

PRESS RELEASE
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Overcoming the need to reference animal test data: Cutest and XCellR8 win significant Innovate UK grant to improve human safety predictions for consumer products

A collaborative project between non-animal testing laboratory, XCellR8, and dermatological testing organisation, Cutest, has been launched, thanks to a substantial grant by Innovate UK.

The aim of the project is to take the first steps to establishing reliable correlations between *in vitro* and *in vivo* predicative irritation testing, to eliminate the need to refer to historical and often unreliable animal test data. This project is an exciting opportunity to develop innovative methods to provide enhanced consumer protection through being able to predict potential irritancy from topically applied ingredients and products.

An important part of the application to Innovate UK was the support expressed by several leading personal care brands and retailers to the objective of developing new predictive safety testing methodologies that further remove the need to refer to historical animal testing. The 2-year research programme started on 1st August and is seeking to determine the correlation between human *in vitro* and *in vivo* data, using a panel of carefully selected reference materials to improve the sensitivity and predictive capacity of skin irritation tests. Stewart Long, CEO of Cutest Systems said: 'We are very excited to be awarded this significant research grant from Innovate UK to undertake this important work. We feel that the 30 years of *in vivo* irritation testing and published research by Cutest, combined with the state of the art *in vitro* testing and research that XCellR8 undertakes, makes this a powerful research collaboration with two leading and complementary companies.'

Dr Carol Treasure, Founder and Managing Director of XCellR8, added: 'The latest funding from Innovate UK means we can continue to expand our research and development capabilities, which puts us at the leading edge of developing new, non-animal testing methods for the cosmetics industry, essential in complying with the EU Cosmetics Regulation. Many of our clients have expressed frustration with the unreliability of existing animal test data and its lack of relevance for humans. This grant will allow companies to take a leap forward in accurately establishing how ingredients may or may not irritate the skin prior to human volunteer trials, thus speeding up the process of bringing products to market.'

Ends

About XCellR8

XCellR8 ([XCellR8](#)) is a contract testing laboratory based at Sci-Tech Daresbury in Cheshire, UK. It provides non-animal based testing solutions to companies and their suppliers involved in manufacturing cosmetics, personal care and household products. Founded in 2008, it holds the Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) accreditation which means its tests can be used by companies to substantiate the safety of their products with regulators. The company was awarded an Innovate UK grant in 2014 to explore the development of a non-animal acute toxicity test in collaboration with the Fund for the Replacement of Animals in Medical Experiments (FRAME), cosmetics retailer LUSH and innovation management company, Inventya. It has also received EU Horizon 2020 funding to continue this work.

About Cutest Ltd

Cutest Systems Ltd (www.cutest.co.uk) is a contract research organisation (CRO) based in Cardiff, UK. Established over 30 years ago, it is the longest continually active CRO in the UK, serving the beauty and healthcare industries. The company has an international reputation as a leading expert in the field, with customers globally. Offering safety and efficacy testing, bespoke protocols and the appropriate substantiation needed to support claims and create value for household brands, Cutest expanded in 2016 by acquiring Reading Clinical Research to further strengthen its offering in both personal care and healthcare.