Alternatives Literature Search Request Form

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), National Agricultural Library (NAL); Animal Welfare Information Center (AWIC)

Last updated: August 2021

AWIC offers free 3Rs (replacement, reduction, refinement) alternatives literature searching services to help determine if alternatives can be incorporated into an animal use protocol and/or whether the protocol unnecessarily duplicates previous research. Both areas of information must be submitted to the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee as required by the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) Regulations (9 C.F.R. 2.31 (d)(ii-iii)(2020)).

All individuals requesting a literature search from AWIC should complete and submit this form to awic@usda.gov. All requests remain confidential and are NOT shared with anyone outside of the AWIC team.

Principal Investigator: 
Phone number: 
Email address: 

If possible, please provide your/the research protocol when submitting a literature search request. Providing the protocol ensures that we have sufficient information to complete a thorough literature search:

- If protocol is provided, only answer questions 9 – 12
- If a protocol is not able to be provided, please complete the entire form below:

1. Title of Animal Study Protocol:

2. General area of research: (e.g., cardiology, toxicology, lipid metabolism, immunology, etc.)

3. Type of protocol: Is the proposed study a research, teaching, or testing protocol?

4. Proposed animal species: (e.g., pigs, rats, dogs, primates, etc.)
5. How many animals will be used in this study?

6. List the specific names of the drugs being used (including anesthetics or analgesics).

7. Describe the methods and procedures using animals and the relevance to the study, paying particular attention to those procedures that may cause pain or distress to the animal.

8. Describe how the animals will be housed and how they will be handled (including how often).
9. List any keywords/terms related to your research/protocol that would be useful when conducting a search:


10. What databases have you previously searched? (Choose all that apply):

[ ] Medline  [ ] Biois  [ ] Agricola  [ ] Biological Abstracts
[ ] CAB  [ ] Scopus  [ ] Web of Science  [ ] Zoological Record

Other(s) (write below):


11. What range of years would you like AWIC to search? (We suggest including at least the past 5 years)

Database year(s): __________ to __________

12. Please provide the search strings previously used for this protocol below (if applicable):


AWIC will return literature search results within 10 business days from the day we confirm receipt of your request (unless otherwise noted). We will respond to let you know your request has been received. Please reach out to AWIC via email (awic@usda.gov) if you have any questions.