

Dear Colleagues,

Replacing the Use of Animals in Science Workshop 2026: request for inputs

We are excited to share that, with generous support from international and local partners, the South African Association for Laboratory Animal Science (SAALAS) will host a **Workshop on Replacing the Use of Animals in Science** in South Africa in late 2026. The workshop will be **free to attend** and will most likely be held in **Gauteng**.

Recent years have seen significant technological and other developments, which are increasingly providing possibilities for conducting more impactful science, whilst at the same time reducing the use of laboratory animals.

This event will be designed to support scientists and organisations across South Africa to consider how these new non-animal technologies and approaches could be utilised in South Africa, to the benefit of scientific quality and animal welfare. To ensure this event is of maximum value to participants, **we need your input** to best shape its specific content and focus. We are seeking information from individuals and institutions about the current challenges in transitioning to non-animal alternatives in your research facilities.

We invite you to **share your experiences, needs, and ideas** regarding the replacement of animals in research, testing, education or training. Some examples might include:

- **Specific models:** Are there specific non-animal models or technologies you have heard about and wish were available or more accessible in South Africa?
- **Toxicology models:** Would you like to find out more about New Approach Methodologies in chemical risk assessment? Are there non-animal methods that you haven't yet been able to fully adopt in your facility due to specific challenges?
- **Non-animal derived reagents:** Have you considered replacing animal-derived reagents or antibodies in your laboratory but faced barriers such as access, funding or training?
- **Sentinel animals:** Do you use sentinel animals for health monitoring and want to learn more about replacing them with environmental health screening methods?
- **3D printed models or training tools:** Have you considered using 3D printed models, something like the koken rat, or other practical alternatives for education and training purposes but encountered challenges in implementation?
- **Virtual dissections and simulations:** Have you investigated adopting virtual dissection or simulation tools but were unable to acquire the necessary software?
- **Alternative databases:** Would you like to learn what is available and how to better use and interpret information from these alternative databases?
- **Colony management software:** Have you explored colony management software but lacked the funding, access or training to implement it?

We invite you to share **any practical ideas, needs, or experiences** that could guide the workshop agenda. Please also let us know:

- The estimated **number and species of animals** per year that could be replaced by adopting these methods,
- Details on the **equipment, funding, training, or resources** needed to overcome barriers to implementing these replacements.

Please send your ideas and feedback by **12 November 2025** to allow us sufficient time for planning. You can share your input either via:

- **Email:** tamsyn@lasvet.co.za OR president@saalas.org OR secretary@saalas.org
- **Google Form:** <https://forms.gle/fGac7Y7LepM3hAZBA>
- **Ongoing Suggestions:** Feel free to email us with ideas at any time, even after the above date as these help shape future workshops and webinars.

All information will be treated **confidentially and anonymously**. Individual names, contact details, or institutional information will not be collected or shared. Only an anonymised summary of ideas will be used for planning the 2026 workshop and may be shared with workshop collaborators solely for planning purposes.

This is an opportunity to **shape the future of animal research in South Africa** by highlighting the replacements that matter most to you and your facility. Together, we can build capacity and create meaningful change.

Warm regards,



Jabu Magagula

President

South African Association for Laboratory Animal Science (SAALAS)