

**STAR  
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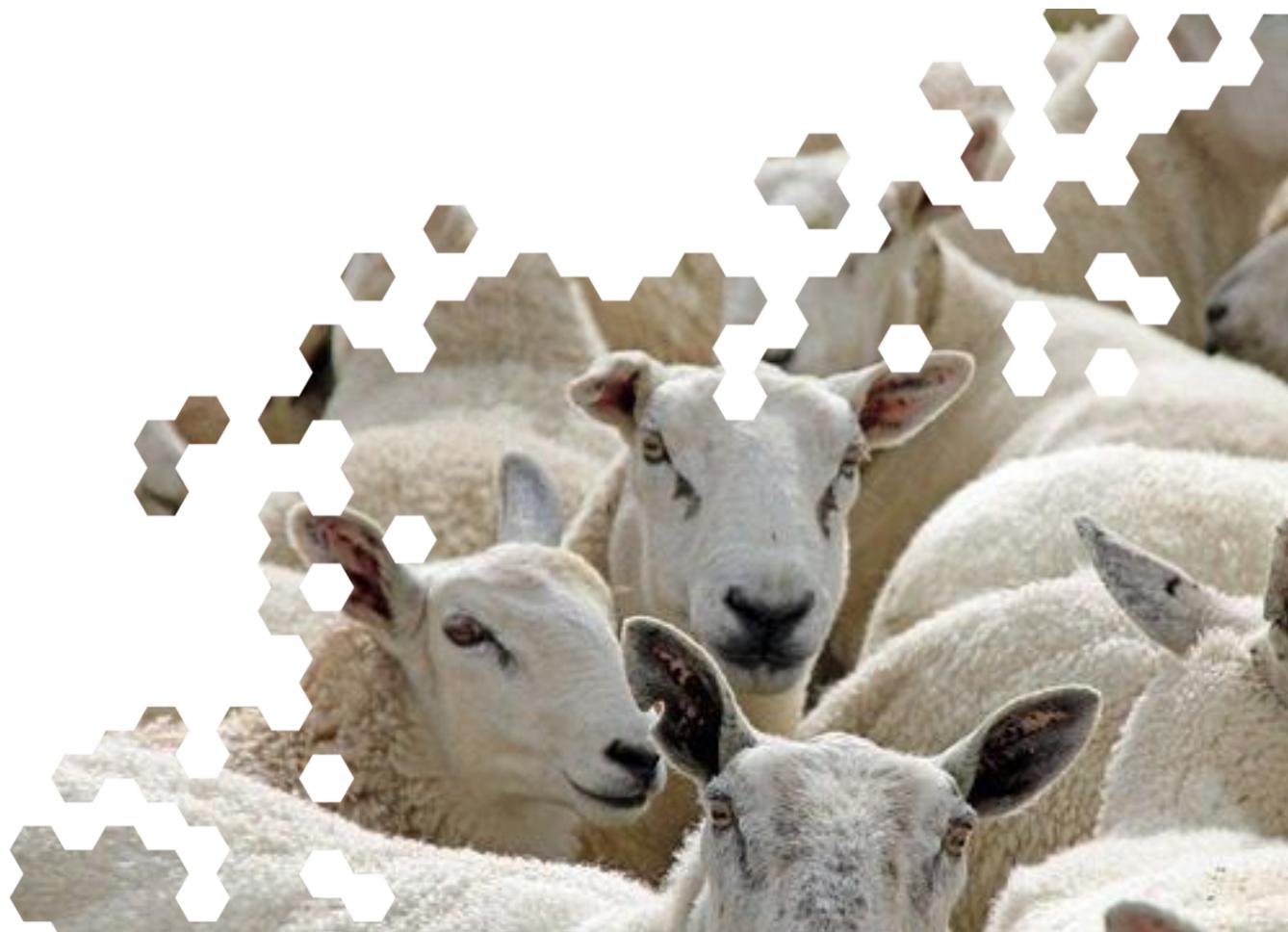
International  
Research  
Consortium on  
Animal Health

# Winter Newsletter 2025

December 2025



Funded by  
the European Union





GEORGE OKORO

## Welcome from the Chair

As we approach the end of 2025, I am pleased to reflect on another productive year for STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC) on Animal Health. Since our Summer Newsletter, the Consortium has continued to deliver on its core priorities — coordinating global animal health research, while fostering collaboration across sectors to avoid duplication and speed up the delivery of disease control tools and strategies. A highlight of recent months was the publication of the 2025 State-of-the-Art Report. This comprehensive review captures advances across our priority diseases and cross-cutting themes, showcases ongoing projects, and flags critical gaps and opportunities for future research globally. You will find the full

report in our Reports page – please take a look! Looking ahead, I am excited about the ongoing activity and momentum in our Consortium. The engagement of 36 global partners in the IRC and their input into the 2025 State-of-the-Art Report underlines the growing strength and reach of STAR IDAZ. The STAR IDAZ Innovation Academy webinar series kicked off in November 2025 and will run well into 2026, supporting researchers, funders, and programme managers who want to turn ideas into real-world solutions for animal health. As we plan toward 2026, we will build on the successes of 2025 —in aquaculture health, One Health funding, brucellosis, and cross-sector collaboration— to support impactful research, accelerate innovation, and strengthen global capacities to prevent and control animal diseases. The Executive Committee met in-person in Beijing in September 2025 to review progress, align international efforts, and set future directions to help address pressing animal health issues worldwide. An important focus for the Executive Committee in 2025 has been the long-term sustainability of STAR IDAZ IRC and funding to the Secretariat. Our next meeting on 11 December 2025 will be dedicated to strategic discussion on this important topic. None of the progress made this year would be possible without the dedication of our Scientific Committee, our Working Group members, our funders and partners, and every member of the wider STAR IDAZ community. Thank you for your hard work, engagement and commitment. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the new Scientific Committee members – Dr Pip Beard (Keele University, UK) and Dr Alejandra Capozzo (Centre for Health Sciences, Inter-American Open University, Argentina). I look forward to meeting you next year. It is a privilege to be continuing this journey together, and I wish you all a peaceful and productive end to the year.

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# Executive Committee Update



The STAR IDAZ IRC Executive Committee is made up of representatives of each of the 36 STAR IDAZ IRC partners. The STAR IDAZ IRC Partners have agreed to coordinate research funding strategies, promote support for STAR IDAZ IRC objectives, and share information between the members. The IRC Executive Committee oversee the strategic direction of the consortium, agree the STAR IDAZ activities, and utilise the outputs to align and coordinate their organisations' animal health research programmes and funding. We would like to welcome the following new Executive Committee members; Mariette Ducatez (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment, France), Noemí Sevilla (Spanish National Research Centre, Spain) and Anders Folkesson (Swedish Veterinary Agency, Sweden).

The IRC Executive Committee meeting was held on 23-24 September 2025 in Beijing, China hosted by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS). An opening address was given on behalf of the Vice President of CAAS, highlighting the global challenges posed by zoonotic diseases and the importance of international collaboration. Dr Vish Nene, as STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee Chair, reported on the Scientific Committee meeting held in August 2025 and the associated scientific recommendations.

The recent activities of the STAR IDAZ Regional Networks were presented. There was an in-depth presentation and discussion around the long-term sustainability planning for STAR IDAZ IRC and the Secretariat to STAR IDAZ, including outcomes of stakeholder engagement and proposed changes to governance structure and workflow. Updates were presented on the active Working Groups: Aquatic Diseases, Coronaviruses, One Health, African Swine Fever (ASF), Vector Transmission and Control, Brucellosis, Mycoplasmas and Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP), Helminths, Vaccinology, Diagnostics (Tools and Technologies), Emerging Issues and Pox viruses. Other items discussed included the Innovation Academy webinar series and the STAR IDAZ research project database. IRC Partners gave presentations focused on their research programmes and opportunities for collaboration. STAR IDAZ activity is driven by the priorities of the IRC Partners, facilitating the coordination and alignment of their funding strategies to foster collaboration, optimise investment and accelerate the delivery of new tools and improved animal health strategies. Thank you to Dr Hong Yin and the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) for hosting the STAR IDAZ meeting in Beijing.

The STAR IDAZ Executive Committee meeting held by webinar on 11 December 2025 focused on long-term sustainability and funding planning for STAR IDAZ, and more information on this will follow.

# Scientific Committee Update



The STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee, comprising approximately 16 independent experts from across the globe, plays a vital role in providing scientific guidance to the STAR IDAZ Executive Committee and Working Groups. The Scientific Committee met in Vienna, Austria on 15 August 2025. The meeting was chaired by Dr Vish Nene, the Chair of the Scientific Committee. The meeting reviewed the progress and required next steps of the active Working Groups for Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Brucellosis, Helminths, and African Swine Fever, and the scope and future activity for Diagnostics (Tools and Technologies) and Emerging Issues. There was extensive discussion on ensuring all STAR IDAZ outputs are impactful and used by the funding community, including a presentation on Target Product Profiles (TPPs) following the recommendation in [WOAH Resolution No.29](#). The Innovation Academy webinar series and the joint collection between STAR IDAZ and DISCONTOOLS were discussed.

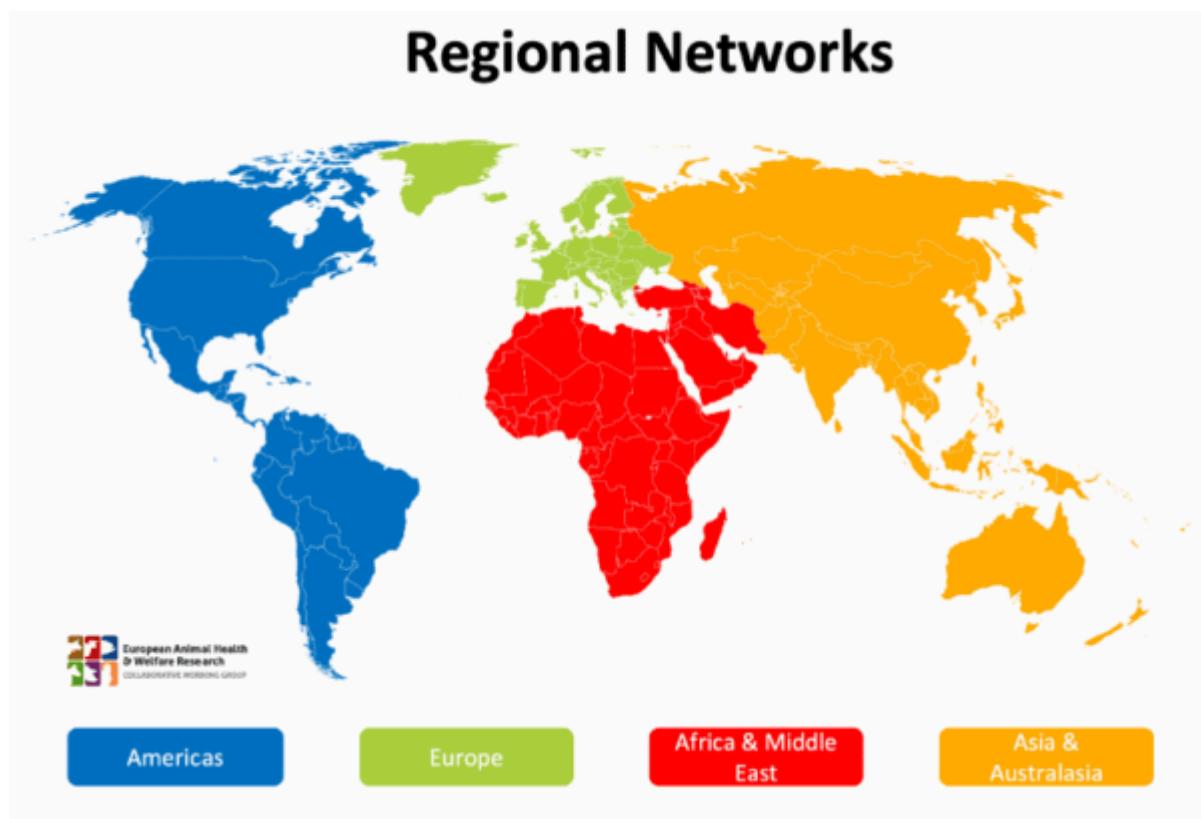
The Scientific Committee continues to play a key role in supporting the STAR IDAZ mission: coordinating global research to develop new and improved strategies against priority animal diseases and zoonoses. Following a recruitment process, two new members have been welcomed into the Scientific Committee – Dr Pip Beard (Head of the School of Live Sciences and Professor of Viral Pathology at Keele University, UK) and Dr Alejandra Capozzo (Director of Centre for Health Sciences, Inter-American Open University, Buenos Aires, Argentina).

The next meeting of the STAR IDAZ Scientific Committee will be held in-person in early 2026.

# Regional Networks

## Americas; Africa and the Middle East; Asia and Australasia; European Network

The STAR IDAZ Regional Networks (for Africa & the Middle East, the Americas, Asia & Australasia, and Europe) facilitate regional cooperation and coordination by identifying common research priorities in the Region, opportunities for sharing resources including access to samples, specialised facilities and expertise, and international or regional funding opportunities.



## Americas Regional Network

The Americas Regional Network met on 21 November 2025 by webinar, with participation from Mexico, Canada, Brazil, and USA.

Country reports from meeting participants highlighted common challenges and research priorities across the region, including highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), African Swine Fever (ASF), bovine tuberculosis (bTB), and screwworm. Members also considered how to improve regional coordination and information sharing.

The next meeting of the Americas Regional Network will be held in-person, alongside the Executive and Scientific Committee meetings in Ottawa, Canada in May 2026.

## **Africa and Middle East Regional Network**

The Africa and Middle East Regional Network met on 5 December 2025 by webinar, with participation Algeria, Uganda, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, United Arab Emirates, Liberia, and GALVmed.

Country reports were provided from representatives from Nigeria, Kenya, Morocco, and Algeria. The reports focused on HPAI, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), CBPP, Rift Valley fever (RVF) and lumpy skin disease (LSD), among others. Members also discussed the impact of climate change on infectious disease epidemiology, emphasising the importance of cross-border and global information sharing to help mitigate disease spread and improve control strategies.

The April meeting included a presentation by Dr Hezron Wesonga focused on contagious bovine pleuropneumonia (CBPP) pathology, diagnosis, vaccination and policy. Dr Wesonga highlighted local challenge in control of CBPP, including variation in adherence to test-and-slaughter control policies.

## **Asia and Australasia Regional Network**

The Asia and Australasia Regional Network met in Beijing, China on 25 September 2025, in a meeting kindly hosted by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences. Members from Russia, Indonesia, China, and Thailand convened in-person, with representatives from Japan, India, Pakistan, WOAH Regional Offices and the Asian Development Bank joining virtually. This meeting was also attended by the Chair of the Scientific Committee and Chair of the European Regional Network.

The September meeting heard dedicated presentations from the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), featuring discussions on science-policy interface and food system transformation, respectively.

Country reports from Russia, Pakistan, China, India, Indonesia, and Thailand focused on ASF and Classical Swine Fever (CSF), AMR, avian influenza, FMD, and LSD. Members also discussed the importance of effective vaccination and diagnostic approaches to mitigate transboundary disease spread.



## **Europe Network: SCAR Collaborative Working Group on Animal Health and Welfare Research (CWG-AHW)**

On 15 September the AH&W CWG, which acts as the European regional network of STAR IDAZ, held its plenary meeting in Krakow, Poland. The event was hosted in the beautiful Radziwiłł Palace of the National Research Institute for Animal Production. The director of the Polish National Veterinary Institute (PIWet) also attended the meeting. In total, 36 AH&W CWG members from ten countries, along with representatives from DG-AGRI, EFSA, COPA-COGECA and RefreSCAR participated either in-person or online. In addition to regular updates on ongoing CWG activities, the meeting included the country reports 2025-2026 on research priorities in animal health and welfare, and discussions on sustainability of STAR IDAZ. An update was also presented on the internal and external programmes of the European Partnership on Animal Health and Welfare ([www.eupahw.eu](http://www.eupahw.eu)), including its expected extension until 2033. The possible collaboration between the Partnership and STAR IDAZ, proposed to take place in 2027, was discussed. The AH&W CWG agreed that it should play a key role in shaping the Partnership's exit strategy. The meeting concluded with two scientific presentations, one on the epidemiological situation on animal health in Poland and another on the animal welfare unit of the hosting institute.



## Priority Topics



9 December 2025 - Georgina Grell

### Gaps and Opportunities in Animal Health Diagnostics

STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium is delighted to announce the release of a new report: 'Gaps and Opportunities in Animal Health Diagnostics'. This STAR IDAZ short survey report highlights global priorities...

[Read more...](#)



18 November 2025 - Georgina Grell

## STAR IDAZ IRC Advances Global Brucellosis Vaccine Research

3 November 2025 – San José, Costa Rica. The STAR IDAZ International Research Consortium (IRC) convened a productive Workshop on Brucellosis Vaccine Research Priorities ahead of the Brucellosis International Conference,...

[Read more...](#)

## SIRCAH News



17 November 2025 - Gareth Dicks

## The State-of-the-Art Report is now available!

The STAR IDAZ IRC is proud to release the 2025 State-of-the-Art Report. The annual report provides an updated overview of research progress across the Consortium's priority diseases and cross-cutting themes,...

[Read more...](#)

**STAR IDAZ** | International Research Consortium on Animal Health  
In Collaboration with STAR IDAZ IRC regional networks

**INNOVATION ACADEMY**

**Objectives**

1. Strengthen innovation stewardship within the global animal health research community.  
2. Bridge the gap between early-stage research and industry uptake by promoting translational pathways, stakeholder engagement, and scalable solutions.

**SAVE THE DATES!!**

**GARY ENTRICAN**  
Roslin Institute at The University of Edinburgh  
19 November 2025  
14.00- 15.00 (CEST)  
Topic: The value of STAR IDAZ IRC roadmaps to stimulate collaboration and maximize ROI of animal health research funding

**JOHANNES CHARLIER**  
Kreavet  
3 December 2025  
16.00 - 17.00 (CEST)  
Topic: Use of DISCONTOLLS to define target areas with high need for innovation

**SVEN ARNOOTS**  
PROVAXS Ghent University  
17 December 2025  
16.00 - 17.00 (CEST)  
Topic: Facilitating discovery to innovation in Animal Health

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12 November 2025 - Katie Gordon

## Join the STAR IDAZ IRC Innovation Academy 2025

The STAR IDAZ IRC Innovation Academy is delighted to announce a new webinar series to help the global animal health research community move from discovery to delivery The Innovation Academy...

[Read more...](#)

## Stakeholder News



12 November 2025 - Katie Gordon

## WOAH: Call for experts to join ad-hoc group

Deadline: Friday 21 November 2025  
The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) is convening a group of multidisciplinary experts (ad hoc Group) to provide its membership with an updated, evidence-based list...

[Read more...](#)

**CALL TO ACTION**

# IRC Partners



## The complete list of partners is:

1. Danish National Veterinary Institute (DTU Vet), Denmark
2. National Institute of Agricultural Research (INRA), France
3. French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety (ANSES), France
4. Ministry of Health, Italy
5. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food security and Nature (LVVN), The Netherlands
6. National Institute for Agriculture and Food Research and Technology (INIA), Spain
7. Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), UK
8. Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council (BBSRC), UK
9. Regional Consortium Belgium (STAR IDAZ.be): Ghent University; University of Liège; Contractual Research Unit at the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment; Sciensano; ARSIA (Regional Association for Animal Health and Identification), Public Service of Wallonia - Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment (SPW ARNE), Staff Direction for Risk Assessment from FASFC (Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain), Flanders Research Institute for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (ILVO) and DGZ (Animal Health Care Flanders)
10. Kimron Veterinary Institute, Israel
11. International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Kenya
12. Tanzania Veterinary Laboratory Agency (TVLA), Tanzania
13. National Institute of Animal Health, National Agriculture and Food Research Organisation (NIAH), Japan

14. Agriculture Research Services, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA ARS), USA
15. National Institute of Agriculture Technology (INTA), Argentina
16. Ministry of Science, Technology and Productive Innovation (MINCYT), Argentina
17. Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Canada
18. Zoetis
19. WOAH (World Organisation for Animal Health)
20. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)
21. Health For Animals (Global Animal Medicines Association)
22. Diagnostics for Animals (Manufacturers of Animal Health Diagnostics)
23. European Commission
24. Regional Consortium; Nigerian Animal Health Research Network led by National Veterinary Research Institute Vom
25. National Advisory Council on Animal Health (CONASA) and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Zootechnics (FVMZ)
26. Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness, CSIRO, Australia
27. Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute (LVRI), China
28. Swedish Veterinary Agency (SVA)
29. National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), USA
30. Norwegian Veterinary Institute (NVI), Norway
31. Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organisation (KALRO)
32. The National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), Uganda
33. The Office National for the Sanitary Safety of Food Products (ONSSA), Morocco
34. Regional Consortium; Swiss Regional Consortium (Swiss Federal Office for Food Safety and Veterinary Affairs and the Institute of Virology and Immunology)
35. International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada
36. Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed), UK



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## **SIRCAH2**

Support to the International Research Consortium on Animal Health (SIRCAH2) is funded by the European Union Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101082377 and by UK Research and

Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee [grant numbers 10055666 and 10058793. SIRCAH2 is run by a partnership including Defra (UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), CAB International (CABI), BBSRC (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council), and Kreavet. It provides organisational and communication support to the IRC, facilitates research gap analysis including the provision of literature reviews for working groups, maps funding activities against identified research needs, and helps mobilise resources to address them. The Secretariat also plays an important role in advocacy for the consortium and bringing in new members.

## **Further Information**

For further information about the IRC please visit [www.STAR IDAZ.net](http://www.STAR IDAZ.net). Research funding organisations and programme owners interested in joining the IRC or researchers interested in joining the working groups should contact the STAR IDAZ IRC Project Office:

**Johannes Charlier** (Kreavet): [j.charlier@animalhealtheurope.eu](mailto:j.charlier@animalhealtheurope.eu)

**Madeline Newman** (Defra): [madeline.newman@defra.gov.uk](mailto:madeline.newman@defra.gov.uk)

**Valeria Mariano** (WOAH): [v.mariano@woah.org](mailto:v.mariano@woah.org)

**Gareth Dicks** (CABI): [g.dicks@cabi.org](mailto:g.dicks@cabi.org)

**Georgina Grell** (CABI): [g.grell@cabi.org](mailto:g.grell@cabi.org)

**Latifa Elhachimi** (Kreavet): [latifa@kreavet.com](mailto:latifa@kreavet.com)

**Katie Gordon** (Defra): [katie.gordon@defra.gov.uk](mailto:katie.gordon@defra.gov.uk)

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**To contribute to improving animal health and welfare.**

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Opportunities to share projects

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