



Streams

Introduction

A congress is an arena for communication. The scientific committee has embraced the theme of this FELASA congress, 'Communication', and has designed four streams each with a different angle and direction of communicating. Communication is the act of conveying information and experiences from one to another. The obvious interactions are between people, between animals, and between animals and people. More subtle examples include communication between cells, microbiological agents and the host and at a molecular level to name but a few. There are direct and indirect ways of communication. For example: creating a psychologically safe and trusting working environment is a way of communicating that staff wellbeing is being taken seriously. A state-of-the-art facility is an indirect way of communicating that creating the best environment for animals and science is deemed beneficial to all. A great theme with many angles, which inspired us to define the following four streams. We hope you feel inspired too!

Stream titles and explanations:

1. **Communication with and between animals**

Animal communication is primarily nonverbal. Interpreting animal needs and responding to them appropriately is crucial for ensuring their welfare. Animals perceive and interpret human verbal and non-verbal communication. Appropriate modulation of human non-verbal communication may positively affect human-animal interactions and contribute to refinement. Technological advances can help to improve our understanding of animal communication.

2. **Communication and Culture of Care**

Culture is a set of assumptions about right and wrong modes of action, that are conserved within a group and passed on to new group members. Laws and regulations tell us what we are allowed and not allowed to do regarding animals in our care. However, a culture of care reflects informal norms on how we should behave in relation with others to the benefit of their well-being and interest, whether they are animals or fellow human beings. The mode of actions of how we care can be modulated with the objective of refinement. Cultural signals provide information on the basic assumptions and core values within a social group and the workplace.

3. **Education and training: Communication towards the future**

Education and training rely on effective communication, particularly for the sharing of new approaches to improve the interaction between trainees and trainers. The dissemination of good practices, developing competence and providing constructive feedback on learners' progress is beneficial to all. Coupled with the ability also, to share information on train-the-trainer concepts, continuing professional development or life-long learning and the virtual world of education practices, is essential in implementing the latest advances in laboratory animal science.

4. **Communicating between peers, authorities and the public**

Communication comes from the Latin "*communicare*" that means actions to make a message understood among a diverse audience with different backgrounds and premises to perceive the message. Therefore, the message must be adapted to the target audience. Professional jargon between peers may not work with the public at large or colleagues not specialising in the field. To communicate about complex subjects may need simplification to make it understandable for others. The diverse platforms for communication make it more important than ever for science and experts to engage and share well-founded information. Open science acts as a buffer against "fake news" and conspiracy theories.