



UNIVERSITIES FEDERATION FOR ANIMAL WELFARE

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Media Release

**From the
Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW)**

21st October, 2005

For Immediate Release:

RECOGNISING THE IMPORTANCE OF ANIMALS' FEELINGS AND THEIR HOUSING - ANIMAL WELFARE RESEARCH AWARDS ANNOUNCED BY UFAW

The Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) has announced that it has made three major research awards, totalling in excess of a quarter of a million pounds:

The second UFAW *Hume Research Fellowship* has been awarded to Dr. Johanneke van der Harst, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht University who will study "Anticipatory behaviour as a multi-functional tool for the field of animal welfare research";

A UFAW *Animal Welfare Research Training Scholarship* has been awarded to Ms Jessica Mettam who is to research the detection and alleviation of pain in fish at the School of Biological Sciences, University of Liverpool;

A UFAW administered *Pharmaceutical Housing and Husbandry Steering Committee (PHHSC) Research Studentship* has been awarded to Ms Anjanette Harris, Institute of Evolutionary Biology, Edinburgh University who will research the effect of welfare-improving housing conditions on the performance of laboratory rodents.

The *Hume Animal Welfare Research Fellowship* scheme promotes high quality science with the aim of substantial advances to animal welfare. The award, offering up to a maximum of £120,000 over three years, is made on an occasional basis to support post-doctoral research. Initiated in 2001, this is the second time a Hume Fellowship has been awarded by UFAW.

With the widespread acceptance that animals' subjective emotions and feelings are crucial factors affecting their well-being and welfare, addressing the difficulty of assessing and measuring those states as determinants of a welfare assessment, has become increasingly important. Dr. van der Harst's work is aimed at enabling further development of a new and practical field technique that can be used to assess animals at the farm or group level, rather than in a research environment, and which can be shown to reflect their internal mental state.

Based on the observation that animals display anticipatory behaviours when aware of impending reward, the study will investigate these behaviours and their relationship to environmental conditions as reliable and practical indicators of positive or negative mental states and their intensity.

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF ANIMAL WELFARE

Chief Executive and Scientific Director: James K Kirkwood BVSc PhD CBiol FIBiol MRCVS

Secretary: Donald C Davidson

Registered Charity No. 207996 (Registered in England) and Company Limited by Guarantee No. 579991



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UFAW's *Animal Welfare Research Training Scholarship*, which offers up to a maximum of £97,000 for a three-year programme of research leading to a degree at the doctorate level, is made to promising veterinary or science graduates for projects likely to lead to substantial advances in animal welfare.

Very large numbers of fish are subjected to invasive procedures during capture and farming, and the question of whether or not they experience pain is currently controversial. Ms Mettam's project, under the supervision of Dr. Lynne Sneddon, aims to determine whether responses to pain are not simply reflexive, and the effect of analgesics. This information will both inform the debate about capacity for pain in fish and determine methods of alleviating pain.

The PHHSC, established by UFAW in 1998, comprises animal welfare organisations, pharmaceutical companies and research organisations, and funds animal welfare research applicable to the pharmaceutical production and testing industry. This initiative is part of UFAW's commitment to promoting the 'Three R's' principle in the use of animals in research (replacement with non-animal procedures, reduction in the number of animals used and refinement of procedures and care to improve welfare).

The Committee's *Research Studentship*, offering up to £25,000 a year for up to three years, supports doctorate level degree work. The latest award, to Ms Harris working under the supervision of Dr. Susan Healy at Edinburgh University, is to support research into the effects of enrichment of housing on the quality of scientific work involving rodents – by far the most commonly used animal in scientific research. Work in this field is of crucial importance in generating implementation of higher welfare housing and husbandry regimes in research using animals.

The *Hume Fellowship*, the *Research Training Scholarship* and the *PHHSC Studentship* are three of a wide range of awards and grants made by UFAW to promote and support developments in the science and technology that underpin advances in animal welfare.

Founded in 1926, UFAW is an internationally recognised, independent animal welfare charity active in research and education, dissemination of information and provision of expert advice to governments, legislators and other bodies. For more information about awards and other UFAW activities contact UFAW on 01582-831818, email info@ufaw.org.uk or visit www.ufaw.org.uk

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Note to Editors:

The Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) is an internationally recognised, independent scientific and educational animal welfare charity. It works to improve knowledge and understanding of animals' needs in order to high standards of welfare for farm, companion, research, captive wild animals and those with which we interact in the wild.

UFAW improves animal welfare worldwide through its programme of awards, grants and scholarships; by educational initiatives, especially at university and college level; by providing information in books, videos, reports and in its internationally acclaimed journal *Animal Welfare*; by providing expert advice to governments and others, including for legislation and 'best practice' guidelines and codes; and by working with animal keepers, scientists, vets, lawyers and all those who care about animals.

This work relies on the support of members, subscribers and donors.

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