

February Updates: People and Places

Updates on Openness

The **Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK**, launched by Understanding Animal Research (UAR) in 2014, presented its annual Openness Awards on December 4th in London. Awardees included: the University of Cambridge (Award for Website or Use of New Media); King's College London (Award for Media Engagement); the four labs involved with LabAnimalTour.org, MRC Harwell Institute, the Pirbright Institute, the University of Bristol, and the University of Oxford (Award for Public Engagement Activity); the Babraham Institute (Internal or Sector Engagement Award); and BBC journalists Rachael Buchanan and Fergus Walsh (UAR's Individual Award for Outstanding Contribution to Openness in Animal Research).

The 81st Stephen Paget Memorial Lecture was given after the awards ceremony by Clive Page, head of the Sackler Institute of Pulmonary Pharmacology at King's College London. Page discussed the role of laboratory animals in asthma and COPD drug discovery and development.

Also in December, UAR published the third annual report detailing how the Concordat signatories are improving transparency about animal research at their institutions. There are currently 117 UK organizations involved.

3Rs has a home in Sweden

Joining its fellow Nordic countries Norway and Denmark, Sweden has officially opened a new center focused on implementing the 3Rs for laboratory animal welfare and high-quality research. The Swedish Parliament decided to create the **Swedish 3Rs Center**, under the Swedish Board of Agriculture, in 2014; construction on the facility began at the end of 2016. Veterinarian Torsten

Jakobsson will serve as the Center's first project manager, and Parliament has provided SEK 15 million per year through 2020.

Studying stereotypies

Georgia Mason of the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada, has received a new grant from the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) in support of her research on indicators of cumulative welfare in nonhuman primates. The three-year project will study the development of stereotypies, self-injurious behavior, and depression-like activity in rhesus macaques, as well as ways to promote resilience in the animals. The UFAW grant will support the final phase of the project and fund travel to a US-primate facility to record behavioral observations and life history data. Mason hopes the results of the study will continue to improve welfare and refine the use of nonhuman primates at research facilities.

Human-animal nexus grants

Five projects in the greater Kansas City area have each received \$50,000 awards as part of the Kansas City Area Life Science Institute and the Hall Family Foundation's 2017 Nexus of Human and Animal Health Research Grants program. Awardees include researchers at Kansas State University, the University of Missouri, and the University of Kansas and projects include the expansion of the 1Data shared drug development database, drug screening for red blood cell pathogens in cattle, the development of a combination vaccine for *Shigella*, *Salmonella*, and *E. coli*, 3-D printing of cartilage grafts, and the investigation of potentially therapeutic fungal compounds.

More CRISPR to CROs

In early December, contract research organizations **Horizon Discovery** in

CAREERS UPDATE

David Besselsen, attending veterinarian and director of University Animal Care at the University of Arizona, has been named interim dean of the school's proposed College of Veterinary Medicine. Besselsen received his veterinary degree and a PhD in pathobiology from the University of Missouri, Columbia; he has worked for the University of Arizona since 1995.

As interim dean, Besselsen will oversee efforts to develop the veterinary medicine program and prepare accreditation materials for the American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education, which is responsible for accrediting DVM or equivalent educational programs. The Council will conduct a site visit in spring 2019. In the meantime, the University will be spending \$8 million to upgrade an existing building owned by the school to be used by the veterinary medicine program.

Cambridge, UK, and **Charles River Laboratories** in Wilmington, MA, each announced new license rights to Dublin-based **ERS Genomic Limited's** CRISPR technology.

Horizon had a previous CRISPR agreement with ERS, but the recently announced expanded license will grant research rights "for the identification of novel genetic traits in species relevant to disease model generation and the industrial production of certain animals, including mouse, rat, chicken, fish, pig and rabbit."

Charles River now has CRISPR agreements with both ERS and the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard; the license from the Broad Institute was awarded in 2016.