

Britain's effort to lead the world in stem cell research with the creation of human-animal "hybrid" clones has ground to a halt through lack of funding less than a year after the controversial technique was legalised. Funding bodies are refusing to finance the research and existing projects have been run down to the point at which they may end completely within weeks.

One of the researchers involved in the work said last night that the grant applications may have been blocked by scientists on the funding committees who are morally opposed to the creation of cloned hybrid embryos derived from mixing human cells with the eggs of cows, pigs or rabbits.

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