



London AWERB Hub Meeting 11th September 2019

Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and authorised for publication on members' websites.

Welcome and Introductions

[] is the new Director of [].
[] has been recently appointed as NC3Rs Regional Program Manager for [], [] and [].

Promoting timely submissions of PPLs

Most establishments are continuing to remind users that it is good practice to start drafting a replacement one year before expiry of an existing project licence, with some even suggesting 18 months.

Some are considering charging admin fees for those whose late submissions cause extra work for unit staff.

Delegation of licence writing by PPLhs has been an issue in some establishments and is being actively discouraged.

[] presented a poster produced by [] forum, designed to communicate the scale of the task of PPL application in a simple visual format.

ACTION: [] to circulate this to hub members.

NC3Rs Manager

[] introduced herself and gave a summary of her role. She has been in post for three months now, a joint position shared between the [].

A key component of the NC3Rs' ten-year vision is to promote and implement 3Rs initiatives within universities. It was clear that there was room to improve the current

position through leadership on the ground and offering support to implement a culture of promoting the 3Rs at all levels.

There are currently six Regional Program Managers in the UK, whose task is to raise awareness of schemes, disseminate information and offer advice to those who need it. Also to help organise workshops, training and symposia, and offer guidance on the 3Rs sections of project applications.

It is difficult to quantify how successful the RPMs might be in changing attitudes in their institutions. Some measurements of this could be:

- The number of events organised, and attendance at these
- The number of meetings held and resulting follow-up actions
- The quality of applications for funding and PPLs from institutions.

Current NC3Rs activities include

- An update of the ARRIVE (Animal Research: Reporting of In Vivo Experiments) guidelines, which should be published within the next few months.
- Two new Flaire web learning courses are now available on the NC3Rs website, covering pre-anaesthetic preparations, and choosing an anaesthetic.
- Three new CRACK IT challenges for 2019, to develop: better hypodermic needles with less dead-space, methods for tracking CAR-T cells, and animal-free tumourigenicity assessment.

Workshop for AWERB Members

The first session of this training workshop organised by the London Hub was held on 5th March, and was highly praised by those who attended. It was suggested that members should gauge demand from their establishments before the Hub decides how often future workshops could be held.

ACTION: all AWERB chairs to report back how many of their members would wish to attend this course in the future.

The availability and willingness of the speakers should be checked before any firm plans are made. An AWERB Chairman from one institution (■■■■) did express enthusiasm to host a workshop in the future.

Pan-London 3Rs Symposium

A 3Rs event, open to the many London academic establishments, is being planned for the 22nd April 2020, at ■■■■. If this first symposium is successful, it is hoped that it could become a bi-annual event, to be held at various London establishments.

Six more guest speakers are needed for the day, [■■■■] would welcome any suggestions. Prizes for poster submissions are planned, one for scientists and one for BSU technicians.

Experimental Design Assistant

[REDACTED] gave a demonstration of the NC3Rs' Experimental Design Assistant, an online tool to help with design and improvement of projects, and provided statistical analysis including power calculations and n values. The software appeared extremely intuitive and gives advice on how to resolve any errors made while building experiment layouts. Using the Assistant's flow diagrams and quoting its statistical analysis should help lend weight to grant applications, AWERB reviews of PPL applications, and journal publications.

The EDA can be found at <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/experimental-design-assistant-eda>

Update on ASC Activities

[REDACTED] has been appointed as chair of the [REDACTED]. In all, there are seven new members of the committee, which increases their number by one.

The layout and organisation of the AWERB Hubs now seems to have settled, following some re-organisation in the first few years of the project. There are now eleven hubs across the UK.

Engagement with the online Knowledge Hub has been encouraging: it is developing into a good repository of 3Rs developments, and forum for discussion on a wide variety of topics.

Brexit Matters

[REDACTED] reported that they were planning an embargo on all live imports and exports, to avoid the possibility of animals being held in queues at ports. This would apply to all destinations, not just the EU. The situation would be monitored, and the length of the embargo applied accordingly.

Any Other Business

The position of Hub Chair and the host institution are scheduled to change after the autumn 2020 meeting.

ACTION: Volunteers for both were requested, with the matter to be discussed at the next meeting.

Date of next Meeting

The exact date of the next meeting, most likely in February 2020, will be announced in due course.