

Call for Abstracts

Animal Research Ethics as Interaction of Research Ethics, Animal Ethics and (Animal Protection) Law. International Perspectives on Theoretical and Cultural Differences

An interdisciplinary European retreat for young scholars

Sept 5-9, 2022 at Hannover Medical School, Germany

Deadline for abstracts: **Feb 21, 2022**

Animal experiments are controversially discussed in society and science, but distortions are also apparent between **animal ethics and biomedical research ethics**. For some years now, efforts have been made to reconnect animal ethics and research ethics in particular. This one-week, international retreat organized by the **Institute for Ethics, History and Philosophy of Medicine** at the **Hannover Medical School (MHH)** is intended to address questions of the conception and implementation of a (more) international **animal research ethics in the context of basic and translational biomedical research**.

In detail, the retreat will examine the **interplay between research ethics, animal ethics and (animal welfare) laws**. In doing so, cultural differences will also be considered, which influence the manifestations of the concepts up to the actual regulations (with a focus on Europe). This examination is necessary to enable a plausible conception of a common animal research ethics as well as to better understand the current implementation of such an ethics: How and to what extent could national and cultural differences be reduced? How could related problematic practices be addressed (e.g., "ethics dumping", the outsourcing of research to countries with less stringent legal requirements)? Furthermore, the retreat will address how realistic international efforts actually are, and what influence cultural, religious, and political interests might have.

Conference theses

Eight predefined theses guide the discussions that will be stimulated by the participating young scholars as well as the invited presentations by experts (see below):

- The task of a (more) international animal research ethics is to take a mediating position between animal ethics and research ethics. **(T1)**
- Animal ethics tends to absolute positions, research ethics to weighing processes in animal experimentation ethics. **(T2)**
- Operationalizing benefits and harms in trade-offs is challenging, as both are poorly quantifiable and the concrete benefit of an experiment is somewhat uncertain, while the harm to the research animals is manifest. **(T3)**
- (Animal) ethics can justify universal demands, but law can only justify particular national and international demands. **(T4)**

- The national differences in law, but also in theory, can be traced back to different cultural and/or religious imprints and make it difficult to develop common (best practice) standards. (T5)
- For the harmonization/internationalization of animal research ethics, scientific standards and positioning (guidelines, recommendations, position papers, etc.) are more decisive than legal requirements. (T6)
- Approving authorities for animal experiments must work according to internationally uniform criteria so that problems such as “ethics dumping” can be prevented. (T7)
- The overarching goal of a (more) international animal research ethics is to reduce animal experimentation or to improve the quality of research. (T8)

The following experts have confirmed their participation so far:

- Prof. **André Bleich** (Hannover Medical School)
- **Alice DiConcetto**, LL.M (Animal Law Europe)
- Prof. **Herwig Grimm** (University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna)
- Dr. **Kathrin Herrmann** (Animal Protection Commissioner of Berlin)
- Prof. **Peter Kunzmann** (University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover)
- Prof. **Helena Röcklinsberg** (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)
- Prof. **Peter Sandøe** (University of Copenhagen)

Participation

The number of participants is **limited to 15 young scholars** (i.e., doctoral candidates and postdocs up to five years after thesis defense) **from Germany and other European countries**. Scholars from non-European countries are welcome to apply as well but preference will be given to European candidates. The **conference language will be English**, with the exception of a public evening lecture. Participants receive a financial **compensation for travel up to 300 € (Germany) and 600 € (other countries)**, respectively. Accommodation (incl. dinner each day) will be provided.

If you are interested to participate in the interdisciplinary retreat, we expect an oral presentation (about 20 min) that addresses one of the conference theses. Further, all participants are given the possibility to contribute to a shared publication on animal research ethics.

Application

Your application should include:

- an anonymized abstract (max. 1000 words) including
- a clearly indicated thematic allocation to one of the eight conference theses (T1-T8)

- a short curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages) and
- a publication list (max. 1 page).

Please send your application to animalresearchethics@mh-hannover.de until **February 21, 2022** and clearly indicate in the subject line of your e-mail the conference thesis your abstract deals with. The selection of candidates will be based on thematic relevance and quality of the abstract as well as on previous scientific qualifications. All applicants will be informed about the acceptance of their proposed talk by April 2022 at the latest.

Organization

Dr. phil. Marcel Mertz (Project lead)

Dr. PH Hannes Kahrass (Project lead)

Felicitas Selter, PhD (Coordinator)

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