MEDIA RELEASE
Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART)

For immediate release

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**ANZCCART New Zealand releases second annual report on Openness Agreement for animal research and teaching**

The Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART) New Zealand is pleased to unveil its second Annual Report on the Openness Agreement for the Use of Animals in Research and Teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand. Launched in July 2021 with 21 signatories, the Agreement has expanded to encompass 30 organizations committed to fostering transparency and accountability in the use of animals for research and teaching purposes.

The Openness Agreement represents a landmark initiative aimed at promoting public understanding of animal research practices and the ethical considerations surrounding them. Signatories pledge to enhance communication with the media, the public, and tangata whenua (the indigenous Māori community) regarding the use of animals in research and teaching, as well as adherence to the principles outlined in the New Zealand Animal Welfare Act.

Key findings from the second Annual Report include:

1. Progress in Openness: The report highlights significant improvements in transparency among signatory organizations, with the majority actively providing additional information to the public about their use of animals in research and teaching.
2. Community Engagement: Signatories have demonstrated a commitment to engaging with the public and tangata whenua through various initiatives, including public presentations, facility tours, and consultations with Māori communities.
3. Enhanced Communication: Despite challenges, organizations have made strides in enhancing communication channels with the media and the public, though there is room for improvement in streamlining access to information on organizational websites.
4. Commitment to Ethical Practices: The report underscores the importance of incorporating tikanga Māori approaches and promoting the principles of the Three Rs (Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement) in animal research and teaching endeavors.

ANZCCART New Zealand Chair, Emeritus Professor Pat Cragg, commented, "The second Annual Report reflects the collective commitment of signatory organizations to uphold the highest standards of animal welfare and promote openness in research and teaching practices. We commend the efforts of all stakeholders involved and encourage further collaboration to advance our shared goals."

The report also includes recommendations for signatory organizations to enhance their Openness efforts, including the adoption of best practices, improved website accessibility, and the development of policies to facilitate transparent communication.

ANZCCART New Zealand invites other institutions and organizations in New Zealand to join the Openness Agreement and contribute to the nation's continued leadership in animal welfare and scientific research. Organizations interested in becoming signatories can contact anzccart@royalsociety.org.nz for more information.

The full report is available for download on the ANZCCART New Zealand website: https://www.anzccart.org.nz/openness-agreement.

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**For further information**

Please contact ANZCCART (NZ): anzccart@royalsociety.org.nz

**Notes to Editors**

ANZCCART (Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching) is two independent organisations in each of Australia and New Zealand committed to providing leadership in addressing ethical, social, cultural and scientific issues relating to the use and welfare of animals in research and teaching.

ANZCCART’s VISION - To be the leading source of information and advice concerning the ethical, social, cultural and scientific use of animals in research and teaching.

MISSION STATEMENT - ANZCCART’s mission and objectives are to promote:

* Informed open discussion and debate within the community when considering ethical, social, cultural and scientific issues relating to the use of animals in research and teaching, by providing a neutral forum.
* Excellence in the use and welfare of animals supplied for or used in research and teaching.
* Responsible scientific use of animals.
* The 3Rs principle of Replacement, Reduction and Refinement as they apply to the use of animals for scientific purposes.
* Strategic partnerships to contribute to the education and training of scientists, students, animal care staff, members of Animal Ethics Committees, and the broader community.

ANZCCART’s ROLE - ANZCCART seeks to achieve these objectives, first by providing an ongoing focus to the social, ethical, cultural and scientific issues involved, second by providing a forum for discussion of these issues and third by facilitating access to relevant specialist advice and resources. Further, through its publications and activities ANZCCART is a source of information for the general public about how animals are used in research and teaching in Australia and New Zealand.

ANZCCART New Zealand - Established as a standing committee of the Royal Society Te Apārangi, the Board of ANZCCART New Zealand comprises representatives from the research, animal welfare, animal ethics and education communities.

Animal use in research, testing and teaching in New Zealand is strictly controlled under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, administered by the Ministry for Primary Industries. The independent National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee advises the Minister responsible for animal welfare on ethics and welfare relating to animal use in research, testing and teaching.