

Q&A

What projects need to go through this committee for review?

Q: What animals do the HKSTP IACUC cover?

A: Live non-human vertebrate animals & cephalopods.

For details, please refer to the “HKSTP Ethics Guide for Animal Research” at Part III of the HKSTP SHE Handbook. Please contact your account manager if you need a copy.

Q: Does my company need to apply to the HKSTP IACUC for ethics review?

A: Yes, if your company is an HKSTP tenant / incubatee / licensee and:

- will use any of the above live animals in or outside HKSTP premises
AND
- have not obtained an ethics approval* that covers the use of live animals in the specific location (eg. in your lab unit in HK Science Park)

(Note: *Approval from an independent ethics committee that meets the research ethics principles & standards acknowledged by HKSTP IACUC)

Q: I collaborate with a university researcher for doing live animal project at his university and ethics approval has been granted by his university. Soon, part of the project will be done in our lab in Science Park several months later, which will involve a smaller number of live animals. Does my company need ethics approval from HKSTP IACUC for doing that animal work in Science Park?

A: Please check whether the university’s animal ethics approval clearly states that it covers this part of the project in your lab in SP.

If it does, then you only need to submit the external approval and ethics protocol to HKSTP IACUC for reference, and also stating the relationship of the P.I. with your company (since the ethics approval may not be in the name of your company).

If it does not, or if the university ethics committee is not willing to extend its approval to your location in SP, then you will need to submit the above materials together with your application to HKSTP IACUC for ethics review.

Application deadline & required materials

Q: When is the application deadline?

A: Applications are reviewed every three months. The application deadlines will be on January 31, April 30, July 31 and October 30.

Submissions received after each deadline will be reviewed in the next cycle.

Q: How to apply?

A: Submit the following documents altogether by email to iacuc@hkstp.org:
(1) completed Application Form,
(2) completed Application Checklist, &
(3) required supporting documents (see below question**)

Q: One of my staff has applied to DH for **animal experimentation license**, but has not got it yet. Can I submit his license copy later on?

A: Yes, parallel application is supported. You can submit the entire application set (except the PDF copy of that staff's DH license) altogether by the IACUC application deadline.

If any project personnel is still pending his/her corresponding licence from DH as of IACUC's application deadline, a copy of the license needs to be submitted to HKSTP IACUC once it is available. Proof of obtaining the license is still required for HKSTP IACUC's review before an official ethics approval to the project will be granted.

Ethics approval

Q: How long will the ethics approval from HKSTP IACUC be?

A: An approval is valid for up to 2 years or the duration of the corresponding license issued by the HKSAR Department of Health, whichever is shorter.

Q: Will any checking be done at my animal R&D location?

A: HKSTP IACUC will conduct monitoring visit once a year, and random spot checks, for the care and use of live animals in the locations of the approved projects.

Example of resources

Q: I don't need to use animal for R&D but want to know more about the ethics perspective. Where can I find such info?

A: You are welcome to refer to the following:

- International Guiding Principles for Biomedical Research Involving Animals (2012)
https://olaw.nih.gov/sites/default/files/Guiding_Principles_2012.pdf
- HK Code of Practice for Care & Use of Animals for Experimental Purposes (2004)
https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/aboutus/abt_adv/files/Code_of_Practice_Care_and_Use_of_Animals_for_Experimental_Purposes_English.pdf
- EU Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:276:0033:0079:EN:PDF>
- NC3R website
<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk>
 - It has a simple training video on the "3R" principles:
<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/contemporary-training-3rs>