



## Corners



### MPS World Summit

The CAAT-organized 2<sup>nd</sup> MPS World Summit, held from June 26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>, was a triumph! Over 1300 people from 39 countries were in attendance for an international meeting of some of the most important people in the fields of humane science, pharmacology, toxicology, and (micro) physiology. 97 supporting organizations, 176 speakers, and 549 posters demonstrated the breadth of the field and its disruptive technologies. The Summit offered workshops, education, talks, and symposia. Both celebrated researchers and those rising in the field found opportunities to share their work and network. We hope to see you in Seattle for the 3<sup>rd</sup> MPS World Summit in 2024!

### MPS Society Seeking Members!

The MPS Society is excited to announce membership opportunities are now available! You can apply to become a member of this newly-officialized society (<https://impss.org>). Keep up-to-date on changes in the world of toxicology, and take part in comprehensive, hands-on training workshops. You may opt out of membership and starting dues any time before dues start in January 2024.

### The SURPASS Initiative

CAAT's Thomas Hartung is leading a scientific research team as part of the ground-

breaking SURPASS initiative, a collaboration between the Johns Hopkins University Whiting School of Engineering (WSE) and the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL). SURPASS' mission is to fund teams that will develop sound, evidence-based solutions to the greatest scientific challenges of our time. Hartung's team, *Organoid Intelligence: Synthetic Biological AI*, will address the potential of fostering intelligence, learning, and computational power in a lab-grown brain.

### Developmental ImmunoToxicity Workshop

The DIT Workshop was held on May 8-9, bringing together leading experts in toxicology to lead timely discussions on the state of the field and how scientists, students, and researchers can push for the acceptance and implementation of new approach methodologies (NAMs). CAAT is proud to take part in these essential discussions.

### Annual 3Rs Symposium

On May 17-18, CAAT took part in the Annual 3Rs Symposium, a landmark virtual event that highlighted the transformative power of humane science and techniques that refine, reduce, and replace laboratory animal testing. The push toward viable, effective alternatives to animal testing is a complex but necessary endeavor, and the participants of the symposium

demonstrated the incredible strides we have made.

### Conferences and Conversations

CAAT's members have spoken at numerous landmark events across the world. Thomas Hartung, Fenna Sillé, Kathrin Herrmann and others gave talks at SOT, FDA Colloquia, the GETA Spring Symposium, the Frontiers Forum virtual deep dive, and many others about organoid development, refinements to laboratory science, and development of new approach methodologies (NAMs).

### Awards and Honors

CAAT's members have been honored with numerous awards for their incredible work in toxicology, organoid intelligence, microbiology, neuroscience, and other scientific disciplines. In particular, Thomas Hartung has been ranked among Research.com's best microbiology scientists for 2023 and was elected to the PARC International Board; Lena Smirnova earned the Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund Award; and CAAT's students have earned some incredible awards for their work: Alan Kim earned a travel award for the INA-18 meeting in Durham, NC; and he and Dowllette-Mary Alam El Din won first and third place respectively in the annual Delta Omega Scientific Poster Competition.

**Recent publications**

Barreras, P., Pamies, D., Hartung, T. and Pardo, C. A. (2023). Human brain microphysiological systems in the study of neuroinfectious disorders. *Exp Neurol* 365, 114409. doi:10.1016/j.expneurol.2023.114409

Hartung, T. (2023). Can you take AI out of the wild and should you? *Frontiers Policy Labs*. <https://policylabs.frontiersin.org/>

content/commentary-ai-data-thomas-hartung

Golden, E., Ukaegbu, D. C., Ranslow, P. et al. (2023). The good, the bad, and the perplexing: Structural alerts and read-across for predicting skin sensitization using human data. *Chem Res Toxicol* 36, 734-746. doi:10.1021/acs.chemrestox.2c00383

Schmeisser, S., Miccoli, A., von Bergen,

M. et al. (2023). New approach methodologies in human regulatory toxicology – Not if, but how and when! *Environ Int* 178, 108082. doi:10.1016/j.envint.2023.108082

Suciu, I., Pamies, D., Peruzzo, R. et al. (2023). G × E interactions as a basis for toxicological uncertainty. *Arch Toxicol* 97, 2035-2049. doi:10.1007/s00204-023-03500-9

**UK reinstates partial ban on cosmetics animal testing**

Following Cruelty Free International's legal challenge of the Home Office's decision to abandon the ban on testing cosmetics on animals, the UK government has announced a partial reinstatement of the ban so that animal testing for ingredients used exclusively in cosmetics is prohibited in the UK.

While it represents progress, this partial ban covers only approximately 20% of the total number of chemicals used in cosmetics. The previous ban, introduced in 1998 and quietly dropped in 2019, also covered "substances used predominantly as cosmetic product ingredients".

Cruelty Free International will continue to put pressure on the UK government to reinstate the full ban on animal testing for cosmetics.

**UK NC3Rs finds that safeguards against animal testing are not working properly**

The UK's government-sponsored National Centre for the 3Rs (NC3Rs) recently

published the results of a study it commissioned into how effectively provisions to replace, reduce, and refine animal tests are being implemented.

One of the major findings of the study is that processes that are meant to safeguard against animal tests taking place where a non-animal alternative could be used instead – for example, the review by research funders and Home Office inspectors of proposals to test on animals – are not working properly.

The report, identifying the delay between the development of non-animal methods and their routine use, also found that the reasons for slow uptake of replacement technologies include the time and cost of setting up an unfamiliar technique, concerns about acceptance of non-animal methods by other scientists, regulators and scientific journals, and poor access to information on non-animal methods.

Link to the report: <https://nc3rs.org.uk/role-review-and-regulatory-approvals-processes-animal-research-supporting-implementation-3rs-2023>

**EU 2020 statistics on animal use released**

The EU's official statistics on animal use in research and testing in 2020 showed a total of 7,331,263 uses (excluding Norway) – an 11% decrease compared to the previous year. Of these 7.3 million uses, 46% were considered by researchers to have caused moderate or severe suffering to the animals involved.

Following the UK's exit from the EU, the top three users of animals are now Germany (1,897,640 uses), France (1,643,787 uses), and Spain (732,831 uses).

Regulatory purposes accounted for 19% of the total number of uses, while 39% were conducted for basic research and 9% for the breeding or maintenance of genetically modified animals.

2020 saw increases in some regulatory tests with widely accepted non-animal replacements, including a 28% rise in skin irritation and a 7% increase in eye irritation tests compared to 2019. There was also a 12% increase in the use of the ascites method of producing antibodies – a procedure that causes severe suffering and has been considered scientifically unnecessary since 1998.



### **Cruelty Free International prevents 120,000 animals from being used in EU chemical tests**

Since 2009, Cruelty Free International scientists have been working with toxicologists to comment on proposals submitted to the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) for conducting tests on animals. According to a recent analysis, these interventions have resulted in approximately 120,000 animals being spared from use in avoidable chemical tests under REACH.

From 2009 to 2023, Cruelty Free International has commented on 651 testing proposals, with 133 proposals rejected, withdrawn, or amended by either the company who submitted the request or ECHA as a result of these comments.

Comments included pointing out that the test was not necessary according to the REACH regulation, usually because the test was only required for the substance if produced at a higher volume, and providing existing data on the substance or a similar substance which meant that further testing did not need to be done.

### **European Citizens' Initiative heard in European Parliament**

The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) launched by Cruelty Free International and other campaigners, in collaboration with the cruelty free brands Dove and The Body Shop and over 100 animal protection organisations across Europe, has now been heard by members of the European Parliament.

The ECI, which calls on the European Commission to strengthen and protect the ban on testing cosmetics on animals, to transform EU chemicals regulation, and to commit to a phase out of all animal testing

in the EU, was presented to the European Parliament by its organising committee in May.

The European Commission's formal response to the ECI, which will detail their proposed actions, is expected this summer.

### **CARE Act reintroduced in US House of Representatives**

During World Week for Animals in Laboratories, the Companion Animal Release from Experiments (CARE) Act of 2023 (H.R. 2878) was reintroduced by Congressman Tony Cárdenas (D-CA) and Congressman Ken Calvert (R -41).

The CARE Act would require research facilities that receive funding from the US National Institutes of Health to implement adoption policies for unwanted dogs, cats, and rabbits and make their policies available on their websites along with the number of these animals used, the number adopted, and the number destroyed.

Fifteen states have enacted similar legislation requiring adoption policies for dogs and cats. This year new laboratory adoption legislation was introduced in five states, and two states saw bills introduced aimed at strengthening their existing laws. The CARE Act builds on these state laws to maximize the best possible outcome for companion animals used in taxpayer-supported laboratories, no matter what state they are located in.

Cruelty Free International is working with Congressman Cárdenas' and Congressman Calvert's offices to continue to build bipartisan support for the bill and encourages other organizations and interested parties to register their support for the bill.

### **Canada passes prohibitions on cosmetics animal testing and trade**

On June 22, 2023, the federal government of Canada confirmed its commitment to prohibit cosmetic animal testing in Canada with the passing of the Budget Implementation Act (Bill C-47). In addition to banning cosmetics animal testing, the amendments in the Bill also prohibit selling cosmetics that rely on new animal testing data to establish the product's safety, and false or misleading labelling pertaining to the testing of cosmetics on animals.

This move follows a decade of campaigning by several animal protection organizations, consumers, and industry representatives. In 2017, Cosmetics Alliance Canada, Cruelty Free International, and The Body Shop formed a stakeholder coalition with Animal Alliance of Canada, The Humane Society International/Canada, and Lush. The coalition worked closely with the Canadian government for several years to advance workable legislation.

Canada's Minister of Health Jean-Yves Duclos joined this stakeholders' coalition at a press conference in June to celebrate the official announcement, where he noted that the government would continue to work with experts and international partners to advance cruelty-free alternatives. Later, in an interview with Cruelty Free International, he offered advice for the United States, which has not yet passed federal legislation addressing animal testing for cosmetics, noting that such moves are good for industry and consumer confidence and that harmonized regulations between the US and Canada would be good for trade.



# EUSAAT

European Society for  
Alternatives to Animal Testing

## **EUSAAT Congress 2024 – SAVE the DATE 18.9.-20.9.2024**

The next EUSAAT Congress 2024 will take place from Wednesday 18.9.2024 to Friday 20.9.2024. We hope for grandiose support like last year and that many stakeholders and researchers from different areas of the 3Rs community will participate again. We will again pay special attention to enabling as many young scientists as possible to participate - through low participation fees and a variety of Young Scientist Travel Awards. We are already very excited about the topics and key areas in 2024 and are of course happy to receive thematic suggestions.

## **COST Action IMPROVE – update**

In recent months, the members of the COST Action “CA21139 – 3Rs concepts to improve the quality of biomedical science (IMPROVE)” were very busy organizing themselves. Over 180 members have been approved and started to work together in the four working groups (WG) Quality and Translatability of Science, Implementation, Dissemination, and Education and have been forming subgroups to tackle the different tasks.

The first large WG meeting took place in Sarajevo with about 80 participants

(in person and online) on June 5-7, 2023, during which the WGs devoted themselves intensively to the four main topics. In addition, thirteen exciting proposals were presented by individual COST Action participants in the form of a pitch. The development of concrete projects was started based on these pitched proposals, which can now be worked on in detail along the objectives described in the Memorandum of Understanding. The new projects include a variety of topics covering ethical and educational content and concrete scientific issues and organizational initiatives related to alternatives to animal experimentation including new approach methodologies (NAMs) based on *in vitro* or *in silico* models or even more complex platforms leveraging diverse methods in consecutive or battery-wise set-ups. In addition, new networking groups formed with a focus on topics relevant for especially young researchers, innovators, and animal caretakers. In conclusion, this meeting was very successful, bringing together many motivated experts from all over Europe and beyond to strengthen the networks within the 3Rs field and initiate new collaborations.

The next meetings within the COST Action this year are a training school with a focus on dissemination in Milan (Italy) in September 2023 ahead of the

Centro 3Rs meeting, which will take place on September 13-15, 2023, and an online management committee meeting on September 18, 2023.

If you are interested in this COST Action, apply to participate in the individual working groups. More details are available at: <https://www.cost.eu/actions/CA21139/>

## **EUSAAT/EU3Rnet at the Austrian 3R days**

EUSAAT and EU3Rnet have been invited to present their activities and participate at the Austrian 3Rs days in Innsbruck, Austria, on December 5-7, 2023. More information: <https://www.austrian-3rdays.com/>

## **EUSAAT society – new postal address**

Following a decision by the General Assembly, EUSAAT has moved to the new postal address:

EUSAAT, Apostelgasse 13/10,  
1030 Vienna, Austria