



Subject:	Review of Scientific Merit of Animal Protocols
Source	Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)
Effective Date	04/13/26
Replaces:	02/08/21
Applies to:	Personnel involved in Research or Teaching involving animals.
Reference:	Animal Welfare Act; PHS Policy on Humane Care & Use of Laboratory Animals. Guide for the Care & Use of Laboratory Animals

The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) provides oversight of the institution's animal care and use program, ensuring compliance with federally mandated regulations, ethical standards, and institutional policies governing the humane use of animals in research and teaching at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz. The IACUC evaluates and reviews all activities related to the care and use of animals and determines if the proposed activities are in accordance with regulations.

Policy Statement

This policy outlines the IACUC's review of the scientific merit of animal research protocols and establishes the procedures that should be followed regarding issues of scientific merit.

A. Procedures

The goal of the IACUC is to prevent unnecessary use of animals in research that is unlikely to produce useful new information. The IACUC does not believe it is the responsibility of the committee to rigorously assess the scientific merit of each protocol.

B. Procedures for Implementation of Policy

- All protocols will be reviewed by at least three members of the IACUC. At least one of these reviewers will be a scientist.
- All reviewers will evaluate the justification provided by the Principal Investigator (PI) for the use of animals. They will present their findings and opinions to the committee.
- The committee will consider the reports and opinions of the reviewers and approve protocols where the potential for gaining useful new information appears to justify the use, number and degree of discomfort of the animals in the project.
- The IACUC can request review of the scientific merit of a protocol from sources outside the committee:
 - Counsel may be sought from consultants possessing expertise in the area of the protocol topic.
 - In the case of departmental or start-up funds, the IACUC will request confirmation from the departmental Chair or designee that the science related to the project has been reviewed.

Compliance and Accountability

In accordance with regulatory requirements, failure to comply with this policy will result in a review by the IACUC. Depending on the severity of the violation, you may be required to complete additional training, and your privileges to conduct animal research at CU Denver | Anschutz may be suspended or completely revoked.

If your research privileges are suspended, your funding agency (e.g., NIH) and relevant regulatory agencies (e.g., USDA) may be informed about your violation of federal and/or local policies regarding the humane use of animals. This notification will have a direct impact on your ongoing funding for animal-related research.