



## Dear Participants of the 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences,

The abstract book contains 614 abstracts of the plenary lectures of 272 oral presentations and 342 posters to be presented at the 5th World Congress on Alternatives in August 2005 in Berlin, Germany. The programme and the abstract book allow you to make your best selection of presentations among seven themes, which will be discussed in 29 sessions, 15 workshops and in the poster sessions.

Usually, the first author of an abstract is slotted to give the oral presentation or to be present during the poster session to discuss your comments and questions. Otherwise, the presenting author is marked with an asterisk (\*).

We hope that you will find the abstracts particularly helpful to set priorities when two or more sessions are scheduled at the same time. In case you do not manage to attend a session or to meet an author, the contact addresses are given for each contributor.

It is obvious from the list of sponsors, the programme and from the number of abstracts submitted that the most important topic of the 5th World Congress will be *in vitro* testing of cosmetic ingredients, in particular acute local toxicity testing. More abstracts have been submitted to sessions and workshops of Theme 5 “Safety testing, validation and risk assessment” than to any of the other themes. Moreover, more than 60 abstracts have been submitted to session 5.4 “Development and validation of alternatives for dermal toxicity testing”. We have, therefore, decided to hold an additional session on *in vitro* dermal toxicity testing. According to the number of abstracts submitted, session 5.6 on “*In vitro* approaches for determining acute systemic toxicity” is the second most popular topic, probably since ECVAM and ICCVAM are collaborating on a project to predict acute oral toxicity from cytotoxicity data. Finally, session 7.2 “Innovative approaches for alternative methods development” is number three in the hierarchy of the most attractive sessions.

The high scientific quality of the abstracts demonstrates that the development of *in vitro* methods is currently at the forefront of research in the life sciences and no longer a by-product of cell and molecular biology. The EU Commission as well as the 25 Member States should, therefore, provide more funding to meet the challenges of EU Directive 86/609 for the protection of experimental animals and in particular those of the 7th Amendment of the EU Cosmetics Directive and the new EU Chemicals Directive (REACH).

The staff of the *ALTEX* editorial office has enjoyed providing you with the abstract volume. We hope that you and all your colleagues will enjoy the 5th World Congress in Berlin, in particular by meeting colleagues from all over the world, who are actively engaged in promoting the 3Rs Principle of Bill Russell and Rex Burch.

With best wishes  
from the *ALTEX* Team in Zurich (CH)