



WELCOME TO FIN3R NEWSLETTER!

Welcome to the 2025 Summer edition of the FIN3R's newsletter!
Scrolling down, you will have a chance to read about our activities so far,
and the approaching autumn plans!
Keep an eye on the upcoming news!



COORDINATION TEAM

Positions for the new R directors are open!

This spring, the Coordination team, together with the Chair of the FIN3R board has been planning the upcoming months, especially regarding the 2026!

As you might know, every three years the new R directors are chosen, meaning that from January we will be looking at a new board! To start the process, the call for applications is open from **May 15th, 2025** all the way through the summer, **until September 15th, 2025**.

Below you can find more information about the application and criteria. Keep in mind that FIN3R is a non-profit organization, looking for enthusiastic individuals to help the development of the 3Rs in Finland. Joining our board means you will be able to contribute to our activities, and shape the new generation of scientists.

For more information about the FIN3R and our way of working, visit our [website](#).

We are open for all of your inquiries and happy to read your applications!

Sincerely,
Dario Greco, Tommaso Serchi, Hanna-Marja Voipio, Eero Lehtonen



REFINEMENT TEAM

Culture of Care in Finland

The culture of care in animal experimentation refers to a communal commitment to improving animal welfare, scientific quality, and transparency of animal experiments. This concept is gaining more attention as a central way to promote the implementation of the 3Rs. To better implement the culture of care in Finland, TOKES and FIN3R organized the first **Finnish Culture of Care Symposium** on April 9th, 2025, at the University of Helsinki, Biomedicum. The symposium was titled "*High Standards, Humane Science*", to emphasize the bidirectional nature of the culture of care: improving animal welfare enhances scientific quality.

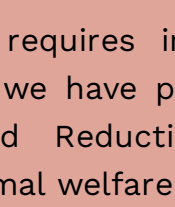
In the morning session, **Paulin Jirkof (University of Zurich, Switzerland)**, **Fernando Gonzalez Uarquin (TARC force 3R Center, University Medical Center MainzGermany)**, and **Jordi Tremoleda (Queen Mary University of London, UK)** provided international examples of culture of care activities and shared their insights on effective implementation practices. Fernando and Jordi also held a workshop "*Care-full stories*" on implementing culture of care in practice the following day. The morning session talks highlighted the importance of local initiatives and networks and the importance of transparent and open communication. These talks were followed by important viewpoints shared by the audience.

In the afternoon session, **Vootele Vöikar (University of Helsinki)** and **Hanna-Marja Voipio (University of Oulu)** discussed the progress of culture of care work in Finland, while **Hajnalka Nadai (Experimentica)** shared her perspective on culture of care in a company setting.

The Symposium concluded with a panel discussion chaired by **Noora Holk (Orion Pharma)**. The panel, which included the speakers and **Pirjo Laakkonen, head of the University of Helsinki Laboratory Animal Centre**, further explored the culture of care. Panelists raised the importance of organizational change and getting everyone working with experimental animals on board.

The Symposium gathered approximately 70 researchers and experimental animal staff from Finnish universities and laboratory animal centers. Through presentations and discussions, the Symposium successfully stimulated culture of care work in Finland. The work continues in TOKES as we develop a roadmap and recommendations to further implement the insights gained from the Symposium.

Mikko Karpale, Chair of the organizing committee



REDUCTION TEAM

Promoting Quality in Science Through Reduction

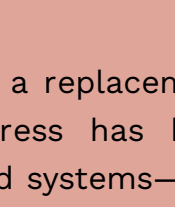
Advancing scientific research requires innovation grounded in ethical principles. Over the past year, we have prioritized the **3Rs framework**—Replacement, Refinement, and Reduction—in animal research. This approach not only improves animal welfare but also enhances the reliability of scientific outcomes.

One key focus has been **longitudinal experiments with laboratory animals**, which allow for deeper insights into complex biological processes while reducing the need for additional subjects. We can advance research by leveraging innovative methodologies and technologies while minimizing harm and promoting sustainable practices.

To further reduce animal usage, we have emphasized **rigorous experimental design and statistical methods**, by organizing workshops on study design and power analysis to ensure meaningful research results. In line with this, experimental design is at the core of reproducibility, and the use of The Experimental Design Assistant (EDA) is encouraged to help design reproducible and rigorous animal experiments with a minimum of animals. Additionally, adopting reproducibility-enhancing strategies, such as estimation statistics, reinforces the credibility of our findings. By combining laboratory animal research with alternative models like human stem cell-derived systems, we can replace and reduce animal use where possible and increase high-quality research outcomes. Through ethical practices and a commitment to sustainability, we strive to contribute meaningfully to science and society.

Together, let us continue fostering a culture of excellence, integrity, and inclusivity to drive impactful discoveries and a sustainable future!

Kind regards,
Mikko Airavaara, Reetta Hinttala, Satu Kuure



REPLACEMENT TEAM

Spring in Replacement: Advancing 3R using Organoids

On April 24th, the Replacement team of Fin3R and STEMCELL Technologies co-hosted the online seminar *Advancing 3R: Innovations in Organoid-Based Research*. The event brought together over 130 participants eager to learn about the latest developments in organoid technologies and their role in advancing the 3Rs.

Cell culture has long served as a replacement R method, and in the past two decades, significant progress has been made. Among the most promising advances are organoid systems—3D cell cultures that mimic the structure and function of real organs. Organoids are increasingly used to explore fundamental biological processes, model diseases, and develop therapeutic strategies. Recent innovations such as co-cultures, assembloids, and single-cell technologies have expanded the potential of organoid research, providing deeper insights into what aspects of biology these models can replicate.

The seminar featured talks from leading researchers demonstrating how organoids are being used to study disease and biology. The keynote speaker, **Dr. Salvatore Simmini**, Director of R&D at STEMCELL Technologies Europe, presented on advancing 3R principles through organoid technologies, focusing on multi-tissue epithelial cell expansion, differentiation, and complex co-culture development. Following Dr. Simmini, **Dr. Keijo Viiri**, **Dr. Emilia Peuhu**, and **MSc Sara Kälviä** from Finland, presented their research on using organoids to model celiac disease, investigate breast biology, and explore mechanisms of Parkinson's disease, respectively.

A panel discussion followed the presentations, addressing key questions about the current state and future of organoid research, such as what are the next steps for organoid research in your field and what are the current limitations of organoid systems. Co-culture techniques were highlighted as a particularly promising avenue and the need for more defined, animal-free matrices for 3D cell culture was a recurring theme. Speakers also emphasized the importance of balancing model complexity with experimental relevance to ensure scientific rigor. In summary, the seminar was successful and well received considering the amount of participants from Finland and abroad, and further points to a need to disseminate information on the methodologies for use of organoids in research.

If you are interested in learning more about organoids, keep an eye on the upcoming FIN3R Symposium that will be organized in Turku in October.

The Replacement team wishes everyone a wonderful summer!

Best wishes,
Johanna Englund, Sarka Lehtonen, Jenni Hakkarainen and Virve Sihvola

JOIN THE BOARD!

Call for the new FIN3R directors!

Finnish 3Rs Center (FIN3R) is looking for new directors for each 3Rs area (Refinement, Reduction and Replacement). The three-year term begins in January 2026 and there may be a maximum of two consecutive terms. This is a voluntary position.

FIN3R is nominated and supervised by the Council on the Protection of Animals Used for Scientific or Educational Purposes (**TOKES**). FIN3R actively distributes information about methods, technologies, practices, and strategies to replace, reduce and refine animal studies in research and education, and organizes educational events.

To apply, the candidates must:

- be employed by a Finnish institution (academic, industry, regulatory or private), all nationalities are accepted
- be fluent in English
- have a PHD degree
- possess relevant documented expertise in their R-area

The candidates are expected to:

- actively assist in organizing events and activities related to their R-area and promote 3Rs knowledge in general
- disseminate relevant information
- plan events for specific R-area such as webinars, workshops, courses, etc.
- contribute to community engagement
- promote and integrate all 3Rs in the program and the work of the organization

To apply, the candidates must submit:

- CV
- Motivational Letter (max 1 page)
- Pragmatic Program (max 1 page)

Please **send applications via email** to sara.sladakovic@tuni.fi.

The FIN3RCenter Advisory Board elects new directors. The deadline for applications is **September 15th, 2025**. Board members (Chair, Coordinator, 3R Directors, and Advisors) will evaluate applications and appoint new directors by the end of the year 2025.

The criteria for selection are:

1. Scientific profile (academic excellence is valued)
2. Program
3. Motivational Letter

For more information, please contact FIN3R Coordinator, Professor Dario Greco (dario.greco@tuni.fi).

UPCOMING EVENTS

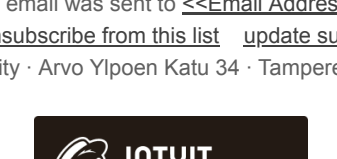
SAVE THE DATES!

Meet us at FELASA conference in Athens!

- In 2023, FIN3R conducted a survey about perceptions on using animas in research. The results will be presented in [poster](#) by Aurora Hämäläinen (Laboratory Animal Center, HiLIFE).
- Vootele Voikar will give a talk in the session [Animal Welfare Bodies in Europe: A Valuable Partner to Culture of Care](#) and chair the session [Better Future for Animals and Research - Promises of Automated Home Cage Monitoring](#).

Traditional **Finnish 3Rs Annual Symposium** will take place in **Turku, on October 27-28, 2025**. More information about the program and registration will be available later!

GET IN TOUCH WITH US!



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