



PEOPLE FOR
THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT
OF ANIMALS

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September 3, 2025

Jay Bhattacharya, M.D., Ph.D.
Director
National Institutes of Health

Dear Director Bhattacharya,

PETA and our 10.4 million members and supporters are grateful to you and your colleagues at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for your leadership in prioritizing state-of-the-art, human-relevant, non-animal research methodologies. Your commitment to accelerating more predictive science reflects the public's expectations for ethical stewardship and measurable benefits for patients.

We also write to urge you to act quickly to cancel grants for obviously cruel—and likely pointless—studies on animals. Our supporters have begun to ask why so many horrific experiments continue and why NIH has not moved with greater speed to end funding for them.

Toward that end, we respectfully ask that you **cancel funding for the following projects** and redirect those dollars to modern, non-animal approaches with clearer translational value:

- [R01-DA-061568](#) to Wake Forest University
 - FY25 funding: \$474,347
 - Project End Date: 30-April-2030
 - Michael A. Nader has received more than \$30 million from NIH since 1998 to deliberately addict monkeys to nicotine, alcohol, cocaine, THC, oxycodone, and methamphetamine. In one current NIH-funded project, "[Investigating the impact of nicotine and alcohol co-use on the abuse potential of cocaine in monkey models](#)," Nader repeatedly exposes long-tailed macaques (cynomolgus monkeys) to cocaine, nicotine, and/or cocaethylene (a cocaine–alcohol metabolite), requires them to choose between drugs and food under shifting contingencies, and subjects them to response-contingent timeouts and reward delays. In addition to being deliberately addicted to these substances, monkeys are surgically implanted with catheters, forced to endure “social stressors,” restraint, and sometimes withdrawal. He uses similar methods in another current NIH-funded project, "[Mechanisms mediating cocaine abuse in socially housed female and male monkeys](#)" (FY25 funding: \$683,838; Project End Date: May 31, 2029), focusing on how male and female monkeys of different social rank choose between cocaine and food. Nader has received more than \$9 million for this project.
- [R37-HD-099090](#) to Michigan State University
 - FY25 funding: \$547,003
 - Project End Date: 28-February-2026

Entities:

- PETA Asia
- PETA India
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- Since 2009, Asgerally T. Fazleabas has received more than \$11.8 million in NIH funding to experimentally induce pelvic endometrial lesions in baboons and mice. He has received more than \$2.7 million for his current NIH-funded project, “[Regulation of endometriotic lesion development by NOTCH1](#)”. In this project, experimenters inject menstrual tissue into baboons’ abdominal cavity in an attempt to establish pelvic endometrial tissue. Fazleabas then repeatedly examines and samples the lesions. The baboons undergo multiple invasive procedures, including laparoscopy and biopsies; they are repeatedly restrained, undergo blood and tissue collection, and experience pelvic pain and inflammation. Under this grant, Fazleabas has also attempted to create “mouse models” of endometriosis by cutting off a part of the mouse’s uterus and then sewing it to the inside of their abdomen. NIH has also paid Fazleabas to conduct some of his mouse experiments in [China](#), where his counterparts there killed pregnant female mice
- [R01-AG-070072](#) to the University of Maryland Baltimore
 - FY25 funding: \$548,544
 - Project End Date: 31-December-2025
 - Since 2009, Istvan J. Merchenthaler has received more than \$7 million in NIH funding for menopause studies in nonhuman primates. Under this current grant, he has received nearly \$3 million for his project, “[Brain-selective estrogen therapy for menopausal hot flashes in an advanced translational animal model](#).” In this project, experimenters purportedly induce menopause in female rhesus macaques by surgically removing their ovaries. The monkeys are given niacin to intensify hot flashes and are repeatedly dosed with estrogen or an experimental drug, with frequent handling and monitoring. The animals endure recurrent hot flashes, repeated drug administrations, and ongoing confinement in a laboratory setting.
- [U01-AA-027997](#) to Colorado Research Partners, LLC
 - FY2023 funding: \$1,151,963
 - Project End Date: 31-December-2025
 - For a current project, “[Fructokinase inhibitors for the treatment of alcohol use disorder](#),” Richard J. Johnson of the University of Colorado Denver, in partnership with Colorado Research Partners, LLC, is conducting preclinical testing of an experimental drug in rats and dogs. In dogs, the battery of tests includes repeated-dose experiments with daily dosing over 28 to 90 days, determination of a maximum tolerated dose, and serial blood draws to measure how the drug behaves in the body. At the end of the study, the dogs will be killed and their organs and tissues analyzed for signs of drug-related toxicity.
- [R01-DC-021830](#) to Washington University
 - FY25 funding: \$631,703
 - Project End Date: 28-February-2030
 - Since 1998, Randal C. Paniello has received over \$4 million in NIH funding to study vocal cord paralysis in dogs. In his current NIH-funded project, “[Treatment of vocal fold paralysis with muscle progenitor cells](#),” dogs undergo neck surgery in which one recurrent laryngeal (voice box) nerve is injured to create unilateral vocal fold paralysis. After three to six months, the dogs are subjected to a second surgery in which muscle cells are injected into the paralyzed laryngeal muscles. Over the following weeks to months, the dogs undergo repeated evaluations, including laryngoscopy, electromyography, and breathing tests. At the end of the study, the dogs are killed and their laryngeal muscles and nerves are examined.
- [R01-EY-026568](#) to the University of Houston
 - FY25 funding: \$740,658
 - Project End Date: 30-April-2029
 - Since 2009, Vallabh Das has received more than \$7 million in NIH funding to study eye movements in monkeys. He has received more than \$4 million since 2016 for his current project, “[Binocular coordination of eye movements](#),” which involves artificially inducing visual disorders such as amblyopia and/or strabismus in infant macaques to study the neural correlates of atypical visual development. Newborn monkeys subjected to monocular visual deprivation to induce amblyopia are

reared wearing helmets and goggles affixed with vision-distorting prisms. As they grow older, the monkeys endure multiple surgeries for headpost implantation, intracranial electrode insertion, implantation of scleral coils, and injections of low-concentration tetrodotoxins.

- [U01AG074960](#) to the University of Georgia
 - FY25 funding: \$1,441,664
 - Project End Date: 31-May-2027
 - Since 2022, Anumantha Gounder Kanthasamy has received over \$5 million in NIH funding under this project, in which he forces a genetically engineered probiotic into rodents and dogs who are supposed to “model” Alzheimer's disease, a disease that neither dogs nor rodents suffer from. In the four fiscal years Kanthasamy has received this NIH funding, he has not produced one published paper relating to the work; therefore, details about what the animals in his experiments are subjected to remain hidden from the public who funds them.

We count on you to ensure that federal research funding advances the most ethical, efficient, and human-relevant science possible, and we stand ready to support and help this effort. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Emily R. Trunnell, Ph.D.
Director, Science Advancement and Outreach
Laboratory Investigations Department
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

CC:

Nicole Kleinstreuer, Ph.D.
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National Institutes of Health