

A Human Skin Platform on the NRP

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New products and medicines that treat skin diseases are continuously being developed and there is an urgent need for ways to test them in human skin. The concern over animal testing for products such as cosmetics and the recognition that human skin differs from animal skin has led to a decline in the use of animals for this purpose. Every day in the UK surgeons remove skin from patients for various medical reasons such as breast reconstruction after cancer and plastic surgery. With the patients consent this skin can be used as a platform to test new skin treatments.

Dr Jelena Gavrilovic and partners from the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and the John Innes Centre have been awarded £50,000 from the NRP translational fund to develop a system to test new products on skin. They will exploit the process to keep the skin removed from patients at the NNUH alive long enough to test different products and treatments including new plant extracts. This system will reduce the number of animals used in product testing and provide access to a better testing regime for innovative industry.