

Policy document on the collection of organs and tissues from dead laboratory animals.

This is a document of the Animal Welfare Body (AWB) Leiden in close collaboration with the PDC (central animal facility LUMC), the ARF (rodent facility), the bird facility and the zebrafish facility of the Leiden University.

Introduction

Article 1 (1a) of the Experiments on Animals Act (*Wod*) states that the killing of animals for the purpose of using their organs, tissues or body fluids for research are considered animal experiments. In practice, this means that a project licence granted by the CCD and a valid research plan (*ozp*) are required.

Within the applicable guidelines, the Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC) and Leiden University (LEI) strive to optimally utilize laboratory animals that have been killed. In some cases when researchers need organs or tissues from dead animals, they can make use of material from laboratory animals that have already been killed for a different purpose or are killed because they are no longer or not needed at the animal facility (surplus animals). The purpose of this document is to clarify when or not a licence is required for using organs and tissues of dead animals in an animal experiment.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to clarify when the collection of fresh organs and tissues from dead laboratory animals requires a licence or not.

Application area

Organs or tissues from laboratory animals (such as cells, tissues, organs, body fluids or embryos), which are regarded suitable for use in *ex vivo* experiments, *in vitro* culture or otherwise for research or educational purposes by suitably organizing the supply and demand chain at the time of collection.

The policy applies to researchers who work at the research facilities of the LUMC and the LEI and it relates to dead animals or organs and tissues thereof which are directly obtained from a researcher or the animal facility.

Quality of research results

When using organs or tissues from surplus animals for research, the researcher must at all times be aware of the fact that the origin of the material, the genetic composition, age and sex, are of vital influence for the quality of the scientific results that can be achieved with the material.

Practical elaboration

There is no 'umbrella' project licence for the provision of killing laboratory animals for the sole purpose of collecting organs or tissues. A generic licence like that is not in line with the current policy of the CCD. Hence the publication of this policy document in which two possible scenarios are presented.

Scenario 1

Scenario 1a. The use of organs or tissues of an animal that has been killed for a scientific purpose. If an animal is killed under a project licence and research plan (*ozp*) and specific organs and tissues are not used for the research topic in question, this material can be used for another purpose.

Scenario 1b. The use of organs or tissues of an animal which has not been killed for a scientific purpose. This includes the killing of surplus animals (for example derived from breeding).

Scenario 1: The collection of organs or tissues for research or educational purposes is not considered an animal experiment when obtained from an animal:

- a. that was killed for another purpose, for instance an experiment based on another research question.

Scenario 1a: No animal experiment => no project licence and *ozp* => direct contact with the researcher who killed the animals.

- b. that is killed because it is a surplus animal and there is no other use for it; and this does not require any additional procedure causing extra discomfort for the living animal.

Scenario 1b: No animal experiment => no project licence and *ozp* => direct contact with the animal facility

PDC: The supply of cadavers can be requested by sending an e-mail to the PDC's administrative office (mail subject: '**surplus animal for tissue**' send to: PDC-Bedrijfsbureau@lumc.nl). It is not possible to ask for specific characteristics of the animals (e.g. sex, age or genetic background) or for a specific time of delivery. The PDC only provides surplus animals at times fitting within the work schedule.

ARF: Every week a list of surplus animals will be published by responsible researcher or coordinator. Ask for surplus at the ARF office: arf@iacr.leidenuniv.nl. Surplus animals are available until they are killed [in principle on Wednesdays].

Fish and bird: The supply of cadavers can be requested by sending an e-mail to the manager facility (mail subject: '**surplus animal for tissue**' send to: g.c.van.der.velden@biology.leidenuniv.nl (fish) or P.C.Snelderwaard@biology.leidenuniv.nl (bird)). It is not possible to ask for specific characteristics of the animals (e.g. sex, age or genetic background) or for a specific time of delivery. The facilities only provide surplus animals at times fitting within the work schedule.

Scenario 2

The use of organs or tissues of an animal with specific characteristics (e.g. a specific genetic background, age, gender). To be sure of the availability of specific material at a certain time and/or when a structural agreement is needed with the animal facility, a specified project licence and a valid research plan (*ozp*) are required.

Continuation at page 3=>

Scenario 2: The collection of organs and tissues for research or educational purposes is considered an animal experiment if:

- a. coming from a living animal and as a result a procedure is being performed (e.g. drawing blood, taking a biopsy);
- b. coming from a laboratory animal on which, shortly before it was killed, surgery or a procedure (for example, perfusion) was carried out with the aim of making the organs and tissues optimally suitable for the intended research or educational purpose. Even if the surgery or procedure was performed under anaesthesia;
- c. it concerns organs or tissues from surplus animals bred specifically for this researchers;
- d. structural agreements with the animal facility are needed and it is the researcher who kills the surplus animal.

Scenario 2: Animal experiment => a project licence and *ozp* needed => 1st contact via AWB (lvD-Leiden@LUMC.nl)

With questions concerning this policy document please contact the facility or [AWB Leiden](#)