



FREE BEAGLES FROM EXPERIMENTS

Petition to free beagles from experiment at University of Barcelona, and to replace them by ethical, human-relevant methods.

An open letter to:

*University of Barcelona: **Joan Guàrdia Olmos***

*Govern of Catalonia: **Teresa Jordà, Pere Aragonès, Gemma Geis***

*Government of Spain: **Diana Morant, Pedro Sánchez***

We, members of the scientific, medical and academic community, are calling for the immediate release of the beagles from captivity that are to be part in a drug discovery experiment related to liver fibrosis and myelofibrosis by the University of Barcelona (Parc Científic). We call for this experiment to be replaced with modern, ethical and human-relevant research methods, that don't involve the use and abuse of animals.

Animal experimentation is both unethical and inefficient. It is estimated that over 100 million animals are used for experimentation every year[1][2]. Cruel, inefficient and unreliable experiments are practised upon millions of sentient beings which are subjected to physical and emotional trauma, and many eventually killed. Sadly, around 96% of these experiments result in failure[3]. Science must realize that humans are very different from other species. Humans possess a different exposome, anatomy, histology, physiology and gene expression than those animals subjected to experimentation[4][5]. We firmly believe that the experiment does not meet the European Commission Directive on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes (3Rs)[6] nor OIEs terrestrial code ("five freedoms")[7].



The University of Barcelona has published a document in which they claim that it is absolutely essential to use living animals (in-vivo) for their liver fibrosis and myelofibrosis drug development research [8].

We oppose that claim on the grounds that we have outlined. On the same document, Parc Científic has expressed their commitment to assure the wellbeing of all animals involved throughout the experiment. We are again opposed to this claim. Parc Científic has admitted that the animals will be killed to undergo necropsy. In addition to that, Parc Científic has hired Vivotecnia, a company recently investigated on animal abuse[9].

Many questions remain unanswered. The scientific community should know what the molecule / drug to be used for research will be, in order for the research to be in accordance with the Open Science principle. Knowing the molecule before the research begins would help peer researchers to look for and suggest alternative methods of research that don't use animals. On what criteria was the number of 38 beagles chosen? Animals must surely not be killed, under any circumstance. There are non-invasive studies (liver elastography to evaluate fibrosis, and MRI for anatomic and volumetric evaluations of organs, among others which can be used in place of necropsy).

There are great advances in non-animal methods of research that are designed to benefit humans. Computer modeling, artificial intelligence and organ-on-a-chip are just some of the methods that we, as scientists must embrace today[10]. Investing in these methods will produce more reliable biomedical research, but also a saner, more humane, respectful and empathetic society.

It is important to recall the Cambridge declaration (2012), which states that humans are not unique in possessing the neurological substrates that generate consciousness[11]. Non-human animals have the neuroanatomical, neurochemical, and neurophysiological substrates of conscious states along with the capacity to exhibit intentional behavior. Moreover, the declaration of Toulon (2019), states that animals must be universally considered as persons and not things, that animals should be considered as nonhuman natural persons and that animals should be granted their own rights, enabling their interests to be taken into account[12].

We beg the University of Barcelona to stop this cruel experiment and to release the beagles for responsible adoption. We urge the University of Barcelona to become an institution of reference in the adoption of state-of-the-art, open science and human-relevant technology without the use of nonhuman animals.

Signatories

Last signatories update: Monday, Feb 18, 2022

- Prof. Nuria Almiron, co-director of the UPF-Centre for Animal Ethics, Pompeu Fabra University, Spain
- Dr. Miriam Martínez-Biarge, MD, PhD, Spain
- Dr. Mario López Rodríguez, MD, oncology radiotherapy, Hospital Universitario de la Princesa, Spain
- Dr. Erika Cudworth, Senior Lecturer in Education, De Montfort University, United Kingdom
- Prof. Delia Langstone, Senior Lecturer/Social Sciences, University of East London, United Kingdom
- Dr. Shireen Kassam, MD, UK
- Prof. Carmen Dell'Aversano, associate Professor, Pisa University, Italy



- Prof. Nickie Charles, Professor and Co-Director of the Centre for the Study of Women and Gender, United Kingdom
- Dr. Paola Dolader, MD, Spain
- Dr. Luis Falcon, MD, president, GNU Solidario, Spain
- Dr Nùria Querol, MD, Spain
- Prof. Corine Pelluchon, philosopher, professor at Gustave Eiffel University, France
- Dr. Edgar Hagenbichler, MD, Austria
- Prof. Luis Simes, biochemist, Argentina
- Rachel Jones, VetMB MRCVS, United Kingdom
- Dr. Richard Fitton, MD, England
- Dr. Xavier Martínez Lacasa, MD, Spain
- Dr. Alberto Lazzero, MD, Italy
- Dr. César Tei Guell, MD, Spain
- Prof. Simon Springer, University of Newcastle, Australia
- Dr Debra Benita Shaw, University of East London, United Kingdom
- Rosie Martin, MSc BSc RD, UK
- Dr Leila Dehghan, MD, ANutr
- Dr Buvana Dwarakanathan MD, United Kingdom
- Dr. Jordi Sabate Villare, MD, UK
- Prof. David Alan Nibert, Wittenberg University, United States
- Dr. Marta Tafalla, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
- Prof. Angélica Velasco Sesma, Universidad de Valladolid, Spain
- Nuria Menéndez de Llano Rodríguez, Associate Fellow Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics, UK
- Prof. Jorge Riechmann, titular de Filosofía Moral y Política, Autonomous University of Madrid - UAM
- Prof. Francisco Garrido Peña, University of Jaen
- Macarena Montes, predoctoral researcher, Pompeu Fabra University, Centre for Animal Ethics
- Dr. Laura Fernández, PhD, Universitat Pompeu Fabra- Centre for Animal Ethics.
- Prof. Toby Miller, Stuart Hall professor Cultural Studies, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico
- Prof. Dr. Benito Alaez Corral, Catedrático de Derecho Constitucional de la Universidad de Oviedo, Spain
- Dr. Juan Ignacio Codina, PhD
- Prof. Dr. Tom Kane, PhD, University of Stirling, Scotland
- Prof. Isabel Balza, profesora Titular de Filosofía Moral, University of Jaén, Spain
- Prof. Dr. Consuelo Ramón Chornet, Professor of Public International Law and member of the Human Rights Institute (L'Institut Universitari de Drets Humans), University of Valencia, Spain

Organizations

- GNU Solidario (<https://www.gnusolidario.org>)
- Investigación Sin Experimentación Animal (ISEA) (https://www.instagram.com/sin_experimentacion_animal/)
- Franz Weber Foundation (<http://www.ffw.ch/es/>)
- Animal Free Research UK (<https://www.animalfreeresearchuk.org>)
- Plant-Based Health Professionals UK (<https://plantbasedhealthprofessionals.com>)
- Observatorio Justicia y Defensa Animal (<https://www.justiciaydefensaanimal.es/>)



References:

- 1.- Taylor, K.; Gordon, N.; Langley, G. & Higgins, W. (2008) "Estimates for worldwide laboratory animal use in 2005"; *Alternatives to Laboratory Animals*, 36, pp. 327-342.
- 2.- Animal Ethics <https://www.animal-ethics.org/animal-experimentation-introduction/#fn2>
- 3.- Akthar, A. (2015) "The Flaws and Human Harms of Animal Experimentations" <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4594046/#fn39>
- 4.- Lesit, M; Hartun, T (2019) "Inflammatory findings on species extrapolations: humans are definitely no 70-kg mice". <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23503654/>
- 5.- Mak, IW; Evaniew, N; Ghert, M "Lost in translation: animal models and clinical trials in cancer treatment" <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24489990/>
- 6.- World Organization for Animal Health - "Animal Welfare" <https://www.oie.int/en/what-we-do/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-welfare/>
- 7.- Directive 2010/63/EU revising Directive 86/609/EEC on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes https://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/lab_animals/legislation_en.htm
- 8.- Parc Científic: "Comunicado: Uso de animales de laboratorio en Investigación biomédica." <https://www.pcb.ub.edu/es/comunicado-uso-de-animales-de-laboratorio-en-investigacion-biomedica/>
- 9.- Cruelty Free International - Toxicity Testing on Animals at Vivotecnia, Spain. <https://crueltyfreeinternational.org/toxicity-testing-animals-vivotecnia-spain>
- 10.- Animal Free Research UK: "A call to accelerate human-focussed medical research" <https://www.animalfreeresearchuk.org/openletter/>
- 11.- Cambridge Declaration . <https://fcmconference.org/img/CambridgeDeclarationOnConsciousness.pdf>
- 12.- Déclaration de Toulon . <https://www.univ-tln.fr/Declaration-de-Toulon.html>

