

Karolinska Institutet Animal welfare body Annual report 2022

Dnr 2-622/2023

Gäller fr.o.m. 2023-02-09



**Karolinska
Institutet**



Karolinska Institutet Animal welfare body Annual report 2022

Innehåll

Introduction	3
Activities 2022	4
Amendments	4
Guidelines, recommendations, and SOPs	4
Courses, conferences, and workshops	4
Other activities.....	5
Planned activities 2023	5

Diarienummer	Dnr föreg. version:	Beslutsdatum:	Giltighetstid:
Dnr 1-622/2023	Dnr föreg. version	2023-02-09	tills vidare
Beslut:		Dokumenttyp:	
Beslut		Dokumenttyp	
Handläggs av avdelning/enhet:		Beredning med:	
Animal Welfare Body, Karolinska Institutet		Djurskyddsorganet vid Karolinska Institutet	
Revidering med avseende på:			
Revidering med avseende på			

Introduction

Karolinska Institutet (KI) has, as one of the leading medical universities, the mission to improve human health and to find new strategies to fight human diseases. The use of laboratory animals is pivotal for many research projects in basic and translational science at Karolinska Institutet.

Research involving laboratory animal is regulated by the Animal welfare act 2018:1192, the Animal welfare ordinance 2019:66 and the Swedish board of agriculture's regulations and general advice on laboratory animals, SJVFS 2019:9 Saknr L150 (called L150 from hereon).

According to the Swedish legislation described above, all animals used for scientific purposes are protected by law and must be treated in the best possible way, both regarding their housing as well as regarding experimental conditions. The Swedish legislation, namely L150 chapter 5, also defines that each organisation carrying out laboratory animal research must establish an Animal Welfare Body (AWB).

The AWB at KI was established 1st of January 2013 and is an independent authority which reports directly to the Committee for research and the establishment license holder.

The AWB consists of eight members: the chairmen, the named animal care and welfare officer (NACWO), a veterinarian and its deputy, a researcher, and its deputy, as well as an animal technician and its deputy. Additionally, for matters concerning aquatic species or non-human primates, an expert in the field or an ethologist is taking part in the discussion and decisions, respectively. Other specialists may be co-opted if deemed necessary.

All members of the AWB are appointed by the Committee for research for a 3-year period. The

current mandate runs from 2023-01-01 to 2025-12-31.

Since July 2018, principal investigators from KI can apply to the AWB for addendums to their ethics license if the addendum meet the requirements defined in L150 (please see the AWB webpage for details). The AWB takes all decisions by majority vote.

Activities 2022

Amendments

During 2022, the AWB at KI handled in total 19 amendments. The minority of those amendments, in total seven, were of administrative character such as change or addition of animal facilities, or exchange of the principal investigator on an ethical license. Most applications concerned adjustments of the experimental settings granted in the underlying ethical license. For these applications, the AWB performs with the specific competences represented in the organization a detailed investigation if those adjustments meet the prerequisites stipulated in L150.

Projects and recommendations

The AWB has established and published two recommendations during 2022, one recommendation concerning the acclimatization of animals after transport to the KM animal facilities and one recommendation concerning the assessment of severity levels in research animals.

- Recommendation 8: Acclimatization of animals after transport to KM animal facilities (Dnr: 1-494/2022).
- Recommendation 9: Assessment of severity level in research animals (Dnr: 1-495/2022).

The AWB has started a project together with the zebrafish core facility at KI to develop a new health scoring sheet specifically for zebrafish to allow for a more objective health assessment and improved animal welfare. Furthermore, the AWB and the zebrafish core facility have been developing new items for enrichment of zebrafish tanks which are currently being tested.

Courses, conferences, and workshops

The AWB organised together with the *Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals* (RSPCA) the conference "Refining severe disease models and procedures", which was held at KI on 24-25th of August 2022. More than 100 participants from KI, Sweden and Europe attended the meeting. The conference covered everything from the development and refinement of different disease models, over news from the regulatory field to retroactive evaluation of studies.

Representatives of the AWB and the zebrafish core facility at Karolinska Institutet took the lead under 2021 and 2022 to establish a completely new zebrafish specific laboratory animal science course. The course has been published through the Nordic consortium for LAS education and training (NCLASET) in summer 2022 and is thereby available to all Institutions which are part of the consortium.

The AWB and the 3R groups at the different animal facilities have been initiating different projects that aim to improve animal welfare. - Change in diets to reduce overweight in non-human primates (NHP), training of NHPs so that they can be weighed without anaesthesia, evaluation of "cellstoft" as new nesting material for rodents and education in assessment of animal welfare for animal technicians are just some examples of ongoing projects.

AWB representatives actively participated at several webinar series organized by Swedish 3R centre e.g., national assessment template for rodents, enrichment for rodents and zebrafish, seminar on larger animals, and the National AWB day.

Other activities

The AWB Invited the Swedish 3R centre to Karolinska Institutet to discuss and intensify future interactions.

The AWB organises regular meetings with other animal welfare bodies in the Stockholm/Uppsala region.

demand of research groups which active at different site.

Planned activities 2023

The AWB will focus on communication during 2023, as communication between researchers and animal staff including animal technicians, veterinarians and other personnel is key for good animal welfare. To facilitate this, the AWB plans amongst others a workshop to be held at KI in fall.

Besides, the AWB will work on the following projects:

- Revision of the AWB webpage
- Finalising the projects concerning zebrafish
- Establishing guidelines for breeding of rodents and zebrafish
- Implementation of an updated assessment template for rodents.
- Outreach in form of lectures and workshops (CPD activities) to scientists and all technical personnel involved in animal work.
- Continuously review and analyse retrospective reports from CDFN, guidelines and strategy documents involving animal welfare. The information will be used to improve animal welfare in current research at all KI institutions in communication with the researchers and in recommendations from AWB.
- Continue to network with other animal welfare bodies in the Stockholm/Uppsala region to facilitate research projects and to meet the

