

# BASEL DECLARATION SOCIETY

## Report 2017 – 2018



### EDITORIAL

#### Dear Members, Signers and Supporters of the Basel Declaration and its Society,

This year the Basel Declaration Society held its first conference on another continent and it was a raving success. The 5th International Basel Declaration Society (BDS) Conference on "Openness and Transparency: Building Trust in Animal Research" was held at swissnex in San Francisco from Feb 14 – 15, 2018. This is the first conference in the USA brought together over 100 participants representing all major stakeholders from Universities, granting agencies, animal welfare and biomedical research organizations, science communicators and journalists. The excellent presentations and venue at swissnex provided the perfect framework for two days of lively and productive discussions. During this conference, our US colleagues initiated the activities that resulted in an open letter by "speaking of research" calling for more openness concerning animal research. This letter was signed by several hundred scientists and published in USA Today on June 20, 2018. In my editorial last year, I wished that "this conference will initiate the development of a unified approach to openness and transparency concerning all issues surrounding the use of animal models for research in the USA" and I am very happy that this goal has been achieved already!

Another important take home message from this conference is the fact that with traditional media, we scientists face increasing problems to reach the young generation, who will make up the next generation of leaders. Over the year, we have started discussions with the young BDS board members to begin developing a communication strategy that allows us to reach out to the young generation. I find this challenge exciting and refreshing and hope that we will be able to have an impact in how the next generation leaders sees the positive impact of animal research in the life sciences on medical progress to the ultimate benefit of patients.

For the first time in 2018, the BDS Award for Education in Animal Research went to a nominee from the African continent. The awardee, Dr. Faez Amokrane Nait Mohamed is Assistant Professor at the University of Sciences and Technology Houari Boumediene in Algeria. He will now organize courses at his home University to teach graduate students how to conduct animal experiments adhering to the highest ethical and scientific standards. I hope that that Dr. Mohamed's wish to establish such courses for scientists in the entire Magreb region will be met with success.

This annual report also includes a report by Dr. Vijay Pal Singh, one of our Indian BDS ambassadors, who organized an international conference on "Recent Advances in 3Rs and Laboratory Animal Science" in Delhi, India. This is testi-

mony of our efforts to establish equal standards of ethically responsible animal research around the world. We are grateful to Dr. Singh for supporting these efforts and we hope that ambassadors in other countries will follow his example - and please let us know when you do so. Such efforts are in the spirit of a grass-root organization like the Basel Declaration Society and benefit animal welfare all over the world!

These activities require significant financial resources and the BDS is grateful to all its institutional sponsors that generously support our activities every year. Without their support the organization of conferences like the one in San Francisco would not be possible. In addition, the BDS needs the financial support of all individual signers and members of the BDS. For a grass-root organization, every even small financial support is essential and I kindly ask all BDS members to please pay their annual membership fees of \$/CHF 50, €50 or £40 at the beginning of the year and/or to make a donation if you are an individual signer and/or supporter of the Basel Declaration. Using PayPal allows for easy payment of your membership fee and donation!

In addition, the number of our institution members is constantly increasing. I would like you to consider convincing your organization/institution to join the BDS as an institutional member if they have not yet done so. Endorsing the Basel Declaration is becoming an important asset that goes beyond the 3Rs in times of increasing public pressure to be open about animal research and adhere to the highest ethical standards of animal experimentation. The BDS is the only international and completely independent organization that supports researchers from both academia and industry. As we are a non-profit grass-root organization every donation goes a long way and is used to support activities to the benefit of the animal and life science research community around the globe. Please let us know if you want us contact your institution/organization to discuss an institutional BDS membership.

As the year 2018 comes to a close, I wish you all a peaceful and relaxing holiday season and a good start into 2019. In looking forward to interacting with you also next year, I remain with best regards and wishes!

**Prof. Dr. Rolf Zeller**  
President of the Basel Declaration Society



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## ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

- October 4, 2017  
Media Training  
The BDS hosted a professional Media Training for interested Life Science students as well as Life Science researchers. The Media Training was held at the Basel Declaration Society's headquarters in Zurich and was complimentary.
- February 14, 2018  
General Assembly  
Venue: San Francisco, US
- February 14–15, 2018  
5<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Basel Declaration Society «Openness and Transparency: Building Trust in Animal Research»  
Venue: San Francisco, US



- March 2 – May, 2018  
Maurizio Crestani, Giuliano Grignaschi, Fabio Luzi, and Federica Riva organized a course on laboratory animal care  
Venue: Milano, IT
- June 22, 2018  
Talk by Nuno Franco about the BDS during the Communication and Transparency session at the 4<sup>th</sup> SPCAL Congress  
Venue: Braga, PT
- July 7–11, 2018  
BDS activities were advertised at the booth of the consortium for public outreach on animal research at the Society for Neuroscience Conference  
Venue: San Diego, US

## PUBLICATIONS

- Summary of the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the BDS in San Francisco, written by Tom Holder, Speaking of Research  
[> more](#)
- Animal Testing, encyclopedia entry, by Nuno Franco  
[> more](#)
- MiceTimes #16  
Preventing diseases and avoiding disasters  
October 2017  
[> more](#)
- MiceTimes #17  
The rhythm of life - Nobel Prize in Medicine for the inner clock  
June 2018  
[> more](#)
- Q&A  
The BDS has sent out 6 newsletters with questions and answers all about animal research to the EU parliament
- Interviews about Animal Research  
Video Q&A's about Animal Research were conducted during the Media Training at the headquarters of the Basel Declaration Society by Life Science students and -researchers  
[> more](#)
- Letter to the Editor  
As a response to the article «Auch Tiere sind nur Menschen», Tagesanzeiger, October 26, 2018  
[> more](#)

## REPORT OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> BDS CONFERENCE IN SAN FRANCISCO

The highlight in 2018 was the 5<sup>th</sup> international BDS conference on “Openness and Transparency: Building Trust in Animal Research” taking place at swissnex in San Francisco from Feb 14 – 15, 2018.



The president of the Basel Declaration Society, Rolf Zeller, was able to welcome more than 100 North American and European scientists, representatives from advocacy groups, funding agencies, communications staff, and animal welfare officers from Universities and companies.



On day 1 of the conference, two plenary sessions with ten talks covering a variety of aspects as well as four workshops on different topics took place. The workshops focussed on these four topics:

1. Openness and transparency in animal research
2. Outreach to students and general public
3. Science communication and social networks
4. Ethics and 3RS

The goal of the workshops was to interact, exchange opinions as well as experience and finally to generate policy papers that captured and summarized the findings and conclusions. The workshop groups were defined in advance, the participants constructed a draft of these policy papers under the guidance of their workshop leaders. During the workshops the policy papers were finalized and presented to the audience on day 2. Furthermore, on day 2 another plenary session with three talks and a panel discussion took place. The conference ended with a Media Training for a handful of interested participants. The feedback from attendees was extremely pleasing, the meeting location at swissnex was excellent, the conference was well organized and perfectly accompanied by our local liaison partners Sheila Fakurnejad and Margaux Mégevand (swissnex). Despite the busy schedule there was still enough time for fruitful discussions among the participants. It was an ideal opportunity to exchange experiences between the different stakeholders and for laying the foundation for future collaborations.



The BDS was extremely pleased with the conference and its outcome. We would like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone that was involved in making this conference happen.



#### Press Impressions

The complete report is available on the BDS website: [Conference Report San Francisco](#)

The policy papers and the talks of the conference can be found [here](#).

The meeting laid the foundation for an open letter on more transparency in animal research in the US that was signed by 600 scientists including four Nobel prize laureates. Read more about it [here](#).

There was even an [article](#) about it in Science.

Also "TheScientist" reported about [it](#).

[Press release](#) on the 5th conference of the BDS February 16, 2018

## REPORT BY DR. FAEZ AMOKRANE NAIT MOHAMED

### This year's awardee of the Basel Declaration Award for Education in Animal Research

My name is Faez Amokrane Nait Mohamed, I am an Algerian Assistant professor at the University of Sciences and Technology Houari Boumediene in Algeria and I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Basel Declaration Society for granting me this year's Award for Education in Animal Research and for financially supporting my participation at the „Introductory course in laboratory animal science, LTK Module 1E“ (FELASA cat.B accredited), University of Zurich, 13 - 17 August 2018. I learned a lot during this course that contributed substantially to my training in animal research. The knowledge I gained will be applied to organize similar practical and theoretical courses on animal experimentation and the 3R principles at my home university.

I would like to address a big and special thanks to Dr Philippe Bugnon and his excellent team for their unique training skills and support during the entire course. This will help me improve in what way I educate people at my home university.

During this 5-day intensive course, I obtained a complete overview on the Legislation and Ordinance on Animal Welfare and Protection and its application on everyday animal experimentation in compliance with the 3R principles and all major aspects of laboratory animal science (like housing, transport, nutrition, animal identification, genetic background) based on the FELASA recommendations. An excellent practical training on gentle handling of rodents, performance of routine analgesia, anaesthesia, standardization of experiments, euthanasia, and critical assessment of animal experiment results was performed in a high-level practical training room.

It is absolutely a must-attend course for every researcher and technician who uses animal models, not only because of the quality of the information being taught but also because of the exchange of experience in animal research and the brain-storming on how to improve animal welfare and to promote good laboratory practice by well and continuously educated animal users.

At my home university we are planning to first introduce the practical part of ethics in animal experimentation for the 3rd year graduate students and we also plan to organize a similar shorter course for the first year PhD students in biology. Secondly, the course will be optimized and opened for the entire scientific community that uses animal models in their research projects, not only in Algeria but in the whole Maghreb region.

Thank you very much Basel Declaration Society and University of Zurich.



*Faez Amokrane Nait Mohamed  
Winner of the BDS Award 2018*



## ARTICLE FROM DR VIJAY PAL SINGH

### Ambassador of the BDS

### Recent Advances in 3Rs and laboratory Animal Science

This article summarizes the outcome of an international conference on “Recent Advances in 3Rs and laboratory Animal Science” which was jointly organized by Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU, Delhi), Institute of Genomics & Integrative Biology (CSIR-IGIB, Delhi) and National Institute of Biologicals (NIB, Noida) on 25-26th November 2017 in Delhi, India. The conference was also preceded by two pre-conference workshops on “Experimental Design” by NC3Rs, UK and “Hygiene in Laboratory Animal Facilities” by Tecniplast, Italy. The organizers of the conference had chosen this topic of recent advances in 3Rs as it was very strongly felt that at the current stage, it was highly essential for our country to create awareness as well as a better understanding of this important concept of 3Rs to improve animal welfare as well as the quality of research. Therefore, it was believed that this conference would provide a platform to the Indian scientists for an enriching interaction with experienced international speakers from around the globe like NC3Rs (UK), ECVAM (EC), AAALAC (USA), Jackson Laboratory (USA), Tohoku University, Japan and several more along with our national experts in the field of laboratory animal science. This event not only increased our knowledge and understanding of the recent advances in 3Rs but also motivated all the participants to improve their standards towards animal welfare and actually implement the 3Rs as well as create much more robust experiments to obtain reliable and reproducible results, thus enabling them to perform high quality research and regulatory testing.

This event included participation of renowned keynote speakers, oral presentations and poster sessions related to recent advances in 3Rs from international and national professionals. Invited speakers and more than 300 participants from all over India and 10 different countries such as USA, UK, Australia, Japan, Korea, Sudan, Sri-lanka, Netherland, Singapore, Denmark came together to share and advance knowledge about recent advances in the 3Rs and Laboratory Animal Science. The participants of the conference consisted of scientists, post graduate students and veterinarians representing various research and educational institutes, universities, industry and various national and international laboratory animal associations. In this report, we have made an attempt to summarize the major presentations and discussions that took place at the pre-conference workshops and the conference related to the 3Rs for wider dissemination of this knowledge.

In India, the experiments on animals are strictly regulated by the Committee for the Purpose of Control & Supervision of Experiments on Animals (CPCSEA) which is a statutory body under “Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1960)” and promotes the implementation of 3Rs through the act, rules, guidelines and further through the CPCSEA nominees in the Institutional Animal Ethics Committees (IAEC) of all institutes in the country using laboratory animals. With this, the awareness about the concept of the 3Rs is continuously increasing but the understanding to the level which could lead to actual implementation is less. Therefore, it was thought that this conference would provide a platform to the Indian scientists for an enriching interaction with experienced international speakers from around the globe.

The conference was also preceded by two pre-conference workshops on “Experimental Design” by NC3Rs, UK and “Hygiene in Laboratory Animal Facilities” by Tecniplast, Italy. The delegates attending the hands on workshop on “Experimental Design” got a deeper insight about the key elements of experimental design, analysis of the results and their reporting for publications in reputed international journals as per ARRIVE guidelines. They also gathered information about the NC3Rs experimental design resources and were given live demonstration of Experimental Design Assistant (EDA) which is available on their website for use by scientists around the globe.

The workshop on “Hygiene in Animal Facilities” was also crucial as a good hygiene status is imperative to high quality animal husbandry, which is essential to minimize the introduction and spread of infectious diseases to ensure that pathogenic or opportunistic microorganisms are not introduced into the Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) or immune-compromised animals.

This event included participation of renowned keynote speakers, oral presentations and poster sessions related to recent advances in 3Rs from international and national professionals. Invited speakers and more than 300 participants from all over India and 10 different countries attended. This scientific gathering was explicit regarding the recent global advances in replacement, reduction and refinement (3Rs) of animals used in research and will certainly help in the actual implementation in research, education and regulatory testing which in turn will enable us to improve the quality of research as well as animal welfare in India.

### Pre Conference Workshop on Experimental Design:

The workshop on Experimental Design was organized by Dr. Mark Prescott, Dr. Nathalie Percie Du Sert and Dr. Viki Hurst from National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs), UK, and included presentations, demonstrations and interactive exercises. The experts expressed their deep concerns regarding the poor reproducibility and reliability of biomedical research using animals and the major reason for this was the poor quality experimental design, analysis and reporting. Therefore, this workshop was planned with the following learning objectives.

- To learn more about current issues with the design, analysis and reporting of animal experiments
- To refresh the knowledge of the key elements of experimental design and learn to report them in publications
- To give information about the NC3Rs experimental design resources
- Live demonstration of the Experimental Design Assistant (EDA)

Dr. Mark Prescott (Director of Policy and Outreach, NC3Rs) focused mainly on the implementation of the ARRIVE Guidelines ([www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines](http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines)) which consist of a 20 item checklist summarizing the minimum information necessary to describe in vivo studies comprehensively and transparently. These guidelines, which have been endorsed by over 1000 journals internationally, help to ensure reproducibility and maximize the output of animal research and to avoid unnecessary animal use.

Dr. Nathalie Percie Du Sert (Head of Experimental Design and Reporting, NC3Rs) and Dr Viki Hurst demonstrated the Experimental Design Assistant (EDA; <https://eda.nc3rs.org.uk>) which is a web application with a supporting website, that helps researchers design robust animal experiments by increasing the transparency of the experimental plan and providing feedback to improve it. The key features of the EDA are (i) A computer-aided design tool, to develop a visual representation of your experimental plan (ii) Critical feedback on your experimental plan, using computer-based logical reasoning (iii) Suggestions for appropriate statistical analysis (iv) Sample size calculators (v) Generation of a randomised sequence for allocation of animals to treatment groups (vi) Support for allocation concealment and blinding.

They also demonstrated the CAMARADES-NC3Rs Systematic Review Facility (SyRF; <http://syrf.org.uk>) which is a free-to-use online platform for researchers to perform systematic reviews and meta-analysis of animal studies.

The platform provides guidance for the entire process and allows some of the tasks to be automated, using data mining and machine learning.

The workshop was highly appreciated by the participants who were now much more confident in doing reliable and reproducible research by planning much better and robust experimental designs and obtaining better results. Participants also felt that knowing the ARRIVE guidelines would now enable them to plan their future research activities much more appropriately so that they may report and publish their research outcomes in some of the best journals of the world.

### Preconference Workshop on Hygiene in Laboratory Animal Facilities:

“Happy and healthy animals make good science”, so a good hygiene status is imperative to high quality husbandry. It has been noticed that in Indian scenarios, we often underestimate the importance of proper cage sanitizing even though it has a critical impact on animal health as well as welfare. The workshop on Hygiene in Laboratory Animal Facilities was organized by Tecniplast, Italy in association with Samitek Instruments, India.

In fact, it is essential to minimize the introduction and spread of infectious diseases to ensure that pathogenic or opportunistic micro-organisms are not introduced in to Specific pathogen Free or immune-compromised animals or the experimental biologic hazards are completely destroyed before these cages are used for housing other animals.

The speakers of the workshop were Mr. Franco Mondini (Techniplast, Italy); Dr. Amol G.Ganla (Medivue Technologies Pvt. Ltd.), Mr. Riccardo Saggin (IWT, Italy), Mr. Tomas Tucek (BMT -MMM group), Dr. Rajesh Anand (Samitek Instruments) who are experts in the area of disinfection, sterilization and washing solutions. These experts talked on critical topics such as (i) Is your cage clean? The need for a validated cage sanitizing process (ii) Damages on cages surface and corrosion – causes and prevention (iii) How to decontaminate Individually Ventilated Cages (IVC) and Laminar Air Flow equipment by using Decon Technology (iv) Sterilization: Basics for animal facilities.

This workshop was also very useful as participants were exposed to the fact that appropriate washing, sanitization and decontamination of cages is very crucial to animal welfare as well as to get healthy animals for research which in turn is required to obtain accurate results.

Dr. Vijay Pal Singh, Organising Secretary, LASACON 2017



## FACTS & FIGURES ABOUT THE BASEL DECLARATION SOCIETY

### Members

Individual Members of the BDS  
September 30, 2018: 259 (2017: 263)  
Institutional Members  
September 30, 2018: 15 (2017: 12)

### Signers of the Basel Declaration

Individual Signers  
September 30, 2018: 4682 (2017: 4645)  
Institutional Signers  
September 30, 2018: 60 (2017: 52)

### Ambassadors

September 30, 2018: 179 (2017: 174)

### Twitter

In April 2013 we started a Twitter account under the username @BaselDec. As of September 30, 2018, we count 595 followers (2017: 498).

### PayPal

Since the summer of 2013, PayPal has been installed on the Basel Declaration Website. This significantly simplifies the process of paying membership fees by our members from around the world. Since November 2015 there is the possibility to transfer fees and donations in EURO, US Dollars or Swiss Francs.

## BECOME A MEMBER

We look for your support to show publicly that we are committed to the 3R principles (Replace, Reduce, Refine), i.e., plan and carry out animal testing in your area of expertise with the utmost care, and contribute to providing the public with open and transparent information about animal experiments.

We encourage scientists, veterinarians, animal caretakers and everyone with an interest in supporting the Basel Declaration principles for animal research to become a member of our society:

For individuals  
CHF \$ 50 | €45 | £40  
[Link](#)



For institutions/organizations  
CHF \$ 500 | €450 | £400  
[Link](#)



Or you can become a Signer and you just sign the Basel Declaration – free of charge  
[Link](#)

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