



ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY

Aarhus University 2026

Aarhus University (AU) performs high quality teaching and research that provide new knowledge within various disciplines of life sciences. Animal experiments remain an essential and necessary part of this work, and have contributed to saving many human and animal lives, helped to improve welfare of animals interacting with man - such as in agriculture, aquaculture, experimental animals and companion animals - and have contributed to the conservation of wild animals.

AU works to promote that quality of life is important for all creatures and that good animal welfare is pivotal to achieve the scientific excellence that AU is renowned for. Thus, AU seeks to provide the best possible welfare of all animals in our care. We are dedicated to advance the 3R principles in both research and education, implicating that animals should be replaced with non-animal models when possible, to reduce the number of animals used, and perform experimentation in ways that protect the welfare of individual animals as much as possible. We encourage adherence to the ARRIVE guidelines and the conduction of systematic reviews as powerful tools to secure robust, reproducible research, and enhance the 3Rs.

To acknowledge the difficult ethical questions associated with animal experiments, AU has formulated an animal welfare policy that applies to the entire university.

As part of our commitment to high standards of animal welfare, AU will:

- Only use animals in accordance with the applicable legislation, ethical standards and guidelines set by national and EU authorities.
- Only perform animal experiments on a rational and scientifically well-documented foundation.
- Take firm action to comply with the 3Rs by:
 - Ensuring that employees and students who work with animals and/or collect data from animal studies are appropriately educated and trained.
 - Using alternative methods when possible.
 - Using methods where as many negative consequences for animal welfare - including pain and failure to thrive - are alleviated as much possible, for example through the use of adequate pain relief and training methods.
 - Continuously reviewing our animal models and adhere to the principles of replacement, refinement, and reduction of animal used.
 - Continuously improving our high animal welfare standards in relation to housing, environmental enrichment, care, and transport.
 - Only using genetically modified animals when they provide novel insight, more precise results and/or reduce the total number of animals used.
 - Ensuring that the health of animals in our care is consistently monitored.



Anne-Mette Hvas
Dean, Professor
Faculty of Health Sciences



Birgit Schjøtt
Dean, Professor
Faculty of Natural Sciences



Eskild Holm Nielsen
Dean
Faculty of Technical Sciences