

The work streams of Understanding Animal Research

UAR works across a number of areas to explain animal research, correct myths and promote science.

Engagement

During 2013, UAR led the work to develop a Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK. This sets out four commitments - practical and measurable ways in which organisations that use or fund the use of animals in medical, veterinary and scientific research can be more open and transparent about their work. We also worked with Genetic Alliance UK to provide patients with opportunities to find out about current research into their own conditions.

Education

UAR provides training for scientists and animal technologists and arranges for them to visit secondary schools across the UK to explain their work and the role of animal research and to answer questions and challenges from young people. It also conducts its own school talks, and visits science fairs, using a rubber rat, lab coats, syringes and goggles in interactive sessions that allow students to conduct an animal 'procedure' of their own.

Policy

UAR works proactively with government to form strong policy, with political parties to propose sensible policy and with individual MPs to educate about animal research. This involves high-level meetings with civil servants, personal briefings and laboratory visits for politicians, and feeding into political policy formation processes.



International collaboration

In July 2013, UAR worked with the Basel Declaration Society to organise a two-day conference in London on Openness and transparency in animal research. This brought together scientists and policy makers from across Europe.

UAR also led the work to form the [European Animal Research Association](#). Following an initial discussion meeting in Brussels in January 2013, and a wider stakeholder meeting in Barcelona in June last year, the EARA was formally incorporated in March 2014.

Media

UAR engages both proactively and reactively with the media. Upon an abolitionist story breaking on radio, television, online or in print, UAR works to counteract negative messages, correct myths and properly explain context. It also works to set up lab visits for journalists and works with journalists to produce feature pieces, including acting as the scientific adviser for in-depth pieces. Activist letters to local and national newspapers are countered as are activist comments online.

Online

UAR has a strong online presence with over 1260 Twitter followers, many tens of thousand "likes" for our Facebook page and over 1,000,000 website visitors per year (or 2,700+ a day). We use social media sites such as Reddit and Google+ to drive traffic to our sites. UAR also publishes opinion pieces in outlets such as the Huffington Post. As well as our main website, UAR runs [animalresearch.info](#), a resource for researchers to understand the historical and current role of animals in research and [animalrightsextremism.info](#), which maps animal-related extremist activity across Europe and the world. UAR has also set up the Science Action

Network to enable scientists and animal care staff to counter misinformation about animal research online.

Member support

We provide a consultancy service and direct support for our members connected with the wide range of issues that we work on. Much of this work is confidential, concerning specific problems when members are targeted by animal rights groups or when they need to address public views on animal research.

Engagement

Concordat on Openness

During 2013 and early 2014, UAR led the process to develop a Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK. A Steering Group, chaired by science journalist and broadcaster Geoff Watts, oversaw the work and a Working Group comprising representatives of all the main stakeholders ensured that the views of potential signatories were accommodated during the drafting of the document.

The Concordat was informed by a workshop session with science journalists, discussions with laboratory animal welfare experts and a public dialogue. Once it had reached a final draft stage, we opened the Concordat to public consultation for six weeks at the end of 2013.

Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK

14 MAY 2014



The final version was published in May 2014 with 72 signatories. The number now stands at over 80 and we are still welcoming new signatories.

Patient Voice

In 2013 UAR's Patients' Discovery Day initiative in collaboration with Genetic Alliance UK grew, with workshops at six Universities across the UK. These workshops, took place in Manchester; Belfast; Dundee; Leicester, Bath and Cambridge allowing local patient groups to see the research taking place in their city, and to understand the essential role played by animals in that research. We are very grateful to the host universities and to BRET and the MRC for funding this work.

Education

School talks

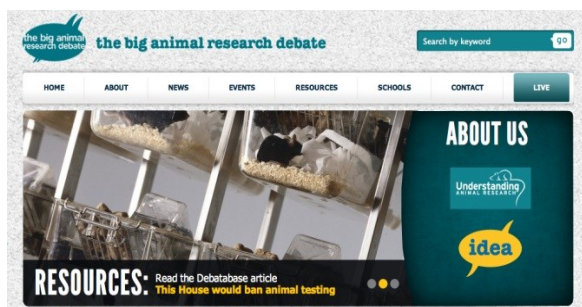


As usual, school talks have been at the centre of the Education team's activities over the past year. We have a target of 300 talks to be run in UK schools in the academic year 2013-14 and, with 275 talks currently on the books, we are confident of meeting the target.

The Big Animal Research Debate

UAR organised 30 debates at universities around the UK (and beyond). Working in collaboration with IDEA UK, UAR helped university students debate the motion, "This House would ban all forms of animal research" during the four days of National Biology Week.

Every debating society defeated the motion, with students voting 4 to 1 in support of continued biomedical research after over 2,000 votes were counted. Many of the debates were streamed live on YouTube, with a number of UAR staff participating in the events.



Educational resources

Six new classroom resources were developed and added for the first time to the TES Connect website for teachers where they proved popular and were downloaded 4,600 times.

Our loan boxes of resources containing lab equipment and rat models for blood sampling were piloted in two schools where they proved popular with staff and students but difficult to retrieve. This was partly because of pleas from the schools to hold on to the equipment for a little longer combined with a tendency for the staff to pass them around.



UAR held education workshop sessions for scientists and technicians in London (three times), Glasgow, Dundee and Cambridge and sessions in Hull and Leicester will take place in the summer.

Open Labs

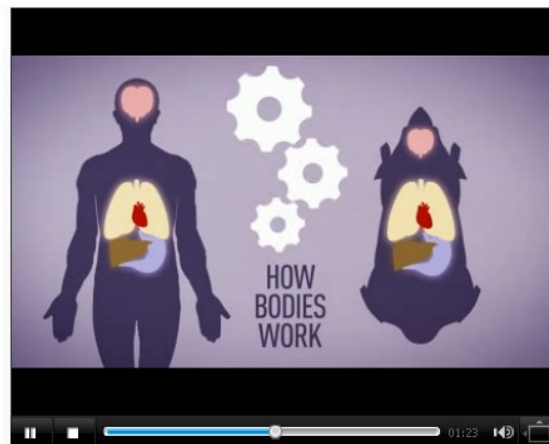
For Science Week 2014 UAR co-ordinated visits to animal units for over 200 school children from 17 schools in 8 different facilities across the UK. Reactions to the visits were so positive from visitors and facility staff alike that we plan to hold a similar event in Science Week 2015.

Policy and media

Media

UAR has continued its reactive media work, responding to letters in papers and anti-research campaigns, but has also briefed numerous journalists from national outlets on the realities of animal research. UAR has also taken Animal Aid to the Advertising Standards Authority and successfully demonstrated that they were misleading the public.

As part of a new approach to communicating on the issue of animal research, UAR has produced an animation in cooperation with the British Pharmacological Society which creates an accessible way to understand pharmacological research. The video is available on the UAR site, YouTube and the politics.co.uk politics site, where UAR has a dedicated microsite.



UAR has contributed written opinion pieces to a wide variety of titles including The Biochemist, the Huffington Post and Pan European Networks. Our quotes have appeared in all national papers, plus journals including Science and Nature.

We are currently working with television producers sketching out ideas for a series of documentaries to be broadcast on terrestrial television.

Public Affairs

UAR continues to engage with politicians at the local, national and European level. Every MEP candidate was written to ahead of the 2014 elections. This approach included a survey of their opinions. Of those that were returned, levels of general knowledge about animal research appear to be in line with the general public. UAR travelled to Brussels to brief MEPs individually, and arranged a lab visit for the staff of one MEP.

UAR assisted with a number of UK MP lab visits in 2013 and 2014, and continues to engage with individual MPs. UAR now writes to MPs supporting anti-research campaigns to make them aware of the likely consequences for medical, veterinary and environmental research of their position.



We attended all three main party conferences in 2013, exhibiting at the Labour Conference. UAR was also involved in policy formation and lobbying around the Intellectual Property Bill, Revised ASPA guidance and reform of Section 24.

Online communication



The statistics

In the last year we have nearly doubled our number of Twitter follower, now have 5,354 Facebook friends and have had over 4,000,000 views on Google+. Our videos have been seen by around 100,000 people on our sites and more elsewhere as our videos are frequently embedded on other websites. And our Klout score – a measure of online impact – has increased from 59 to 78.

If you search in www.google.co.uk we do well but a search in www.google.com is not quite so fruitful. One of the reasons we ask our members to use and link to our material is that this helps us get to the top of the search engine rankings and, most importantly, outrank anti-vivisection groups, whichever search engine you use. Compared to last year, we are doing better, with our videos now coming into the first page on a YouTube search, for example. What follows are some of the activities from the last year that have helped us achieve this success.

Major developments in 2013 – This Week in Animal Research

Around a year ago we started to sum up our daily newsfeed into a weekly ‘*A week in animal research*’ infographic, highlighting six notable stories. This has been very successful and regularly gets thousands of views across social media.



We have also produced infographics for the 2012 Home Office statistics, World Diabetes Day, World AIDS Day and changes in cancer survival rates.

The Nobel Prize predictions piece that was one of our most popular news stories on the main website and was covered in the Union-Tribune San Diego

<http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2013/sep/21/ucsd-nobel-predict/>

www.animalresearch.info

In the last twelve months we have written 29 new pages on animalresearch.info and a further 20 pages have been updated. These new pages have or are being translated into Spanish, German, Italian and French as we now have a full complement of freelance translators. We've also improved the quantity and quality of images and video within this site. Overall traffic to the site increased by 80% over the year, with good increases coming to our European language content.

www.animalrightsextremism.info

Our brief for reporting on animal rights extremism is to collate incidents that are reported in the press throughout the world. There have been around 40 news items written up over the year, with around one half being translated into the respective languages of the country where they have

happened. Unlike our other sites, we are of course happy when there is nothing to report on ARE.info.

Despite the lack of news items, traffic to this site has increased significantly over the year.

Member support

While much of our member support is confidential consultancy work, Freedom of Information requests and presentations to member organisations continue to be core activities for UAR.

We provided media relations support to B&K during its 2013 planning application, participating in many TV and radio interviews on the company's behalf. We have provided this same service during the ongoing appeal process.

We have also supported many of our University members in dealing with FOI requests about their animal research, helping them to co-ordinate responses and consider a sector-wide view in drafting their responses.

International collaboration

During 2013, UAR led the work to establish the European Animal Research Association, which aims to foster better public understanding of animal research and build resilience into the supply chain across Europe.

We also worked with the Basel Declaration Society to co-host an international conference for scientists and policy makers on openness and transparency in animal research. This two-day meeting took place in London in July 2013 and covered many aspects of openness and transparency from the importance of publication guidelines such as ARRIVE and ICLAS to the difficult topic of publishing 'negative' results