



Animal Protection Research Prize 2026 - Call for Tender

5th January 2026

Animal Protection Research Prize 2026 of the German Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Regional Identity (BMLEH) is committed to improving animal welfare both nationally and internationally. The welfare of laboratory animals is an important concern for the BMLEH. Therefore, the BMLEH supports measures taken by the German Center for the Protection of Laboratory Animals (Bf3R) to limit animal testing to the minimum necessary and to ensure the best possible protection for laboratory animals. To improve the protection of laboratory animals and promote 3R research aimed at replacing animal experiments with new methods and technologies (Replace), reducing the use of laboratory animals to the minimum necessary (Reduce), and minimizing the suffering of laboratory animals (Refine), the BMLEH is offering the Animal Protection Research Prize in two categories.

Prize Categories

The Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Regional Identity (BMLEH) is announcing the Animal Protection Research Prize in two categories for the year 2026. The deadline for nominations is April 12, 2026.

The Animal Protection Research Prize for outstanding research achievements based on the 3R principle
This prize category is presented to national and international scientists who, through their innovations, have had a major impact on the replacement or reduction of animal experiments or have developed methods in the interests of animal welfare that have significantly contributed to reducing the suffering of animals before, during and after an experiment. It is crucial that the methods or procedures are scientifically and/or technically innovative compared to established methods or represent a significant

improvement on existing methods. The Animal Protection Research Prize for outstanding research achievements in accordance with the 3R principle is endowed with €100,000. Nominations are made by national 3R centres (see below), heads or institute directors of national research institutions, or German animal welfare organisations that have defined the protection of laboratory animals as a priority area of their work. For detailed information on nominations, see below.

To the nomination platform:

<https://foerderportal.bund.de/easyonline/reflink.jsf?m=TSCHFP&b=PHFL&t=SKI>

The Animal Protection Research Prize for young scientists in 3R research

This prize is presented to one or more young scientists who have completed their doctorate within the last five years. It recognises innovative, forward-looking scientific theses or follow-up work that has had or is likely to have a significant impact on the field of 3R research. The work should contribute to the development of methods and procedures that can replace or reduce animal testing (Replace and Reduce) or improve the housing conditions of laboratory animals or reduce pain, suffering or harm in experiments (Refinement). A convincing concept for the continuation of the method or procedure must be presented. The prize category is endowed with up to €50,000. Participation is open to self-nominations as well as nominations by national 3R centres, directors or institute heads of national research institutions, or German animal welfare organisations that have defined the protection of laboratory animals as a priority area of their work. For detailed information on participation, see below.

To the application platform:

<https://foerderportal.bund.de/easyonline/reflink.jsf?m=TSCHFP&b=PWN3R&t=SKI>

About the BMLEH Animal Protection Research Prize

With EU Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes, the so-called 3R principle was subsequently incorporated into the Animal Welfare Act in Germany:

- Replacement of experiments with methods that do not involve laboratory animals (Replace)
- Reduction of the number of laboratory animals used (Reduce) without compromising the usability of the data obtained
- Reduction of the stress to which animals are exposed during experiments (Refine)

The BMLEH Animal Protection Research Prize was established as a funding measure in line with the 3R principle. From 2009 to 2022, the prize was awarded in particular to young scientists for their 3R research work. Following an evaluation and redesign of the BMLEH Animal Protection Research Prize in 2024, not only was the prize money increased, but two prize categories were also added. Nominations are expressly welcome for national and international research work, individuals, institutions and organisations for the Animal Protection Research Prize in the category of outstanding research achievements in accordance with the 3Rs principle. Researchers based in Germany who are involved in 3R research are encouraged to measure their work in a global context. The Young Scientist Award recognises the 3R work of young scientists in Germany.

The Animal Protection Research Prize ceremony is expected to take place in Berlin in September 2026.

Information on Participation

Applications for the Animal Protection Research Prize for outstanding research achievements in accordance with the 3Rs principle are accepted exclusively via nominations (self-nominations are not permitted). Self-nominations may also be submitted for the Young Scientist Award. National 3R centres (e.g. see <https://www.bf3r.de/angebote/linklisten/3r-zentren-und-informationsplattformen/> or https://www.bundesnetzwerk-3r.de/SiteGlobals/Forms/Deutschlandkarte/Deutschlandkarte_Formular.html) as well as the management or institute directors of national research institutions in the field of life and natural sciences and German animal welfare organisations that have defined the protection of laboratory animals as a priority area of their work are entitled to nominate candidates for all prize categories.

Family members (spouses or partners and close relatives) cannot be nominated. Any documents that have already been awarded an animal welfare prize at the time of nomination or submitted for this purpose must be identified as such.

Nominations and applications must be submitted digitally via the easy-Online platform (see above) by 12 April 2026. Details and required documents requested on the nomination platform can be found in advance in the FAQs, the nomination form and the application form (<https://www.bmleh.de/DE/themen/tiere/versuchtstiere/tierschutzforschungspreis-ausschreibung.html>). In particular, the cover sheet with the original signature of the nominator must be sent by 19 April 2026 at the latest by post to

Bundesinstitut für Risikobewertung (BfR)
Deutsches Zentrum zum Schutz von Versuchstieren (Bf3R)
Max-Dohrn-Str. 8-10
10589 Berlin

Applications from young scientists must be accompanied by a letter of support from the institute management with an original signature. Nominations and applications received after this date will not be considered. The nomination or application must be written in German or English. Submitted documents will not be returned.

The complete announcement and current information on the Animal Protection Research Prize can be found on the BMLEH website <https://www.bmleh.de/DE/themen/tiere/versuchtstiere/tierschutzforschungspreis-ausschreibung.html>

Advice and organisation of the Animal Protection Research Prize

The BMLEH is advised by an independent award committee on the presentation of the Animal Protection Research Prize. The award committee is composed of scientific experts in the field of life sciences, representatives of Germany's 3R centres and scientific representatives of animal welfare organisations that have defined the protection of laboratory animals as a priority area of their work.

The call for entries, the award committee and the awarding of the Animal Protection Research Prize are managed by the German Centre for the Protection of Laboratory Animals (Bf3R). On behalf of the German Federal Government, the Bf3R is committed to improving the protection and welfare of laboratory animals not only nationally, but also in Europe and at an international level. Among other

things, the Bf3R promotes research projects for the development of alternative methods to animal testing. More information about the Bf3R can be found on the website <https://www.bf3r.de/en/>