

Dear colleagues, participants and supporters of WC8 and other readers of these proceedings,

Just over seven months ago over 800 delegates joined us in Montréal for five days of exciting discussions on the status of Three Rs alternatives and animal use in the life sciences. We met old friends, made new friends and together worked towards our shared goal to fully implement the Three Rs in biomedical and biological science. Under the banner of “Together its possible”, representatives from 52 countries joined in discussing issues related to replacement, reduction and refinement of animal use.

The scientific program was intentionally broad. We wanted to encompass the strides made towards implementing new technologies for regulatory testing. However, we also wanted to look at new approaches for minimizing and refining animal use in biomedical science, as well as in diverse research areas, such as agricultural and wildlife research. This resulted in an astonishing 37 scheduled and 17 additional scientific sessions, with over 200 oral and over 400 poster presentations!

We could not have been more pleased with the turnout for the meeting, the quality and diversity of the information presented, and the active discussions that were generated both during and outside of the sessions. To those active participants, we would like to thank you for making the Eighth World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences (WC8) a success Your valued contributions detailed in the next sections made this Congress one to be remembered. In his Conference Report on WC8, the Editor in chief of *ALTEX*, Franz Gruber said:

“For the first time an animal care committee organized the World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences. The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) took this chance to promote Refinement on a broad scale. But those who might have expected – or dreaded – a pure Refinement Congress, were pleasantly disappointed. All Rs were equally well represented. And Refinement simply took up the place it deserves; perhaps it really was given too little space at previous Congresses.”
(http://altweb.jhsph.edu/bin/i/altex_2011_4_360_361_ReportCalendar1.pdf)

A unique achievement that will remain as the WC8 legacy is The Montréal Declaration on the Synthesis of Evidence to advance the 3Rs principles in science. This declaration calls for a change in the culture of planning, executing, reporting, reviewing and translating animal research via the promotion and coordination of Synthesis of Evidence of animal studies. By endorsing this Declaration, the Congress agreed to actively promote the use of structured ways to advance the implementation of the Three Rs. At the congress, an exploratory meeting of scientists interested in the field of Systematic Reviews (one type of synthesis of evidence used in medical research) of animal studies was held, and it was agreed to start an international collaboration to further develop this field.

For those readers who were present at WC8 it was our great pleasure to welcome you to Montréal and we sincerely hope you found the WC8 to be both an informative and fun event. We are pleased to present the proceedings of the Eighth World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences (WC8), which we hope will remind you of the important discussions held during those days. For those of you who were unable to join us, we hope that these proceedings serve as an inspiration, and encourage you to join us for WC9.

We hope to see you all in Prague in 2014!




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