



IIVS, Advancing Science & Animal Welfare Together | June 2026



A collaboration between **Institute for In Vitro Sciences (IIVS)** and **Epithelix** has been established to expand access to advanced human-relevant respiratory tissue models within the United States. Through this partnership, IIVS will leverage its logistical experience distributing precision-cut lung slices (PCLS) throughout the country to serve as a U.S.-based distribution and scientific support hub for Epithelix's in vitro respiratory tissues and cells. This collaboration will help streamline logistics, reduce shipping challenges, and improve access for researchers and industry partners throughout North America. The partnership supports the growing demand for physiologically relevant non-animal respiratory models used in inhalation toxicology, pharmaceutical development, infectious disease research, and regulatory safety assessments.

The partnership also addresses one of the primary challenges associated with international shipment of live tissue models: maintaining tissue quality and viability during transit and customs clearance. By establishing a centralized U.S. distribution capability, IIVS and Epithelix have developed streamlined quality control and shipping processes that improve reliability and turnaround times for customers. Together, the organizations are supporting the broader adoption of New Approach Methodologies (NAMs) and reducing reliance on animal testing in respiratory research and safety evaluations.

Breaking NAMs News in the US and Europe

US EPA Releases Updated List of NAMs and Nomination Process

The EPA announced major new steps to reduce and eventually eliminate animal testing in chemical and pesticide evaluations by expanding the use of New Approach Methods (NAMs), including in vitro and in silico approaches. The agency updated its approved list of alternative testing methods for the first time since 2021 and launched a new process for scientists and

organizations to nominate additional methods. EPA officials say these actions support the goal of ending all mammalian animal testing by 2035 while improving the speed, accuracy, and human relevance of chemical safety decisions.

Approaches added to the list of NAMs include methods for phototoxicity, eye hazards, endocrine disruption, acute fish toxicity, developmental neurotoxicity, as well as defined approaches for eye damage and skin sensitization, read across and cheminformatics tools, and more.

- [TSCA List of NAMs](#)
- [Nomination process](#)

NIH Established ORIVA and Renames NICEATM

Big news for NAMs development, validation, and application! On June 15, the National Institutes of Health announced that NICEATM has moved under the newly created NIH Office of Research Innovation, Validation, and Application (ORIVA). That office will play a critical role in coordinating NIH-wide efforts to develop, validate, and scale the use of human-based approaches across NIH biomedical research.

Since NICEATM will no longer be part of the National Toxicology Program (NTP), it will undergo a small name change and will be one of two ORIVA divisions (Division of the National Interagency Center for the Evaluation of Alternative Test Methods (D-NICEATM)), along with the other Division for Accelerating Innovation in Biomedical Research (DAIBR).

This change has the potential to accelerate validation and regulatory application activities and expand them across the entire NIH, unlocking more funding and impact by leveraging all NIH institutes and centers.

- [New ORIVA web site](#)
- [News Release](#)

European Union releases roadmap for chemical safety

The EU's 2026 Roadmap for phasing out animal testing in chemical safety assessments outlines a long-term strategy to replace traditional animal testing across 15 legislative areas, including chemicals, pesticides, pharmaceuticals, food additives, and medical devices. The plan emphasizes future implementation through more than 30 targeted actions to gradually integrate validated non-animal methods into regulations and guidance by 2029, while also removing redundant animal tests.

A major focus of the roadmap is building the infrastructure needed for long-term adoption of alternative methods. Beginning in 2026, the European Commission will establish a Roadmap Steering Team and Inter-Agency Working Group to oversee implementation and coordination with EU agencies and Member States. By 2027, the Commission plans to publish a report identifying key regulatory needs for alternatives to animal testing and explore "Safe Spaces" that allow regulators and innovators to test new approaches across sectors.

The roadmap also prioritizes future scientific and technological development by expanding funding, validation, and standardization efforts for non-animal methods. Planned initiatives include revising OECD guidance for evaluating alternative methods, improving readiness criteria for non-animal approaches, and accelerating AI-based tools for predictive health and environmental assessments. Progress will be monitored through public reporting dashboards and new indicators that track reductions in animal use and the advancement of alternative technologies.

- [Roadmap link](#)
- [Fact sheet](#)

Introducing the GARD®skin Assay at IIVS

The Institute for In Vitro Sciences (IIVS) is pleased to announce the addition of the GARD®skin assay (OECD 442E) to our expanding portfolio of skin sensitization testing. This assay is included in the OECD 442E test guideline, bringing an advanced alternative for safety assessment.



What is the GARD®skin Assay?

GARD®skin is a genomics-based in vitro assay designed to identify chemicals that may cause skin sensitization. GARD®skin uses human cell-based systems, combined with advanced gene expression analysis, to assess how a substance interacts with biological pathways involved in sensitization. The assay employs a dendritic-like cell model and measures changes across a large panel of 196 genomic biomarkers. These biomarkers are analyzed using machine learning to classify substances as sensitizers or non-sensitizers with a high level of accuracy. In addition, GARD®skin is **compatible with a variety of difficult-to-test materials**, including complex mixtures, poorly soluble substances, and highly colored or reactive materials that may present challenges for other in vitro methods.

Supporting the “2 out of 3” Framework

The addition of GARD®skin strengthens IIVS’s ability to support flexible testing strategies for the “2 out of 3” Defined Approach described in OECD TG 497. With the addition of GARD®skin, IIVS now offers multiple non-animal methods across the key events used in defined approaches for skin sensitization testing, including:

- Key Event 1 (OECD 442C): DPRA
- Key Event 2 (OECD 442D): KeratinoSens™ or EpiSensa
- Key Event 3 (OECD 442E): GARD®skin or h-CLAT

This expanded capability provides clients with greater flexibility when designing integrated testing strategies, supports regulatory submissions, and reduces reliance on animal data. For

IIVS contributes to Education for Safety Assessors with comprehensive NAMs module



For more than 25 years, the German Society for Scientific and Applied Cosmetics (DGK) and the German Cosmetic, Toiletry, Perfumery and Detergent Association (IKW) have been offering a continuing education program for safety assessors at the highest level. This year, the 8th module of the comprehensive online course was launched, covering all aspects of non-animal approaches, from local endpoints, in silico approaches, systemic endpoints, and risk assessment.

The course was designed by DGK, IKW, and IIVS, and features 18 expert speakers from industry, trade organizations, test method developers, academia, and, of course, IIVS.

[Learn more about the course](#)



IIVS is presenting our work this summer. Hope to see you there!





We are exhibiting!



Contributor Spotlight - SC Johnson



SC Johnson remains a dedicated advocate of IIVS through its ongoing grant support, including a grant in 2026 to support our education and training activities. This support allows us to undertake training, outreach, and other activities to advance non-animal alternative testing methods and increase confidence in using them by regulators and industry. Beyond general funding, SC Johnson has also played a key role in targeted initiatives — such as a collaborative, multi-stakeholder project to develop and validate non-animal approaches to assessing eye irritation in antimicrobial cleaning products. This work ultimately contributed to the adoption of a successful policy by the U.S. EPA, permitting the use of these alternative methods.

As a U.S.-based, family-led company, and a global leader in household cleaning, home storage, air care, pest control, personal care, and professional products, SC Johnson demonstrates a strong commitment to scientific rigor and innovation. Its continued support of IIVS reflects a clear dedication to advancing high-quality science while promoting alternatives to animal testing.

ASCCT Abstracts Open - Plenary Speakers Announced



15TH ANNUAL MEETING

American Society for Cellular and Computational Toxicology

ASCCTox.org/AnnualMeeting



SAAOP: October 26, 2026

ASCCT: October 27-29, 2026



**Durham Convention Center
North Carolina, USA**



Planning for the 15th Annual American Society for Cellular and Computational Toxicology is in full swing. Recently, plenary speakers **Gary Miller, PhD** of Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health and **Russel Thomas, PhD** of UL Research Institutes confirmed their participation in the meeting, which will be held in Durham, NC this October.

Session and CE proposals are now being considered by the Organizing Committee, but it's not too late to present your research. Travel award and abstract deadlines are still to come July 10 and in September. Visit ASCCT for more information or to submit your abstract.

Journal Articles

- **Knowledge is Power: Creating a Database of Reconstructed Oral Tissue Model Applications for Personal Care Industry and Beyond** | Megan Creelman, Gertrude-Emilia Costin
- **Next-generation full-thickness human skin models produced using 3D electrospun scaffolds and animal-component-free culture media** | Patrick J. Hayden, Jayashree Chakravarty, Rayan K. Hodroj, Sar R. Lindner, Lisa M. Fitzgerald, Jacob T. Le Do, Hsin Tzu Keng, Vivek Patel, Holger P. Behrsing, Matthew D. Phaneuf
- **Conceptualizing the Simplicity of Personal Strategies Used for Efficient Time and Project Management** | Gertrude-Emilia Costin

We Want to Hear From You

IIVS is always interested in the needs and requests from researchers interested in advancing the awareness, acceptance and use of alternative methods. If you have any input on methodologies of interest, please don't hesitate to contact us at clientservices@iivs.org.

Connect With Us



Institute for In Vitro Sciences, Inc. | 30 W. Watkins Mill Road Suite 100 | Gaithersburg, MD 20878 US

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