


# Researchers awarded prize for promotion of alternatives to animal experiments

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**The 3RCC award has been conferred on two Eawag researchers by the 3R Swiss Competence Centre (3RCC) for their outstanding research work. For the first time ever, the researchers managed to obtain ISO certification for a toxicity test using cultured fish gill cells, thanks to their project work in this area. This represents a milestone in the promotion of alternatives to animal experiments. The prize was awarded on September 2nd in Bern.**

Eawag has been researching for many years to find alternatives to animal experiments so as to reduce and replace tests on live fish. One such alternative involves the use of cell lines from rainbow trout gills. The cells cultured in the laboratory can be used to reliably determine acute toxicity levels for fish of water samples and chemicals. In the spring of 2019, we reported that this toxicity test had been ISO certified.

Überlandstrasse 133
CH-8600 Dübendorf
T +41 58 765 55 11
F +41 58 765 50 28
info@eawag.ch
www.eawag.ch




The women responsible for this pioneering work on the use of alternatives to animal experiments are Kristin Schirmer, Head of the Environmental Toxicology Department, and Melanie Fischer, a Laboratory Technician in the same department. The two researchers have now been recognised for their outstanding work by 3RCC. The Competence Centre promotes the “3R” principles of replacing, reducing and refining when it comes to animal experiments in Switzerland, and supports the implementation of these in the biological sciences. The award is designed to honour researchers who have made an important contribution to promoting the 3R principles.

### Original publication

Fischer, M.; Belanger, S. E.; Berckmans, P.; Bernhard, M. J.; Bláha, L.; Coman Schmid, D. E.; Dyer, S. D.; Haupt, T.; Hermens, J. L. M.; Hultman, M. T.; Laue, H.; Lillicrap, A.; Mlna?íková, M.; Natsch, A.; Novák, J.; Sinnige, T. L.; Tollefsen, K. E.; von Niederhäusern, V.; Witters, H.; Župani?, A.; Schirmer, K. (2019) Repeatability and reproducibility of the RTgill-W1 cell line assay for predicting fish acute toxicity, *Toxicological Sciences*, 169(2), 353-364, doi: 10.1093/toxsci/kfz057, Institutional Repository

## Contact



**Kristin Schirmer**

Head of department

Tel. +41 58 765 5266

kristin.schirmer@eawag.ch



**Melanie Fischer**

Lab Technician

Tel. +41 58 765 5233

melanie.fischer@eawag.ch

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