

FENS-JNS-SfN JOINT STATEMENT ON THE USE OF ANIMALS IN RESEARCH

Our Stance

The Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), the Japan Neuroscience Society (JNS) and the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) strongly advocate the responsible use of animals in biological and biomedical research. Animal models are vital and irreplaceable for scientific progress and in combating the devastation of human neurological and psychiatric diseases, which affect more than 1 billion people worldwide, and for improving veterinary health. Animal models must be used appropriately and within humane guidelines, carrying out research that maximizes scientific gain with the least amount of animal suffering. As scientists pursue these advances, we strive to replace and reduce the number of animals wherever scientifically justifiable, and continuously refine experimental procedures to improve animal welfare.

The Impact

Animal research provides the basis for our understanding of nervous system function and the general physiology and biology of both humans and animals. It has been essential to nearly every major scientific breakthrough in neuroscience as well as to medical advances improving and saving the lives of humans and animals in the last century and will be equally essential to the next century's progress. Recent findings in animal research have led to a greater understanding of the mechanisms that underlie conditions such as Parkinson's disease, stroke, stress, and drug addiction, and produced successful treatments and knowledge that will enable future advances for both humans and animals.

Research Obstruction Must Stop, Education and Research Must Continue

Democratic forms of discourse have led to national and international laws and regulations that guide research, and should continue to be the basis for their further development. While we support freedom of speech and peaceful airing of diverse views, it is unacceptable that—in the pursuit of better health, understanding of disease and scientific progress—researchers, their families, associated businesses and communities face harassment, violence, and intimidation by animal rights extremists. As part of our dedication to democratic discussion and dialogue, our scientific communities are committed to expanding public awareness and information about the irreplaceable historic impact of responsible animal research and its continued essential role in scientific and medical progress.