

Non-ASPAs animal use: Project proposal Form

Guidance for users - delete this box

This template is intended to help you develop a form for non-ASPAs project review that will meet the needs of your establishment, its culture and the people and bodies working within it. **This form can be used by AWERBs, subgroups, research integrity bodies, or any other committee reviewing non-ASPAs animal use.** Please edit it as necessary. Feedback and examples of any (blank) forms you develop would be very welcome at animalsinscience@rspca.org.uk. You can find an example of a completed form [here](#).

Background

[Establishment] has a local Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB) which is a requirement for all establishments that use animals in research regulated by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPAs). The AWERB reviews all projects involving animals, from a local perspective to ensure that animal use is carefully considered and justified, and that the 3Rs, replacement, reduction and refinement, are fully implemented.

The [AWERB/other body] also reviews and makes decisions on any proposal for research involving animals that is not regulated by the ASPAs. In such cases, the AWERB will need to satisfy itself that such projects are ethically acceptable to [establishment], that all relevant regulations are complied with, and that all potential harms to animals are reduced to a minimum.

This form is designed to help you identify and minimise any ethical and/or welfare issues associated with your project involving animals. Even if your work is not regulated by the ASPAs, our Culture of Care applies to all animal-related activities.

Our aim is to support you in creating a project that is both scientifically valuable and ethically sound. We believe every animal has intrinsic worth, and we are committed to avoiding harms, and improving welfare, within all our animal use.

Please be open and transparent in your answers. Think of this as a conversation to ensure your project aligns with our shared ethical principles. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to help.

1. Project overview

Project title:	
Applicant name(s), role(s) and qualifications:	
Department:	
Proposed start date:	
Proposed end date:	
Collaborators (if any)	
Please list the guidelines, standards, or professional body statements you will follow. <i>E.g. International Society for Applied Ethology (ISAE), The Association for the Study of Animal Behaviour (ASAB), The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines.</i>	

2. Aims and objectives

Please explain the aims of your project, referring where appropriate to relevant previous research.
Please explain the proposed benefits and justification for the research.

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Please list the species, life stages and number of animals you propose to use. Indicate if any of these have any special protection or endangered status.

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Why is it necessary to use animals?

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What kind of methods/approaches will be used? For example, simple observational studies, manipulation of the environment or training animals. Please provide brief details and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) where available.

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Please provide information on proposed methods for statistical analysis, including justification for sample size.

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3. Animal welfare considerations

What physiological and behavioural effects might the proposed procedures have on the animals? Is there any potential to cause anxiety, stress or otherwise compromise the animals' fitness or wellbeing? Even 'subthreshold' procedures that do not require regulation under ASPA can cause some harms to animals, so please include any potential welfare considerations that you can think of.
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Provide details on how you have considered the application of each of the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction, Refinement). How did you search for and consider alternatives¹; how did you optimise numbers and experimental design; how did you think about the animals' experiences and find ways to reduce suffering and improve welfare?

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How will you assess the animals' welfare when carrying out these procedures? What indicators of anxiety, stress or distress will you monitor and at what level of distress will you stop a procedure? What recording systems will you use?

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What will happen to the animals used at the end of the study?

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Do you have contingency plans in case animals need veterinary treatment/euthanasia?

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If your project involves fieldwork with wild animals (e.g. drones, traps, tagging), how will you ensure these activities minimally disturb, stress, or interfere with their natural behaviours and/or impact on non-target animals?

¹ This term is used to refer to non-animal methods and approaches which avoid animal use. These can include cell cultures, or tissues, taken from humans and kept alive in vitro - but some of these may require growth media containing serum derived from animals, which can present ethical and animal welfare concerns.

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Who will have day-to-day responsibility for the animals? Please also provide emergency contact details.

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Where will the research be carried out? If animals are removed from the wild, please describe methods of capture, transport, housing and care including diet, group size, frequency of monitoring, enclosure dimensions and enrichment. Please also provide information as to what animal handling training you have had (or will have).

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Do you require a licence to carry out your research? For example, Natural England fishing or trapping licences?

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4. Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I will follow agreed protocols and uphold high standards of animal welfare throughout this project.

Applicant signature

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Date of application

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Please note the committee may ask for further clarification or explanation before making a decision on the project.