

Dear Carolyn Thomas MS,

Chair of the Petitions Committee

Thank you for your letter dated 12 May 2025 regarding Petition P-06-1497: *End Welsh Government funding of animal experiments and divert funds to modern, human-relevant technologies*.

Please find below a formal response from Swansea University, provided on behalf of the institution by Professor Helen Griffiths, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation:

Swansea University recognises the ethical considerations and public concern surrounding the use of animals in research. We are committed to the highest standards of animal welfare and ethical conduct in all aspects of our research. While the University has not set a definitive timeline for ending all animal use in research, our practices reflect a strong commitment to the principles of the 3Rs — *Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement* — which guide the responsible use of animals in science.

In particular:

1. **Conservation-led research:** A significant portion of our animal research is conducted in the context of conservation, where the species under study is often the most appropriate model. For example, Swansea University's Centre for Sustainable Aquatic Research (CSAR) was awarded the Animal Health and Welfare Award at the 2025 Annual Aquaculture Awards (20 June 2025), recognising our dedication to the welfare and protection of aquatic species.
2. **Commitment to alternatives:** Where research relates to human health or biomedical advancement, animal models are used only when no viable alternative currently exists. Swansea University actively supports and invests in the development of alternative methodologies, including advanced *in vitro* systems and computational models. Notably, the University is a UK leader in developing *in vitro* approaches for nanoparticle safety assessment — further details can be found on our [Nanotechnology and Safety Research page](#).
3. **Governance and ethical review:** All animal research proposals undergo rigorous ethical scrutiny through our Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB), which ensures that animals are only used when essential, and that research design minimises harm and maximises welfare.
4. **Training and oversight:** All staff and students involved in animal research are trained and regularly assessed to ensure compliance with legal, ethical and scientific standards. This includes adherence to the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPA) and ongoing evaluation of competency.

Swansea University is also a signatory to the Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK and is committed to transparency regarding the use of animals in research.

More information about our approach can be found here: [Animals in Research – Swansea University](#)

We hope this response provides clarity on our current position and the measures we are taking to minimise and ultimately reduce the need for animal use in research. Please do not hesitate to contact us if further information is required.

Yours sincerely,

Olivia Wild

On behalf of Professor Helen Griffiths

Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research & Innovation

Olivia Wild

Swyddog Portffolio (SLT) | Portfolio Officer (SLT)