

Policy statement on animal experiments at the University of Fribourg

The University of Fribourg is committed to quality and excellence in biomedical research based on animal experiments. To this end, it establishes a culture of care dedicated to human and animal welfare and is committed to transparency and education in its animal experimentation activities.

Medical and biological knowledge is largely based on studies involving laboratory animals. Thanks to such animal experiments, decisive progress can also be made at the University of Fribourg in the understanding of fundamental life processes and in the development of clinical diagnostic and therapeutic procedures.

Research with and on animals adheres to the experimental objectives as stated in the Swiss Animal Protection Ordinance ([art. 137](#)) and is subject to **approval by the Cantonal Veterinary Office** LSVW/SAAV, according to which the research benefits and animal welfare are weighed up. The University of Fribourg is committed to the ethical treatment of laboratory animals by consistently implementing the 3R principle (reduce – refine – replace). This applies not only to the experimental interventions, but also to the housing and handling of the animals. It also supports methods and research that can help to reduce the number of animal experiments or completely replace animal experiments with alternative methods.

Through an unconditional application of the **Culture of Care**, all actors working with animals, such as animal caretakers, veterinarians, heads of animal facilities, researchers, animal welfare officers and management staff, contribute on a daily basis to guaranteeing the welfare of animals in the research facilities. The University provides funding for staff, infrastructure and (continuous) education. As a member of the Swiss Transparency Agreement on Animal Research, the University of Fribourg is committed to providing transparent information about its animal research activities and seeks active dialogue with the interested public.

The Rectorate of the University of Fribourg is fully committed to cutting-edge research, including animal experiments if necessary. It supports its scientists in conducting research within the framework of Swiss and cantonal legislation and in **contributing to the advancement of scientific knowledge** by disseminating the results.

Approved by the Rectorate on 28.08.2023

Astrid Epiney, Rector

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