

Gaining insight
into the use of
animals
in science



Making the EU a global leader in transparency



What is a non-technical project summary (NTS)?

An NTS is an opportunity for researchers and scientists to connect with the public. As a **basic yet comprehensive description of an authorised project involving animal use**, it is an invaluable resource for anyone seeking to understand why and how the work is being undertaken.

Published in a **user-friendly database** and using all official EU languages, these summaries are accessible to anyone interested in learning more about animal research projects in the 27 EU Member States and Norway.

ALURES NTS database: the most transparent repository on animal-based research and testing in the world



The **ALURES NTS database** is continuously updated by project leaders across Europe. Using clear and concise language, the summaries help to understand where, why and how animals are still being used to support research and testing needs. They also present reasons why animals cannot be fully replaced yet in various scientific areas.

To ensure privacy and confidentiality, the NTS database is anonymous.

What information do the project summaries provide?

Objectives and benefits

- The overall project objective(s).
- How the project helps advance science and contributes to scientific understanding.
- How the project will ultimately benefit humans, animals, or the environment.

Harms

- What procedures the animals will be typically used in (e.g. injections, surgical procedures).
- Potential level of impacts or adverse effects on animals (e.g. mild, moderate, severe).
- Species and numbers of animals expected to be used.
- What will happen to the animals at the end of the procedure (e.g. reused, rehomed).



How the project applies the Three Rs



- Clear information on what has been done to replace animal use; why full replacement is not possible to achieve the objectives.
- Details on how animal numbers were reduced and kept to a minimum (e.g. by using computer modelling, sharing of tissue or reuse).
- Comprehensive information on what is done to refine the process, to minimise pain, suffering and distress and improve wellbeing.

Timely, accessible and comparable

In 2021, ALURES NTS was launched. Previously, project summaries used different formats, were impossible to search, scattered across 27 sources and often published with a delay. Now, by law, competent authorities must publish a project summary using a common template in the easily searchable ALURES NTS database within six months following its authorisation.

ALURES NTS: Benefits from increased openness and transparency

- Improves public and NGO accessibility and understanding of different animal use areas.
- Provides scientific information to the public and reduces the spread of misinformation.
- Provides a tool to identify where science urgently needs to develop alternative approaches.
- Invites scientists to better communicate and bring their research closer to the public.
- Facilitates the sharing of good practices.
- Supports evidence-based policymaking.



ALURES NTS database in practice

Project developing new cell therapy treatment for patients such as diabetics who have no options available other than limb amputation



Up to 25% of patients need amputation because current treatments are unsuitable.

Nearly
80%
of patients risk dying
within 5 YEARS after
amputation.

Critical limb ischaemia (CLI) occurs when an artery that supplies blood to the limb becomes blocked and the cells beyond this point begin to die. This condition is very common in diabetes patients. The project explores the possibility of using cells from patient's own blood to restore vessel function and blood flow.

What are the potential benefits?

- **Fewer patients** require amputation, die from CLI, or from complications due to amputation.
- Burden on healthcare services **reduced**.

Why can't non-animal alternatives be used?

In vitro (non-animal) investigations have been carried out to determine whether modified cells can successfully regenerate vasculature tissue. However, in vitro studies do not always accurately demonstrate what will happen after transplantation into a living person or animal. This is especially true when it comes to the **formation of vessels**. Cells can form many vessels in the lab, but then none in animals. These cells need to be **tested on an animal** to see if they can generate blood vessels and restore blood flow, and whether they are suitable as a potential therapy for CLI patients.

How are animal numbers being kept to a minimum?

- Statistician consulted to determine **lowest possible number** needed to obtain meaningful scientific outcome.
- Pilot study estimates **appropriate number of animals** required at beginning of research, ensuring no more animals used beyond number required for scientifically robust results.

What is being done to minimise pain, suffering and distress?

- **Anaesthetic** administered for each step of procedure.
- **Painkillers** for three days after surgery and as required at any point throughout procedure.
- **Body temperature** regulated using heated blanket.
- Medicine for **faster recovery** so animal is quickly returned to home cage.
- **Removed from study completely** if adverse effects experienced beyond those expected from planned techniques.



Want to find out more about this project? Visit the [ALURES NTS database](#) for a detailed description of the objectives and benefits, harms, and how the Three Rs are applied.

The **EU is committed** to **reducing and ultimately replacing animal use** in research and testing. Until that goal is achieved, the European Commission is doing all it can to **find alternative approaches to make animal testing redundant**. **Transparency is key** for progressing towards this goal.

From policymakers, government officials and funding bodies, to researchers, NGOs and the general public, **everyone can be informed** about the use of animals in research. Having a clear picture of where, how and why animals are needed allows for fact-based dialogue and helps to identify where science urgently needs to develop alternative approaches.

Check out ALURES NTS and find out where, how and why animals are needed in science

Want to know more?

[Website](#)

[ALURES Statistical
EU database](#)

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