

ORBEA-iMM

It is a requirement that all breeders, suppliers and users of experimental animals must have an Animal Welfare Body (AWB) in place.

In accordance with article 34 of Decreto-Lei 113/2013, the Instituto de Medicina Molecular has set up an Animal Welfare Body (in Portuguese, Órgão Responsável pelo Bem-Estar Animal – ORBEA), whose composition follows that established by Despacho 2880/2015.

The main tasks of an ORBEA are the following:

- (a) advise staff dealing with animals on matters related to the welfare of animals, in relation to their acquisition, accommodation, care and use;
- (b) advise staff on the application of the requirement of replacement, reduction and refinement, and keep it informed of technical and scientific developments concerning the application of that requirement;
- (c) establish and review internal operational processes as regards monitoring, reporting and follow-up in relation to the welfare of animals housed or used in the establishment;
- (d) follow development and outcome of projects, taking into account the effect on animals used, and identify and advise as regards elements that further contribute to replacement, reduction and refinement; and
- (e) advise on rehoming schemes, including appropriate socialisation of animals to be rehomed.

All research projects to be carried out at iMM with animal models have to be first submitted to ORBEA-iMM for ethical evaluation and only after approval the project can be submitted to DGAV – Direcção-Geral de Alimentação e Veterinária (Portuguese competent authority) for legal authorization. Only after this, researchers can start their projects using animals.

ORBEA-iMM thus plays an important role in fostering a culture of care at institutional level, promoting a conscious and responsible use of laboratory animals.

ORBEA-iMM Members

- . Pedro Simas (Responsible for ORBEA-iMM and Scientific Director of Rodent Facility)
- . Márcia Silva (Coordinator of ORBEA-iMM and Animal Welfare Officer)
- . Daniel Gomes da Costa (Animal House Veterinarian)
- . Iolanda Moreira (Manager of Rodent Facility)
- . Leonor Saúde (Head of ZebraFish Facility)
- . Lara Carvalho (Manager of ZebraFish Facility)
- . Ana Sebastião (Scientific Consultant)
- . Marc Veldhoen (Scientific Consultant)

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