



## Andrew Blake Tribute Award

### Introduction

The Andrew Blake Tribute Award commemorates the work and life of Andrew Blake, who in 1990 founded the charity *Seriously Ill for Medical Research*. Andrew suffered from Friedrich's ataxia, a hereditary condition described as one of the "worst of neurological diseases". Andrew died in May 2002 aged 39. Andrew was passionate about the need to support scientists in their work and his commitment to speaking out against animal rights activists took up much of the last ten years of his life. He died shortly before he was to collect his MBE.

*Seriously Ill for Medical Research* campaigned very effectively on behalf of scientists working in medical research for fifteen years. It attracted the support of a wide variety of opinion formers from the world of politics, business and entertainment, as well as from science. Through lobbying and media work it was able to present a strong and reasoned argument that society as a whole had a responsibility to support and defend scientists and laboratory animal technicians supporting their work. It articulated powerful arguments, based in scientific fact, against unreasonable and unfounded accusations of cruelty in animal research. In part it was effective because Andrew Blake worked tirelessly to win the active support of people who were seen as unbiased and trustworthy. The charity was wound up in 2006, by which time Government was seen to have taken effective steps against extremists. Although he did not live to see it, Andrew Blake succeeded. His work helped achieve better policing, stronger legislation and increased funding from Government to protect scientists and research organisations.

In recognition of Andrew's commitment to animal welfare; The Andrew Blake Tribute Award is presented by the Institute of Animal Technology and sponsored by The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (the ABPI) to an animal technologist judged to have made a significant contribution to improving laboratory animal welfare. The Institute of Animal Technology is the professional association which represents animal technologists in the UK. It is the foremost professional body of its kind in the world and by its activities continues to advance and promote excellence in technology and the practice of laboratory animal care and welfare.

The IAT is responsible for ensuring Animal Technologists, and others professionally engaged in the field of animal science within the United Kingdom, receive appropriate training and qualifications, thus ensuring that they lead the biomedical research sector in advancing standards of laboratory animal welfare at home and abroad.

The ABPI represents innovative research-based biopharmaceutical companies, large, medium and small, leading an exciting new era of biosciences in the UK. Our industry, a major contributor to the economy of the UK, brings life-saving and life-enhancing medicines to patients. Research using animals plays an important role in our industry's research and development of new medicines. The ABPI therefore supports research using animals where alternative methods are not available, where the potential benefits to health are compelling, and where acceptable ethical and welfare standards can be met. The sector is strongly committed to the 3Rs and takes its responsibility for the animals in our care extremely seriously, and animal technologists play a central role in this work.

## Details of Award

The Andrew Blake Tribute Award is awarded annually, where sponsorship allows, to the animal technologist judged to have made the *most significant contribution to improving standards in laboratory animal welfare over the previous twelve months*.

All qualified animal technologists are guided in their work by the IAT's Ethical Statement:

“In the conduct of their professional duties animal technologists have a moral and legal obligation, at all times, to promote and safeguard the welfare of animals in their care, and to recognise that good laboratory animal care welfare is an essential component of good laboratory animal technology and care.”

The award is made to acknowledge the professional and personal commitment of animal technologists to improving standards in all aspects of laboratory animal care and welfare.

## Qualifications for entry

Entries are invited from all qualified animal technicians & technologists working primarily in the UK. The closing date for entries is usually around the end of November but it can vary depending on the date of the annual Congress, judging is usually concluded soon after the closing date.

## Submission

The topic of work that you describe in your application may be undertaken as part of project and presented as a poster with the headings: title, aim, method, results, discussion, conclusion and references.

The submission which should contain the content below should be submitted online via the following link: <https://www.iat.org.uk/abta>

- Why did you undertake this work? (what was the potential problem you were trying to improve)
- How did you undertake it? (species, numbers, sex, materials used)
- Describe in a comprehensive and concise manner that allows a complete understanding facilitating reproducibility
- Explain if the work contributes to one of the 3Rs
- Explain how was the welfare of the animals improved?
- Describe the results you obtained including data generated with assessment
- Were there any statistics undertaken? Please provide this information
- Acknowledgements & References.
- Brief CV to include your overall contribution to the work
- Please list your supervisors or PPL holder if applicable for the work

To allow others to be able to replicate the work, please consult the ARRIVE guidelines:  
<https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/arrive-guidelines>

## Judging Criteria

- Advancement in animal welfare 40%
- Robustness of study 25%
- Overall significance 20%
- Novelty 10%
- Clarity of presentation of the work 5%

## Judging

- Entries are submitted to a judging panel consisting of one member of IAT Council, one representative of the ABPI and two other independent people one to be in current employment within the Animal Technology Industry.
- All judges will have a vested interest in the area of laboratory animal research and will hold relevant academic qualifications.
- The criteria for judging the award are flexible, but the innovation or improvement, which is the subject of the entry, will have achieved a measurable advance in one or more aspect of laboratory animal care; it will be consistent with the aims and objectives of the 3Rs - Replacement, Refinement and Reduction
- It was also be consistent with the IAT's responsibility to advance and promote excellence in both technology, and the practice, of laboratory animal care and welfare.
- The winner is chosen by majority vote.
- The successful entrant will have a record of achieving high professional and scientific standards. He or she will have demonstrated a very significant professional and personal commitment to laboratory animal welfare.

## Prize

- The award is presented to the winner at IAT Congress in March or April, following the closing date.
- The winner receives a cash prize of £250, an engraved glass award and will be invited to attend Congress.
- The poster will be displayed during Congress, the winner has the option to presenting their poster during the poster session of Congress.
- The winning entry will be reported in IAT 'Bulletin', the appropriate IAT Congress Handbook, and on the IAT website. It may be published in the IAT Journal 'Animal Technology and Welfare', it will be circulate to ABPI members and with the agreement of sponsor and winner, be promoted to reputable to scientific colleagues and reputable scientific media.