistant with Professor Graeme Houston at Dundee University. They use Thiel-embalmed human cadavers to test medical devices, such as stents.

Did you always want to be scientist? And what motivated you to become a scientist?

I've always had an interest in medical research, but when I was at primary school I wanted to be a nurse. I've always liked science and did naturally well in those subjects at school and so that's what naturally drew me into research.

"For our area of research it's very easy to understand why we use human cadavers – animals do not have the same anatomy as us. "

What led you to this area of research?

Working with the Thiel cadavers was quite opportunistic on my part. Before I had my daughter I worked with a medical device testing company on 'first-in-man' trials, which got me interested in clinical research. After I had my daughter I trained as a nurse and then went back into clinical research where I met Professor Houston.

Describe your typical day in the lab.

There isn't really a typical day! When we are not doing research on the cadavers there's a lot of paperwork, logistics, set-up and administration we need to do to make sure that our work is conducted both ethically and scientifically.

There is usually a team of us working at the institute (IMSaT) using the Thiel cadavers and when we are conducting our research it can be very emotive for all of us. We truly appreciate the fact that people have donated their bodies to medical education and research. It's a special gift, allowing us to do the research that takes place here.

Why are you conducting animal free research?

For our area of research it's very easy to understand why we use human cadavers – animals don't have the same anatomy as us. So for our work, there is nothing more superior to doing research on human cadavers.

What are some of the positive benefits of doing animal free research?

We are fortunate to have a large scientific community, both here in Dundee and elsewhere, who understand the need to do medical device testing in humans and can see the positives.

How would you describe your research or research goals?

To be the leading training facility for endovascular techniques and interventional device testing using Thiel embalmed cadavers.

If you weren't doing research what would you do instead?

I honestly don't know! I can't imagine not being here doing this research.

What do you do in your spare time?

I do love sports. I run with local trail runners but not fast, just for fun. Recently, I completed my first triathalon and I also love walking. We have a big garden and grow veggies and love to cook (and eat!).

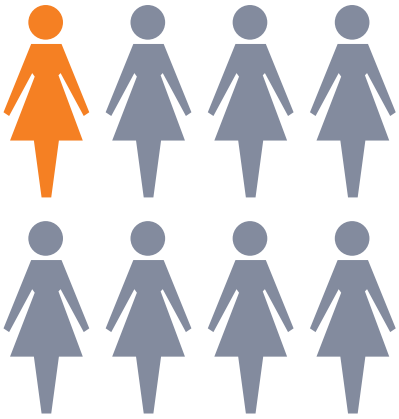
We have two cats - Vincent and Florence, siblings who are 11 months old. I also have two children, which I would also put in the pet category - expensive, difficult to train, but very cute!

Thiel embalming uses a mixture of water-based chemicals that are much less toxic than traditional techniques but still ensure a cadaver can safely be kept at room temperature for a very long time. It results in a more life-like look and feel, enabling the body to be moved and respond in a more natural manner.

Breast Cancer UK

Development Director, Emma Wrafter, introduces our new campaign and research partnership with Breast Cancer UK.

Back in 1971 incidence rates for breast cancer first started to be collected. Nearly 50 years on, the incidence rates for breast cancer in UK women has doubled. Sadly, we also know that **1 in 8 women in the UK will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.**



Our new fundraising campaign aims to raise **£90,000** to fund an innovative research project which investigates the role of environmental pollutants in increasing breast cancer risk.

This important work will improve our understanding of the causes of breast cancer to help us prevent the disease in more people in the future.

What is breast cancer?

Breast cancer occurs when abnormal cells in the breast grow in an uncontrolled manner.

What causes breast cancer?

There are lots of different risk factors for breast cancer, some of which we are unable to control such as our age, being a woman or our genetic make up. Other risk factors such as how much alcohol we drink, how much exercise we take and our exposure to chemicals linked to breast cancer however, is something we can have more control over.

Who is Breast Cancer UK?

Breast Cancer UK works to prevent breast cancer by tackling the environmental and chemical causes of the disease. They look at the role of endocrine disrupting chemicals in breast cancer. You can read about their work at **breastcanceruk.org.uk.**

BCUK Breast Cancer UK
Preventing breast cancer

Why this project?

It's thought that a large proporation of breast cancer cases are attributable to environmental and lifestyle risk factors. Yet only 1% of research funding into breast cancer is spent on this area. Our three year project will make a real difference to developing better science and improving our understanding of breast cancer.

YOU DO THE MATHS!

How will it work?

The research project will use human tissue samples to develop *in vitro* models to research the role of chemicals in breast cancer.

What's an endocrine disrupting chemical?

Endocrine disruptors are chemicals that can interfere with the endocrine (or hormone) systems. Some are thought to disrupt the female hormone oestrogen, which may increase the risk of breast cancer.

How can you support the campaign?

Over the next couple months, Animal Free Research UK and Breast Cancer UK will officially launch our campaign to fund this pioneering research.

We will need your support to help us raise awareness of the work we'll be doing and also help us reach our target. We'll be supporting you with short films, social media downloads, emails and exciting activities to help get you started. We hope you'll join us!

In the meantime we've set up a donation page here: **animalfreeresearchuk.org/breastcancer.**

IN VITRO

In vitro literally means 'in glass'. Research that is *in vitro* means investigations take place in an artificial environment, i.e. in the laboratory, as opposed to research which takes place inside a living organism, referred to as *in vivo*.

Get involved

Can you help fundraise for animal free research? We've got some great events coming up for you to have fun and raise vital funds!

Jump for World Animal Day

World Animal Day is held on the 4th October to help improve the welfare of animals around the world.

Could you take on a sponsored 10,000 feet parachute jump to raise money for Animal Free Research UK and to celebrate World Animal Day?

Jump for World Animal Day takes place on Saturday 30th September at Sibson Airfield in Peterborough. Sign up with a booking fee of £70 and if you raise a minimum of £325, the rest of your jump costs will be covered.

If you can't make the date on Peterborough, you can jump at a location near you and on a date of your choice!

animalfreeresearchuk.org/skydive

South Coast Challenge

Enjoy some of England's finest scenery as you walk, jog or run over the August bank holiday weekend (26th -27th August) with the fantastic 100km South Coast Challenge.

Take in stunning views of Eastbourne, Beachy Head, Seven Sisters Country Park, the South Downs Way, Brighton, Devils Dyke and Arundel.

The full course is 100km, with half and quarter challenges and a two day option all available. Different registration fees and minimum sponsorship targets exist for various options.

The Big Half

Held on Sunday 4th March 2018, the Big Half is a new one day festival with a half marathon to celebrate the wonderful cultural diversity of the great city of London. The Big Half will start at Tower Bridge passing through the boroughs of Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Lewisham and finishing up in Greenwich.

General entries have now sold out, but you still have the chance to take part in this amazing new event by joining our team! Register for just £20 and pledge to raise a minimum of £300.

Thames Path Challenge

The Thames Path Challenge takes place on 9th and 10th September and stretches 100km from Putney Bridge to Henley. Most of the 4,000 challengers will walk at their own pace, many will jog parts, and some will run the whole course. You can join as an individual or as a team and there are also half and quarter distance options.

Or join the Challenge's sister event, The Thames Bridges Trek. This also starts from Putney Bridge and is a 23km walk through central London, zig-zagging over 16 historic bridges with the best views of London and finishing beyond Tower Bridge for a celebration finish.

For more information on any of these events or to register your interest, please email danielle@animalfreeresearchuk.org.

Current projects

With your support, we are funding a diverse range of animal free research projects to help human health - and **all without harming animals**

- Diabetes at Glasgow Caledonian University
- The Animal Replacement Centre of Excellence at Queen Mary University of London
- Wound healing at Queen Mary University of London
- Chronic pain at Queen's University Belfast
- Edentulousness at University of Birmingham
- Medical training and cardiovascular device testing at University of Dundee
- Diabetes at University of Exeter
- Leukaemia at University of Glasgow
- Quantum dots at University of Leeds
- Chronic kidney disease at University of Nottingham
- Toxicology at University of Nottingham
- Magnetoencephalography at Aston University

Meet TeenVGN

We're passionate about young advocates supporting our mission to replace the use of animals in medical research. One of our favourite organisations is TeenVGN, set up by two ambitious young volunteers, Kylie and Laura. Laura explains what they do and how we work together.

We set up TeenVGN in 2013 after realising that despite there being lots of fantastic campaigns groups and support groups for vegan adults, there really wasn't anything for young people, especially in the UK. I had a background in Youth Work and Kylie had a background working for an animal charity so we decided to put those things together and came up with TeenVGN. It began as just a website and support group for young people, but quickly got bigger than we could ever have imagined and now we host the UK's only vegan summer camp for teens and organise "hang outs" throughout the country so that young people can meet like-minded friends.

We met Animal Free Research UK (then Dr Hadwen Trust) at one of the Vegfest festivals and got in touch about having you at VGN Summer Camp. Our campers love you and have become involved with the organisation outside of camp, which we think is amazing! We'd love to continue supporting and working with you as much as possible because it's important to us to spread the word about alternative research.

Our ethos is really to show compassion to all sentient beings. We aim to educate and guide young adults through their vegan walk and show them how they can be compassionate people throughout their life. Everything we do is 100% for the animals and we want to show the positive things about being vegan and give them every resource they need, but we do want to show people that being kind reaches all areas of life too, which is why we have our food bank and homeless projects. I suppose you can say that our main ethos is just simply, love.

If you're thinking about moving to a vegan lifestyle, we say go for it! Put your all into it but don't beat yourself up if you get something wrong. People take things at different paces, and even we are learning new things every day. You can't be expected to know everything from the off set, which is why groups like ours are there to help you along the way. Have a question? Ask. Just be the best that you can be.

Emily, our new Science Communication Officer, will be at this year's VGN Summer Camp!

Other replacement news

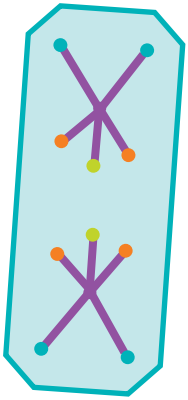
Canadian Centre for Alternatives to Animal Methods (CCAAM)

Dr Charu Chandrasekera's quest to find more effective, human-centred research methods has led her to develop and open the Canadian Centre for Alternatives to Animal Methods (CCAAM) at the University of Windsor. Dr Chandrasekera established the first centre of its kind in Canada with advice from a panel of experts, including our Science Director, Dr Brett Cochrane.

CCAAM's mandate is to use only human-based biomaterials and methods, due to the differences in the way animals and humans regulate biological processes; with the goal of ultimately ending the use of experimental animals. Dr Chandrasekera is *"looking forward to collaborating with Animal Free Research UK to advance animal replacement through 21st century science, innovation, and ethics."*

http://bit.ly/ccaam

A novel microfluidic 'organ-on-a-chip' device to model the human kidney



A re-usable, microfluidic model human kidney has been developed by scientists from Binghamton University in the USA (DOI:10.1039/C6RA25641D) that could predict the human body's response to pharmaceuticals better than animal models. Most of the features of a normal kidney, such as blood flow and the filtration of waste, are incorporated in the device, which exhibits more natural physiological cell behaviour and responds more sensitively to drugs than traditionally grown static cells. With such devices, it will be possible to study and understand adverse kidney effects of new drugs before they appear in human clinical trials or pre-clinical animal studies.

Development of human brain organoids

Growing small balls of human brain tissue, which replicate the whole brain, is helping scientists to understand human brain development and how this might relate to neuropsychiatric disorders, such as autism. The accelerated development of these 'mini-brains', called human brain organoids, were the focus of two complementary studies highlighted in a recent edition of Nature.

Scientists at Harvard and MIT (DOI:10.1038/nature22047) described how brain organoids can be developed from stem cells to survive in culture for over nine months and how their neuronal activity can be controlled using light stimulation. Additionally, scientists at Stanford University and the European Molecular Biology Laboratory in Germany (DOI:10.1038/nature22330) developed brain-region-specific organoids, which they then functionally fused together to study the neurodevelopmental disorder, Timothy syndrome.

Reducing animal testing through better knowledge sharing

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) at ECVAM (European Centre for the Validation of Alternative Methods) has carried out a study of available knowledge on the replacement, reduction and refinement (the 3Rs) of animal procedures used in research and testing to understand how supply of such knowledge can better meet demand.

Findings show that although much 3Rs knowledge exists, its dissemination could be improved through better coordination, communication and outreach. More emphasis on targeted 3Rs education and training initiatives could also increase its impact.

http://bit.ly/ECSciHub

Doug Maw: Marathon Man

We were so pleased to have Doug Maw run this year's London Marathon for us. Here's what Doug had to say about running for us.

I applied to run the 2017 London Marathon for Animal Free Research UK and was lucky to get their one spot after someone pulled out. That gave me a limited time to train and fundraise, but I was overjoyed to get the opportunity.

I have been against animal research for many years, even before I went vegan in 1996. The images I saw via organisations like BUAV had a profound effect on me and led to my decision to go vegan, expanding my compassion through extending my understanding of animal rights. I have been writing to MEPs & MPs for many years trying to effect change on the use of animals in research and became aware of Animal Free Research UK's work only a few years ago and had very little experience of the charity.

The unnecessary suffering of animals in laboratories has always sickened me. Seeing companies repeating tests that have already been done is nothing short of callous. In any case the results have always struck me as unreliable. Humans have so many different attributes within our own species that affect the efficacy of medications or how other products affect us. How much more so when it comes to different outcomes for humans and other animals?

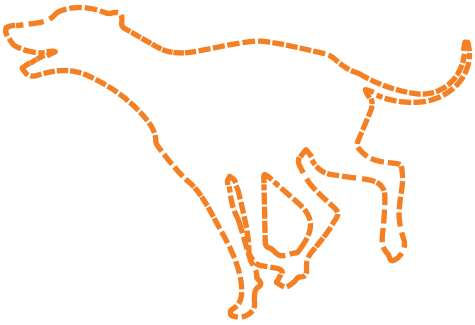
Doug raised over £3,000 for us by running the London Marathon!

The use of animals in research to benefit humans seems to me to run counter to good science.

Fortunately, many people are wising up to the unnecessary nature of this research and the pioneering alternatives promoted by Animal Free Research UK. This realisation has not yet attained sufficient recognition to command the level of government or corporate funding that those using animals receive. This was my motivation to run for the charity.

"The use of animals in research to benefit humans seems to me to run counter to good science."

Due to my starting the petition to stop the Bank of England using animal parts in the new polymer notes, I had an audience that I was able to engage with the issues. The charity helped me in many ways including coming up with the monicker "Fivermen" and the idea to sponsor me £5 to put those tainted fivers to good use. I was able to raise funds to help animal free research whilst continuing to promote the campaign against using animals more generally.

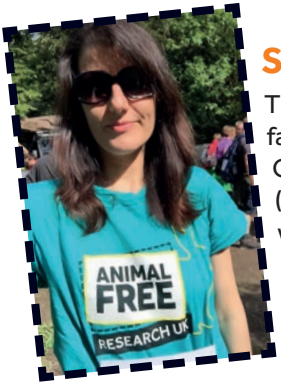


Fabulous friends

Birmingham Group

The Birmingham Group have been trying out a new fundraising activity this year and raised a very impressive £573 from two supermarket collections in Coventry.

Thank you so much to Amanda and Simon.



Sussex Group

The Sussex Group have been busy attending fairs and festivals in Brighton and Hove. Our lovely shop volunteer, Cecilia Cabodi (pictured), even found time to fit in a 30km walk on the beautiful Sussex downs and raised over £200 for animal free research. Thank you all so much!

West Yorkshire Group

The West Yorkshire Group has been attending stalls all over the North spreading awareness about our great work and raising much need funds, thank you so much!

Skydiving

Jennifer Jellicoe faced her fears and skydived for animal free research and raised nearly £400. Thank you for being such a super star, Jennifer!

Running for Animal Free Research

Thank you to Steve McNulty who ran 5km every day in January, a whopping total of 155km, and raised over £300.

High five to Richard Eldridge (pictured) who has taken on 78km of running and obstacle races for animal free research. Richard completes his fundraising in September and hopes to raise £1,000!

Massive thanks to Nicola Cowee who organised a virtual run with Vegan Runners and raised £1,250!

Facebook running group

If you are running for us, please join our new running group on Facebook to share your fundraising stories, workouts and training tips with fellow runners. Simply search for 'I'm running for Animal Free Research UK' on Facebook and request to join!

London Group

Thank you to the London Group who have attended various fairs in and around London, telling members of the public all about the vital work of Animal Free Research UK and raising much-needed funds. A massive thank you for your continued and amazing support!

Cornwall Group

The Cornwall Support Group have been very busy this year already. They have raised over **£3,000** from twelve supermarket collections. Keep up the amazing work, Cornwall Group!

Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who signed up for the Royal Parks Half Marathon and the Great North Run. We hope you all smash your fundraising targets and have great races!

Fabulous friends

Bude Group

The Bude Group is raising money to fund a Summer Studentship with Dr Helen Wheadon at the University of Glasgow for leukaemia research. The group have already raised £1,863 of their £1,940 target with various events such as stalls and raffles. The fundraising is to be rounded off with a 5km run by Melissa Roberts raising funds in memory of her loving partner, Lawrence, who lost his battle with leukaemia in 2014.

Dr Wheadon said: *"A heartfelt gigantic thank you to the Bude Fundraising Group! This money will help fund our vital research into leukaemia.*

The Summer Studentship will enable us to develop a three dimensional, fully humanised, culture system to sustain stem cells derived from leukaemia patients, which is vital for testing new drug combinations.

It is also fantastic for Rachel, the student, who is delighted to have this opportunity to gain valuable research experience. This support will help her in her future career as she is keen to become a cancer research scientist.

It is also especially lovely that we are being sponsored by the Bude Fundraising Group as I'm originally from Devon and spent many a happy day on the beach in Bude. One of my funniest memories is swimming with my friend and commenting about the towels floating by, only to realise they were ours!"

Thank you to all of our amazing fundraisers! Whether you do a sponsored event, take on an awesome challenge, run a stall, carry out a supermarket collection or manage a static collection box, every time you fundraise or give up your time for Animal Free Research UK, you are helping to end the use of animals in medical research, forever!

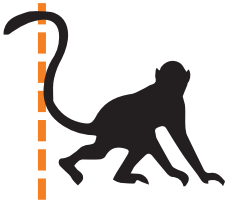
If you would like to fundraise for us or join a fundraising group, please get in touch. Call us on 01462 436819 or email danielle@animalfreeresearchuk.org.

Top 5 fundraising tips

by Steph Jones-Giles - Animal Free Research UK Bude Group

Don't try and do it all alone

Many hands make light work and a group of people creates energy, brings fun and generates ideas no one person could have thought of alone.

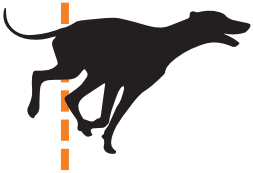


Keep it interesting

Look for different methods of fundraising and keep things fresh. A tombola is a great way of raising funds as everyone likes an immediate win! Other ideas include children's games, raffles, sponsored challenges, skydives and supermarket collections. Do as many different activities as you can to reach the widest possible audience.

Make full use of social media

Before, during and after an event, use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. Social media can be used to organise events, publicise events, update as the event is happening and let people know about successes. Everyone needs to feel acknowledged, thanked and praised for their efforts. Always take time to do this. Social media is an excellent vehicle for this. Having said that, traditional media has a place too so don't forget to send articles or letters to your local newspapers also.



Spread the word

Spend time locating suitable hosts for collection tins in your area, such as shops or cafes. Supply the venue with a poster and other literature and top these up frequently. Don't forget to empty the tins regularly and again take time to acknowledge and thank the business owners.

If you don't ask...

You'll be surprised what 'gifts' you will receive if you ask. A recent chat with an artist about Animal Free Research UK gained me two prints. I looked for a suitable event locally and asked if the organiser would mind me holding a raffle for one of these in the interval. It was a brilliant awareness raising exercise and raised £115. Trust me, more people say yes than no. Be bold!

We have more fundraising ideas at animalfreeresearchuk.org/a-z-of-fundraising-ideas

Make a difference with your energy bills

We're not your average energy company. We use the money our customers spend on their energy bills to build new sources of green energy – we call it turning 'bills into mills'.

Our customer service is legendary. No automated phone lines – just friendly people who pick up the phone and treat you like a real person.

Join us and we'll donate up to £60 to Animal Free Research UK*. It couldn't be easier and takes less than five minutes.

ANIMAL FREE RESEARCH UK

Up to £60 donation to Animal Free Research UK when you join Ecotricity*

*For full terms and conditions, please go to **ecotricity.co.uk/afruk**

ecotricity

Call us free on **0808 123 0123**
or visit **ecotricity.co.uk/afruk**