

The use of formal agreements to achieve replacement in education: The experience of Russia and Ukraine

Nick Jukes (1), Elena Maroueva (2), Dmitry Leporsky (3), Corina Gericke (4)

- (1) InterNICHE, Leicester, England
- (2) InterNICHE Russia, Moscow, Russia
- (3) InterNICHE Ukraine, Kharkov, Ukraine
- (4) Doctors Against Animal Experiments, Braunschweig, Germany

Abstract

By 2011, nearly 40 formal agreements had been signed between humane education campaigners and universities across Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. Since 2005, when InterNICHE signed the first contracts with St Petersburg State Veterinary Academy and VelikieLuki State Agricultural Academy, adopting a strategy of formalising the collaboration with universities to achieve specific replacement-focused objectives has proved effective. InterNICHE National Contacts perform the majority of outreach and alliance-building with universities, and liaise internationally to combine the strengths and resources of the localised and the global in the process. InterNICHE pioneered the use of agreements in Russia, and InterNICHE and Doctors Against Animal Experiments (DAAE) (Germany) collaborate for those in the Ukraine. Typically the Agreements are signed by the Dean or Rector of the university along with the InterNICHE Co-ordinator and DAAE Project Manager. They usually detail the animal use to be replaced, and refer to curricular change at the level of department, faculty or whole university. Resources such as computer hardware, models, mannekins and software alternatives are usually provided by InterNICHE and DAAE. Media interest in the curricular transformation has been high. In many cases the agreements bring to an end the animal experiments and dissections and secure the implementation of alternatives; in others the project confirms and consolidates an existing change and secures implementation. By 2011, together they are saving an estimated 40,000 animals (vertebrates and invertebrates) from being killed annually. As one tool in the broader campaign for humane education, the successful use of agreements reflects a growing acceptance of replacement of animal experiments in education in former Soviet countries.

Introduction

By 2011, nearly 40 formal agreements had been signed between humane education campaigners and universities across Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. Since InterNICHE signed the first contracts with St Petersburg State Veterinary Academy and Velikie Luki State Agricultural Academy in 2005, adopting a strategy of formalising the collaboration with universities to achieve specific replacement-focused objectives has proved effective.

Outreach

InterNICHE National Contacts perform the majority of outreach and alliance-building with universities in their country, liaising internationally to combine the strengths and resources of the localised and the global. Contacts with universities have often been established following enquiries made by teachers, applications for support for humane education initiatives, meetings at scientific conferences, and student interest in alternatives. One element of the collaboration with universities has been the signing of formal agreements.

Formalising the collaboration

InterNICHE pioneered and continues to negotiate agreements in Russia, and collaborates with Doctors Against Animal Experiments (DAAE) (Germany) for those in the Ukraine. They usually detail the animal use to be replaced, and refer to curricular change at the level of department, faculty or whole university. Resources such as computer hardware, models, mannekins and software alternatives are usually provided by InterNICHE and DAAE.



Typically the agreements are signed by the Dean or Rector of the university along with the InterNICHE Co-ordinator and DAAE Project Manager.

Results and feedback

In many cases the agreements bring to an end the animal experiments and dissections and secure the implementation of alternatives; in others they confirm and consolidate an existing change and secure implementation. The universities value the enhancement of the education and training process with innovative tools and new technology, and appreciate international collaboration. Media interest in the curricular transformation has been high. By 2011, together they are saving an estimated 40,000 animals (vertebrates and invertebrates) from being killed annually.

Conclusion

The numbers of animal experiments and dissections ended and replaced with alternatives is significant, and the associated pedagogical, ethical and economic advantages for universities have been recognised by teachers, students and the media. As one tool in the broader campaign for humane education, the successful use of agreements reflects a growing acceptance of replacement in education in former Soviet countries.

Corresponding author

Nick Jukes
InterNICHE
98 Clarendon Park Road
Leicester LE2 3AE
England

tel: +44 116 210 9652
e-mail: coordinator@interniche.org

www.interniche.org

