



a BRIGHTER FUTURE



Animal Free Research UK

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Transforming medical research
for animals and for people

our **STRATEGY**

Phase one: 2020-2023



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Foreword

50 YEARS AGO, a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens decided to change the world.

Dedicated to doing all they could to end experiments on animals, they realised the best way to achieve their vision was to advance scientific research methods to match their progressive values. And so, Animal Free Research UK was born.

Back then, using animals was often the only option in medical research. However, our founders knew there was a better way to find cures for human diseases. Not only were they aware that using animals in medical research was ethically unjustified, they also recognised that humans react and respond to drugs and diseases differently from animals. They were serious about finding better treatments, and they needed a new way to research them.

Fast-forward five decades, and we're immensely proud that our small charity has played a foundational role in creating cutting-edge, humane and human-relevant methods of research. Thanks to the £10 million in funding we have awarded to over 260 novel research projects into conditions including cancer, dementia and diabetes, our researchers have driven forward understanding of debilitating diseases as they affect humans, bringing us closer to effective treatments - and all without harming animals.

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who has been on this journey with us – our world



Laura-Jane Sheridan
Chair, Animal Free Research UK

class researchers who have undertaken this progressive research, our loyal supporters who have generously funded our work and our partners and collaborators, without whom we simply couldn't continue.

The world is at a crossroads following the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced a reappraisal of what is truly necessary to deliver safe and effective health solutions as quickly as possible. The speed at which the vaccines were developed was thanks, in part, to decision-makers agreeing that human trials could be conducted in parallel with - and sometimes ahead of - animal tests.

We now have a unique opportunity to tear up the rule book and start afresh. It is time to think big and imagine a better way. So, the next phase of our journey starts with an ambitious strategy to finally end the use of animals in medical research. It is truly visionary – and we won't be able to achieve it without your support.

If we succeed, we will change the world forever. For the good of both animals and humans.

We started our journey as a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens. Now, we are going to finish it by creating a groundswell for change. We hope you will join us.



Carla Owen
Chief Executive, Animal Free Research UK

About

Animal Free Research UK

ANIMAL FREE RESEARCH UK funds pioneering research that saves humans and animals and is forging a future where animals are replaced with modern, human relevant techniques.

We believe using animals in medical research is unethical, costly and ineffective - with over 90 percent of new drugs tested on animals failing to benefit human health. Crucially, we believe pioneering technology is rendering animal testing redundant.

Our scientists and laboratories push the latest animal free technological and research boundaries towards a cure for major diseases like cancer, heart disease and dementia.

We engage with policy makers, the scientific community, pharmaceutical industry and the public to accelerate the use of ethical, pioneering lab technologies that save lives, money and time – and we champion regulatory change to end the use of animals in laboratories.

Together we are creating powerful change and making the UK an inspiring world leader in ethical research that will find cures for diseases and save the lives of humans and animals.

our HISTORY

ANIMAL FREE RESEARCH UK began life as the Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research in 1970.

Our charity was founded by the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV), now Cruelty Free International, in honour of former president Dr Walter Hadwen to award grants to scientists to help replace the use of animals in medical research.

In 1980 we split from the BUAV and became a charity in our own right.

In 2017, we changed our name to Animal Free Research UK to increase our influence with a simple message that is understood quickly.

Fifty years on, we have awarded £10 million in grants to over 260 projects including on cancer, Alzheimer's, asthma, diabetes, and heart disease, and we are creating a new generation of animal free researchers through our innovative Animal Replacement Centres of Excellence.



our **VISION**

is a world where human diseases are cured faster without animal suffering.

our **PURPOSE**

is to enable scientists to stop using animals in medical research.

our **MISSION**

is to pioneer excellence, inspire and support scientists and influence change to end the use of animals and improve medical research.

our **VALUES**

Rigorous and evidential – we present factual, reliable information. Our work is evidenced-based, thoughtful and respected by our peers.

Pioneering – we place ethics at the heart of science through innovative, solutions-focused research. Our determination drives scientific discovery forward.

Compassionate – we care deeply about people and animals. Our ambition to end suffering is heartfelt and unswerving.

our **ASSUMPTIONS**

Experiments on animals are ethically unjustified.

Pioneering animal free research provides the best chance of finding treatments for human diseases.

Educating people how to think, not what to think, is the best way to create long lasting change for animals and to improve scientific research.

our **STRATEGIC GOAL**

is to transform medical research and regulation so that there is a clear pathway to develop and deliver effective treatments for human diseases faster and without animals.



our THEORY OF CHANGE



the NEED

Policy, regulation and limited resources prevent scientists from conducting medical research without using animals



our VISION

is a world where human diseases are cured faster without animal suffering



our PURPOSE

is to enable scientists to stop using animals in medical research

FUNDING

ADVOCACY

INPUTS

- Reputation
- Funding
- Networks
- Personnel

ACTIVITIES

- Fund transformational research & development and technology that has the potential to replace animals
- Fund and enable the career pathway of exceptional scientists (from PhD to fellowship) who only use human relevant research methods
- Collaborate with universities, high-impact journals and industry to enable animal free research
- Influence decision makers to change policy to enable human relevant research

OUTCOMES

An increasing number of scientists are committed to human relevant research

- An increasing number of scientists are using human relevant research methods
- An increasing number of scientists are staying on an animal free career path
- There is more funding available for human relevant research
- Fewer animals are used in medical research
- New technology and methods are being used to conduct human relevant research

Policy makers, industry and the academic community support animal free research

- An increasing number of high-impact journals are publishing human relevant research
- An increasing number of universities are hosting animal free medical research groups
- An increasing number of discussions and actions among policy makers are taking place to replace animals with human relevant techniques

IMPACT

The research & development of treatments for human disease is entirely animal free

FOCUS AREAS



FOCUS AREA



FUNDING TRANSFORMATIONAL RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT and technology that have the potential to replace animals

Objectives

Replacing animals

We will fund the development of pioneering new approach methodologies that make animal research redundant.

Treating diseases

We will fund ethical research that focuses on understanding disease directly in humans. We will support research which identifies opportunities to repurpose drugs and treat diseases without further animal suffering.

Unlocking funding

We will support researchers to obtain proof of concept via our Animal Free Research UK Pilot Studies programme so they can access larger grants.

Building partnerships

We will collaborate with public, private and third sector partners to maximise funding for animal free medical research.

Outdated animal research is failing humans and animals, yet over 3 million animals suffer in Britain's laboratories every year. We believe using animals in medical research is unethical, costly and ineffective.

- Over 90 percent of new drugs tested on animals fail to benefit human health.
- Adverse drug reactions cost the NHS up to £466M every year
- Most major diseases still have no effective treatment.

As pioneers of animal free research for the last 50 years, we passionately believe we are now on the cusp of a laboratory revolution which is replacing animal testing with cutting edge technologies such as 3D organ on a chip. Building on our substantial track record, we will fund transformational research with a focus on developing new approach methodologies to replace animals and on drug repurposing to treat diseases. To achieve a paradigm shift that ensures human models for human disease are developed and used, a substantial boost in funding for animal free research is urgently required. We will work with researchers to unlock major sources of funding by supporting proof of concept pilot studies which provide confidence and demonstrate scientific excellence.

FOCUS AREA

2

FUNDING AND ENABLING the career pathway of exceptional scientists, from PhD to fellowship, who use only human relevant research methods

Objectives

Establishing Centres

We will work with our university partners to establish Animal Replacement Centres of Excellence (ARCs) that support exceptional scientists from PhD to fellowship.

Training young scientists

We will deliver an annual summer school providing opportunities for undergraduates to gain animal free laboratory experience and career enhancing skills.

We will pilot a mentorship scheme to support early careers researchers and develop future leaders in animal free research.

Supporting researchers

We will facilitate a Community of Practice for animal free researchers to enable collaboration and networking. We will hold an annual conference to highlight the best in cutting-edge animal free medical research. We will develop and support resources that enable scientists to switch to animal free research.

We are passionate about enabling the next generation of medical researchers to embark on a scientific career entirely free of animal testing.

The cultural shift needed for animal free research to be considered the gold standard by the research community will be driven by the next generation.

We believe it is essential to invest in young researchers at different career stages to support the scientists of the future so that human models become the norm.

We will invest in the future by creating a novel career pathway supporting researchers from PhD to postdoctoral research associate to becoming a prestigious Animal Free Research UK Fellow, piloting a new Animal Replacement Centre of Excellence (ARC) at the University of Exeter.

We will continue to provide undergraduates with exciting opportunities to gain animal free laboratory experience via our popular summer student programme.

To build a strong voice within the scientific community in support of animal free research we will establish a Community of Practice for biomedical researchers at all career stages that provides opportunities for networking, research collaboration, problem solving and mentoring.

We will develop a training and support programme for scientists, providing them with resources to enable the transition to animal free research and hosting events that position human relevant medical science as the gold standard.

FOCUS AREA

3

COLLABORATING with universities, high-impact journals and industry to enable animal free research

Objectives

Replacing animals products

We will support universities to use non-animal products in research and phase out animal-derived biomaterials.

We will work with industry to make animal free biomaterials accessible and affordable.

Working with journals

We will work with high impact journals to phase out any requirement for human relevant research to be validated in animals.

Setting standards

We will facilitate the establishment of best practice criteria for human relevant cancer research and pre-clinical testing.

We will work with expert partners to create a roadmap for human relevant drug development.

To achieve our goal of transforming policy and regulation so that it actively enables – rather than prevents – the use of animal free research from laboratory bench to patient bedside, we will break down the barriers in academia and industry.

Animal-derived biomaterials are a hidden source of suffering in research laboratories, using countless animals each year. We will collaborate with universities and industry to phase out their use and promote human-relevant replacements.

Publication is the lifeblood of academic research, yet some animal free researchers are prevented from publishing important work in the highest impact journals because they are required to validate their findings in animals. We will work with researchers and journals to understand the issues and transition to more fit-for-purpose editorial policies.

Standardisation of human relevant approaches is key to active take up by researchers and for gaining regulatory approval. We will support the standardisation of human relevant laboratory techniques and establishment of best practice criteria to ensure animal free research is credible, reproducible and take up is exponential.

Using an evidence-based approach, harnessing the expertise of our animal free researchers and collaborating with academia and industry, we will set out roadmaps to achieve transformational change in how diseases are understood and new medicines are discovered and delivered to patients without animal suffering.

FOCUS AREA

4

INFLUENCING DECISION MAKERS to change policy to enable human relevant research

Objectives

Modernising medical research

We will work to influence the UK Government to establish an official function to accelerate human relevant research.

We will support the establishment and coordination of an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Human Relevant Science to ensure a strong voice in the UK Parliament.

Collaborating for change

We will play a leading role in the Alliance for Human Relevant Science to accelerate awareness and use of animal free approaches within industry and the scientific research community.

We will actively participate in the International Council on Animal Protection in Pharmaceuticals (ICAPPP) to promote animal protection in international pharmaceutical testing guidelines. animal free medical research.

We will develop and support resources that enable scientists to switch to animal free research.

We know that animal free research is best for both people and animals, but we understand that creating sustained changes in practice is complex and sometimes only comes about thanks to updates in policy, legislation and regulation.

That's why we will work to influence robust public policy and regulatory change that enables animal free research from bench to bedside so that fewer animals are used in medical research and the discovery and delivery of effective treatments for human diseases accelerates.

As a first step, we will work to influence the UK Government to establish an official function dedicated to accelerating the replacement of animals with human relevant techniques.

We will work collaboratively with partners and stakeholders across sectors, geographies and perspectives to make the case for progressive change.

Demonstrating the strength of public feeling and placing scientific evidence at the heart of our message, we will encourage politicians and decision-makers to act so that public policy enables cutting edge animal free research.

Outcomes, impact and monitoring our PROGRESS

WE PUT IMPACT at the heart of our strategy, focusing on our core purpose and measuring what matters to build trust with our supporters, beneficiaries, and stakeholders.

Much of our work is about changing hearts and minds in order to improve treatments for human diseases and end animal suffering. We recognise that the road to the cultural change required across the scientific, regulatory, and political communities is long and complex.

The impact of our work and funding are likely to emerge only after a considerable time, and the direct link to human health and animal protection may be difficult to track.

To this end, we have developed a series of high-level indicators of progress that measure what most matters. We will draw on both quantitative and qualitative data to provide an overview of how and where our work is making a difference.

We will actively use the information collected to develop and refine our strategy, and to communicate the achievements and outcomes that result from the research we support and the change we create.

What we want to achieve	Indicators of progress
<p>An increasing number of scientists are committed to human relevant research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increasing number of scientists are using human relevant research methods ▪ An increasing number of scientists are staying on an animal free career path ▪ There is more funding available for human relevant research ▪ Fewer animals are used in medical research ▪ New technology and methods are being developed to conduct human relevant research
<p>Policy makers, industry and the academic community support animal free research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increasing number of high-impact journals are publishing human relevant research ▪ An increasing number of universities are hosting animal free medical research groups ▪ An increasing number of discussions and actions among policy makers are taking place to replace animals with human relevant techniques ▪ An increasing amount of pharma R&D is animal free

The long-term impact

we seek to **achieve** is that research & development of treatments for human diseases is entirely animal free.



Solid foundations

ACHIEVING OUR STRATEGY requires solid foundations, a robust business model and long-term operational and financial sustainability.

We will diversify our income, identifying and investing in new opportunities for growth and prioritising fundraising and marketing activities that deliver the best returns on investment.

We will ensure our operational and financial processes are fit for purpose to enable the charity to grow and evolve, and so that we can deliver excellence in customer and beneficiary care across our diverse range of stakeholders to build credibility and trust.

We will invest in infrastructure and continue our programme of digital transformation to enable us to effectively and efficiently manage the charity, and inform and engage our stakeholders.

We will regularly review our performance against key deliverables, flexing and innovating to ensure we remain on course to achieve within a rapidly changing external climate.

We will invest in our people, acknowledging that employees who have good quality jobs and are managed well will be happier, healthier, and more fulfilled and more likely to deliver our objectives, contribute positively to our values, and grow with our charity.

We recognise that good governance is fundamental to our success, enabling and supporting compliance with the law and regulations, and promoting a culture where everything works towards fulfilling our vision.

We will ensure our Trustees are equipped with the skills and resources required to comply with the Charity Governance Code and fulfil our legal obligations.