

# Minutes of the Board meeting

15 July 2013

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## Present:

### Board:

Professor Ian Kimber OBE (IK, Chair)  
Dr Phil Botham (PB)  
Dr Malcolm Skingle CBE (MS)  
Professor Jamie Davies (JD, Deputy Chair)  
Dr Tony Peatfield (ACP)  
Dr Ian Ragan (IR)  
Dr Vicky Robinson (VR)  
Mr Neil Yates (NY)  
Dr Carl Westmoreland (CW)

### Office:

Dr Rubina Ahmed (RA)  
Dr Kathryn Chapman (KC)  
Dr Joanna Edwards (JE, *for Item 2 only*)  
Dr Anthony Holmes (AH)  
Dr Mark Prescott (MP)  
Mr Dan Richards (DR)  
Ms Ashley Scott, Secretariat (AS)  
Ms Suzanne McArdle (SM, *for Item 2 only*)  
Dr Cathy Vickers (CV)

## Apologies:

Dr Lesley Heppell  
Professor Maggie Dallman

## 1. Welcome

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the twenty seventh meeting of the NC3Rs Board.
- 1.2 Members welcomed Dr Carl Westmoreland, Unilever, new Chair of the Studentship Panel.
- 1.3 Members were reminded that this was Professor Kimber's last meeting as Board Chair, and that [Professor Stephen Holgate CBE](#), University of Southampton, had been appointed as his successor and would take up his appointment on 1 August.

## 2. Infrastructure for Impact Awards – application review

- 2.1 Members reviewed 16 applications received for the [Infrastructure for Impact Award scheme](#), which was established in late 2012. The aim of this scheme is to fund 3Rs infrastructure, equipment and networking across laboratories and institutes.
- 2.2 Four awards were made:
  - [Professor Paul Flecknell](#), Newcastle University 'Training and teaching resources to underpin implementation of refinement of *in-vivo* studies' (£64,556);
  - [Professor Malcolm Macleod](#), University of Edinburgh 'ivSyRMAF- the CAMRADES-NC3Rs in vivo systematic review and meta-analysis facility' (£504,931);
  - [Dr John Marshall](#), Queen Mary University of London 'Multi-user, multi-centre MRI to reduce and refine the use of mice in cancer and trauma research' (£250,000);
  - [Professor Valerie Speirs](#), University of Leeds 'SEARCHbreast: A virtual resource to facilitate sharing breast cancer materials and knowledge to benefit the 3Rs' (£495,766);

### 3. Minutes of the meeting on 29 January 2013

- 3.1 The minutes from the January 2013 meeting were agreed to be an accurate record of the discussions with one minor amendment: the addition of an attendee's name which was accidentally omitted.
- 3.2 There were no matters arising from the previous Board meeting.

### 4. Summary of activities

- 4.1 Members noted progress with a range of activities:
- Programmes and planning of workshops and symposia;
  - Peer review of applications for other research funders;
  - Changes to the biennial grant holder meeting;
  - Development of the Experimental Design Assistant (EDA);
  - Various working groups led by the Office.
- 4.2 Members noted progress with the development of the new NC3Rs website and the large amount of work that this entailed;
- 4.3 Members noted that recruitment was underway for two posts for the chemicals and consumer products programmes and that in the interim the work had been reallocated to other staff where possible to ensure that momentum was maintained;
- 4.4 Members commended the Office on the significant volume of work and variety of activities being led by staff.

### 5. Research funding update

- 5.1 Members noted:
- Recruitment of new funding panel members with 12 new members appointed to the [Grant Assessment Panel](#) and 10 to the [Studentship Assessment Panel](#) including, Dr Carl Westmoreland as the new Chair of the Studentship Panel;
  - [Six Project and eight Pilot Study awards in July 2013](#);
  - [Two David Sainsbury Fellowship awards in April 2013](#);
  - A new strategic award call in the area of '[Imaging Technology Development for the 3Rs](#)'.

### 6. CRACK IT 2013 update

- 6.1 KC gave members an update on the CRACK IT Challenges and Solutions.

#### *CRACK IT Challenges*

- 6.2 Members were informed that:
- Since 2011 there has been an increase of in the number of Challenge winners with an SME partner from 60 to 90%;
  - The 2012 CRACK IT Challenge Phase 2 interviews were held on 10 and 11 July with ten applicants across the four Challenges being interviewed;

- Two awards were made for [Challenge 10: PreDART](#) and [Challenge 7: Rodent Little Brother](#). For Challenge 9 DRGNET the award decision was deferred, and both applicants were given additional time to complete the Phase 1 objectives. No award was made to Challenge 8: ProBE IT;
- Five challenges have been developed for the [2013 competition](#), and additional funding has been secured from the Alzheimer's Research UK and the Technology Strategy Board (TSB).

#### *CRACK IT Solutions*

#### 6.3 Members were informed that:

- The CRACK IT Solutions funding scheme had been launched in April 2013;
- There are currently [12 Solutions on the CRACK IT website](#), six from academia and six from industry;
- The first award was made to [Professor Robin Williams](#), Royal Holloway, University of London, to support the development of a *Dictyostelium* model for emetic liability and palatability testing, in partnership with GlaxoSmithKline and Syngenta.

### 7. New Technology Strategy Board collaboration

- 7.1 Members were informed that the KC and CS had met with Paul Mason, Head of Development at the [TSB](#) to discuss the Emerging Technologies and Industries programme and the potential for non-animal technologies.
- 7.2 As a result the Office was working with the TSB to organise two workshops (in July and August) to assess the opportunities for new technologies to reduce animal use, to estimate the animal and financial savings of using these technologies and also to identify changes in the current business model that would be needed to take full advantage of them.
- 7.3 It was agreed that Members would be updated on progress with this collaboration at the next Board meeting.

### 8. Communications strategy and current plans

- 8.1 DR gave an overview of the NC3Rs Communications and Engagement Strategy for 2014 - 2019.
- 8.2 Members noted that the strategy covered the next quinquennial review period and would focus on highlighting the successes and major advances from the NC3Rs activities over its first ten years with both scientific and public stakeholders. Key areas identified were:
- Launch of the new NC3Rs website and development of additional content;
  - Continued development of engaging digital content for a range of audiences e.g. [NC3Rs blog](#) and podcasts;
  - The launch and ongoing development of the NC3Rs public engagement programme;
  - Organisation of events in 2014 to celebrate the NC3Rs ten year anniversary;
  - Members were informed that the final communications strategy would be presented at the October meeting.

## 9. MRC feedback on 2012 Annual Report

9.1 Members were informed by ACP that the:

- The [NC3Rs 2012 Annual Report](#) had been considered by the MRC Management Board in April 2013. Feedback was very positive;
- MRC had co-ordinated the recruitment of the new NC3Rs Board Chair and that, following approval of the appointment by David Willets, the Minister for Universities and Science, Professor Stephen Holgate CBE had been appointed;
- VR had submitted to the MRC a case for support as part of the Spending Review 15/16.

9.2 Members thanked the MRC for its feedback and support.

## 10. Coalition Pledge to work to reduce the use of animals – update

10.1 VR informed the Board that the Office continued to discuss opportunities to deliver the [Coalition Pledge](#) with Ministers and colleagues in other government departments.

## 11. Finance update

11.1 Members noted the management accounts and expenditure for FY 12/13.

## 12. AOB

12.1 Board members thanked IK for his Chairmanship and support of the NC3Rs over the previous five years and noted that he would continue as a Board Member in his capacity of Chair of the Grant Assessment Panel.

12.2 IK informed the Board that MS term as Board member had ended and thanked him for his contribution to the NC3Rs.

12.3 The next meeting of the NC3Rs Board would be held on 17 October 2013 [**Addendum:** date was subsequently changed to 10 October 2013].

NC3Rs

August 2013