

For Immediate Release
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Media Invite: **Queen's Gets Failing Grade in Freedom of Information Audit**

Contact: Dr. Zipporah Weisberg, QAD Media Coordinator
613-767-8892; Zipporah.weisberg@gmail.com

Kingston: On March 16, Freedom of Information Day, Queen's Animal Defence (QAD) – a local advocacy group dedicated to social justice for all animals – will be staging a public Freedom of Information (FOI) audit, on Queen's University's policies on animal experimentation. The "Queen's Animal Audit" reveals the University's repeated denials of FOI requests, depriving students of their right to know, and animals of their right to be heard. QAD demands transparency and open discussion to facilitate the development of ethical and effective science.

What: Presentation of QAD's audit on Queen's animal research policies, a black box representing "What is Queen's Hiding?"; and quizzes to test the knowledge of passersby.

Who: Queen's Animal Defence, a local animal advocacy group comprised primarily of Queen's students and members of the Kingston community.

Where: Ground Floor (outside cafeteria), Mac-Corry, main campus, Queen's University.

When: 12-12:30pm, March 16, 2015.

On this year's Freedom of Information Day, QAD calls for transparency on Queen's animal research policies. The campaign highlights the University's repeated denials of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to provide information about the numbers and species of animals used in biomedical research, information which is provided by European and American universities, and Canadian institutions like UBC. This is an affront to democracy, and to the intelligence of Queen's students and the larger Queen's community, who have a right to make up their own minds about the ethical and scientific value of research partially funded out of the public purse.

Despite a petition from more than 1500 members of the community, Queen's recently rejected a proposal, submitted jointly by QAD and local rescue organizations, to establish a formal Retirement and Adoption (R&A) program for animals used in research and education on campus, an initiative other universities, such as the University of Guelph, have adopted to great success.

Dr. Zipporah Weisberg, the Abby Benjamin Postdoctoral Fellow in Animal Ethics at Queen's, says, "*Everyone loses out on Queen's current policy. The animals are silenced. Students and the public are deprived of the opportunity to engage in informed debate about publicly funded research practices. The research community avoids the accountability that is necessary to ensure their scientific practices are ethical and effective.*"

An electronic copy of the proposal and/or campaign posters are available on request.