



## The Benefits of AAALAC International Accreditation

More than 850 institutions in 36 countries around the world have earned AAALAC International accreditation. Here are a few of the reasons why so many biomedical and agricultural research programs chose to participate in AAALAC's program ...

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### It represents quality

Organizations and companies look for ways to communicate their commitment to excellence. In the scientific community, AAALAC International accreditation shows that an institution is serious about setting, achieving and maintaining high standards for animal care and use and committed to animal welfare in science. AAALAC International offers the only international accreditation for animal care and use programs, and it has become recognized around the world as a sign of quality and sound science.

### It promotes scientific validity

When research involves animals, reliable scientific results depend on superior animal care. AAALAC International accreditation engages scientists, veterinarians, managers and administrators in an independent, rigorous assessment of their institution's animal program—an assessment that ultimately results in improved animal welfare and better research practices and outcomes.

### It provides assurance in a global marketplace

Today it's common for research institutions to partner or contract with other research entities around the world. Because laws and regulations related to animal research vary

widely from country to country, AAALAC International accreditation can be used worldwide as a way to gauge the quality of a particular program, harmonize animal care and use practices, and provide assurance to diverse stakeholders.

### It's a recruiting tool

AAALAC International accredited institutions can use their accreditation as a recruiting tool to attract the best and brightest researchers and professors. Talented professionals look for high quality programs to support their research. Accreditation assures potential employees that the institution is dedicated to achieving the highest standards for animal care and use.

### It demonstrates accountability

In today's world, companies and organizations are held to very high levels of accountability—by their own constituents and the general public. Although animal research is a controversial issue for some, most people support biomedical research if it's conducted in a humane manner. Accreditation through AAALAC International is voluntary and demonstrates a willingness to go above and beyond the minimums required by law. It tells the public and other stakeholders that the institution is committed to the responsible care and use of animals in science.

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### It advances animal welfare and promotes the "Three Rs"

AAALAC International accreditation helps institutions enhance their stewardship of the animals they use in research, teaching and testing. Participation also helps institutions focus on, and demonstrate, their support for the tenets of "Three Rs" of animal research: "Reduce, Refine and Replace."

### It provides a confidential peer-review

AAALAC accreditation requires an institution to first perform its own self-evaluation (an extremely valuable exercise for any institution to undertake). Next, a team of highly qualified AAALAC representatives

provides an in-depth, confidential, on-site evaluation of the institution's animal care and use program. This independent peer-review ensures that the institution's program is meeting AAALAC International standards.

### It stimulates continuous improvement

When an institution participates in the AAALAC accreditation program, it's committing to a process that stimulates continuous improvement. Earning and maintaining accreditation keeps an institution aware of, and engaged in, current best practices. Accreditation is a true commitment to humane animal care and use and shows the world that an institution is serious about ensuring animal well-being and conducting good science.

### It instills a sense of pride and teamwork among animal care personnel

Earning and maintaining AAALAC International accreditation is a great achievement that can instill a sense of tremendous pride throughout all levels of an organization. In particular, it can be an immensely satisfying accomplishment for the animal care technicians, custodians, and others who provide much of the day-to-day care for an institution's animals. The process of earning and maintaining accreditation is often a valuable team-building experience for the entire animal care and use staff.

## What people say about the AAALAC International accreditation program

*(Following are comments from AAALAC's most recent survey of institutions participating in the accreditation program...)*

"We always learn something new that helps our program as a result of an AAALAC site visit."

"AAALAC is a valuable resource for information and support. AAALAC site visits have been essential in gaining administrative support for needed improvements in our program during times of fiscal constraint."

"It's very helpful to have an objective outside observer review our operations and programs and let us know where we need to strengthen our procedures."

"AAALAC is a 'Good Housekeeping' seal of approval and has public relations value."

"Our institution has found AAALAC site visits helpful and informative. We appreciate your suggestions and strive to implement all of them. It's our mission to constantly be improving our laboratory animal program and AAALAC has provided sound guidance."

"We acted on many of AAALAC's suggestions. Very helpful. Thank you!"

"This was my first site visit and it was a very helpful, professional, and value-added experience for our program."

"Honestly speaking, even though we get a little anxious, we look forward to your visits."

"The assistance from AAALAC in providing clear statements of the importance of ethics, care, and compliance in working with animals is extremely valuable. We appreciate you!"

"AAALAC is a valuable resource and we get better after every AAALAC site visit."

"I view AAALAC as a partner in research!"