

New Investigator Award

Dr. Benjamin Lecorps

Senior Lecturer, Bristol Veterinary School
University of Bristol

The recipient of the 2025 New Investigator Award was Dr. Benjamin Lecorps. Dr. Lecorps is currently a senior lecturer in Animal Welfare and Ethics and Sustainable Agriculture at the Bristol Veterinary School. He was nominated by Professor Mike Mendl, with additional support from Dr. Dan Weary and Dr. Marina von Keyserlingk.



Dr. Lecorps' research has been widely recognized for its innovative approaches to understanding animal affective states. His pioneering work includes developing and validating non-invasive methods to assess animal emotions, such as the use of infrared thermography in laboratory animals, the creation of a new probabilistic judgment bias task for dairy calves, and the adaptation of methodologies like anhedonia testing for cattle. These efforts have provided new insights into the emotional consequences of common farm practices such as disbudding and cow–calf separation.

As an innovative and courageous thinker, Dr. Lecorps draws on concepts from human psychology, cognitive science, and behavioral ecology to expand theoretical frameworks in animal welfare science. His proposals that captive environments may induce depressive-like states in animals and his application of Bayesian brain theory to animal affect have been described by peers as a potential “major breakthrough in animal welfare science thinking”.

Beyond research, Dr. Lecorps has demonstrated strong leadership and mentorship throughout his career. He previously served as a student research coordinator at the University of British Columbia and, since joining the University of Bristol, has built a thriving research program, secured funding, and developed new research infrastructure. He is also recognized as an engaging teacher and a dedicated mentor who inspires students to pursue research.

Dr. Lecorps' influence extends well beyond academia. His analyses of animal transport laws have informed policy briefs for UK and EU lawmakers and were even cited in the UK House of Lords. He also plays an active role in embedding animal welfare within sustainability education and chairing a “Sustainability in the Curriculum” group at Bristol.

The ISAE Awards Committee commended Dr. Lecorps as a well-rounded scientist who has already made significant contributions across research, teaching, and knowledge transfer.

His innovative thinking, leadership, and dedication to improving animal welfare make him a highly deserving recipient of this year's New Investigator Award.

More information about Dr. Benjamin Lecorps can be found [here](#).

