



Request for Proposal (RFP) for landscaping and identifying opportunities for philanthropic funding activities at the intersection of Climate Change, Health and Digital Equity

1. RFP Background & Objectives

Human health and the stability of our climate are intertwined. For example, global heating is an existential threat to any vision of a healthy future¹ - whether through the direct impact of heat on cardiovascular disease and vector-borne disease related mortality, or the indirect effects which are making areas of planet uninhabitable and therefore resulting in forced migration. The impact of climate change on health and well-being makes it an insidious and evolving public health emergency.

Importantly, the communities that are most vulnerable to climate hazards also tend to be less able to prepare, adapt and/or mitigate their impacts. For example, children, the elderly and socially excluded groups (such as people experiencing homelessness or in certain contexts people of specific socioeconomic or ethnic backgrounds), are especially susceptible to the disruption caused by flooding, dangerous heat, drought, and poor air quality. As noted by the American Public Health Association, this vulnerability is particularly acute in individuals living in low-income communities 'which often are exposed to multiple environmental hazards, yet are least likely to have resources or connections to address the cumulative health impacts of environmental exposures that are worsened by climate change'².

In recognition of the urgency presented by the climate change public health crisis, the Wellcome Trust is setting an ambitious agenda to bring together expertise across science, innovation and society to develop equitable solutions to this health challenge (hereafter referred to as the 'Climate-Health Challenge/Research'). Principles of equity, diversity and inclusion underpin all parts of our new strategy, as does Wellcome's responsibility to help build a better research culture. We want the broadest possible range of people to contribute to – and benefit from – science's potential to change the world.

To inform how we achieve these goals, Wellcome's [Data for Science and Health](#) (DSH) and [the Our Planet, Our Health](#) teams are looking for a supplier **to map the existing landscape of research and civil society contributions on the role of, and best practices for ensuring 'digital equity' in addressing the impacts of climate change on health and well-being.**

Digital equity in this context means work to improve the inclusivity of data science and digital tools through understanding, engaging with and supporting communities who contribute to, manage, use, or are affected by those tools. This includes data subjects (people about whom data are collected); data scientists; health professionals; researchers; software engineers and populations who are impacted by the use of data science tools, for example

¹ <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2020/06/the-intersection-of-health--equity--and-climate-change.html>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5922198/>



when policy-making that affects their lives. The notion of ‘digital equity’ covers both the need to address issues of data inequality and exclusion in society, and in research or data science communities.

Examples of relevant work that falls at the intersection of digital equity, climate change, and health include, but are not limited to:

1. Qualitative research to improve institutional behavior, such as developing a robust public engagement-based exercise to help a national statistics agency understand where it is reasonable to provide greater disaggregated data on extreme heat vulnerable populations (e.g., very old, young, rural, or disabled individuals) whilst balancing sensitivities to privacy concerns and expectations from these vulnerable groups regarding how data will be used, or;
2. Quantitative and/or qualitative research to inform policymakers on how to understand the trade-off between the benefits of facilitating more locally relevant climate research through greater sharing of met service data, and the associated national security concerns which often prevent open sharing of this information, or;
3. Quantitative demonstrations of the risk to individual privacy posed by specific linkage activities, such as combining hyper-local weather or climate information with administrative mortality records, so as to provide researchers with good quality information necessary to ensure that participants can provide truly informed consent for relevant future projects.
4. Conceptual development of a new consent framework for climate-health research using digital tools based on a trans-disciplinary exercise to determine what the key aspects of an informed decision in this context might constitute; this could then be used by longitudinal population studies seeking to re-consent their cohorts to collect relevant environmental and meteorological exposures via personal (digital) monitors.

With the above background in mind, there are **three objectives** to this commissioned activity:

1. Landscape and synthesize how digital equity has been conceptualized in the context of Climate-Health research.
2. Highlight validated tools and processes that Wellcome might consider including as part of a future toolbox to support more diverse and inclusive research.
3. Identify opportunities for Wellcome to deploy resources to support the digital equity in Climate-Health research agenda more broadly

2. RFP Specification

Several philanthropic and advocacy organizations have on-going programs addressing issues of equity at the intersection of climate change and health, from the Robert John Wood Foundation¹ to the Centre for Climate Change and Health³. However, not all of this work is relevant to digital equity and inclusion, which often has many of its own nuances that require

³ <http://www.phi.org/wp-content/uploads/migration/uploads/application/files/h7fjouo1i38v3tu427p9s9kcmhs3oxsi7tsg1fov3yeh5h5x.pdf>



dedicated investigation and support. Therefore, we seek to commission a supplier who will have the following responsibilities:

1. Landscape mapping:
 - a. Conduct desktop research to identify contributions, whether in the academic literature, policy documents, or other sources, that explore issues of digital equity in Climate-Health research. The associated synthesis activities would include a discussion of how digital equity has been conceptualized and if there are any pre-existing theoretical formulations, in order to identify neglected issues in this domain.
 - b. Create a dataset of tools and processes that would facilitate diversity and inclusion that could be made available to future grant applicants as part of a digital equity toolkit. A generic example is that of the UK National Institute for Health Research briefing notes for researchers on public involvement⁴.
2. Qualitative research: Engage with practitioners at key organisations (e.g., researchers, policy stakeholders, civil society stakeholders, etc.), and conduct research (such as interviews and surveys) to understand their perspectives on the landscape. The engagement with practitioners would aim to understand (at a minimum) their perspectives on:
 - a. Areas where the digital equity discourse is mature, and where tools or processes exist that Wellcome should support instead of forging a new path.
 - b. Opportunities for funding novel developments which would facilitate more diverse and inclusive research from a digital perspective.
 - c. General concerns and hurdles that have limited the development of best practice where Wellcome could play a role by influencing other stakeholders

Deliverables to be included are (but not limited to):

1. A report detailing the results from the landscaping activity and research in line with the two objectives above.
2. A dataset of the existing tools identified through the landscape mapping
3. Presentation of findings to teams at Wellcome.

Key to this project is ensuring we capture perspectives from diverse geographies and have adequate representation of settings where the health impacts of climate change are most acutely felt.

We anticipate the work will take **3 months** to complete and we expect to receive bids in the region of **£100,000** excluding VAT. However, this is an outcome specification and suppliers should request the budget needed to deliver the required outputs within the timeframe.

⁴ <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/briefing-notes-for-researchers-public-involvement-in-nhs-health-and-social-care-research/27371>



3. RFP Timetable

#	Activity	Responsibility	Date (all times are BST)
1	RFP issue to Suppliers	WT	Monday 21 st June
2	Submission of RFP Response & questions from suppliers	Supplier	5pm BST on Friday 2 nd July
3	RFP Evaluation Period (& preparation of responses to Supplier Q&A)	WT	Monday 5 th July to Friday 9 th July
4	Advice to suppliers as to whether they have been invited to present their full proposal. Return of Supplier Q&A to shortlisted Suppliers (collated response to all at the same time).	WT	5pm BST on 9 th July
6	Supplier Presentations. Please submit the TPSRA2 and contract feedback form prior to the presentation (details are below).	WT & Supplier	Tuesday 27 th July
7	Notification of Contract Award	WT	Wednesday 28 th July
8	Contract Negotiation	WT & Supplier	Thursday 29 th to Friday 6 th August
9	Contract Start Date	WT & Supplier	Monday 9 th August

4. Response Format

Supplier Q&A

Prior to the submission of your RFP response, Suppliers are provided the opportunity to submit any questions they have about the exercise. All questions are to be submitted to the Wellcome Contact by e-mail in accordance with the RFP timetable.

RFP Proposal

Suppliers are required to submit proposals which respond to the following sections;

RFP Questions

This section requests responses from Suppliers, the specific questions in relation to this RFP exercise are outlined in the table below.

#	Question	Max words
1	Please provide an example of previous work where you have successfully completed a similar project	250 words
2	Outline your approach for delivering the activities and objectives of this RFP. Please include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of how you propose to resource the project 	400 words



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Methods that will be used for the landscape mapping and research• Deliverables and timeframes in which you propose to meet the requirements; not to exceed 3 months in duration.	
3	Provide a brief outline and justification of the proposed costs to meet our requirements; not to exceed £100,000 GBP. Ideally this would take the form of line items and which deliverables they are necessary to achieve.	150 words
4	Highlight to us any risks which you foresee with meeting Wellcome's requirements, and your approach to risk management.	200 words

Based on these responses up to three suppliers will be invited to a second stage where they will be given a one-hour slot on the 27th of July to present a more detailed proposal to the Wellcome evaluation panel, via Microsoft Teams. The following assessment criteria will be used to select the suppliers progressing to the second stage:

Assessment Criteria for Proposal	Weighting
Track Record in relation to the RFP objectives (Question 1)	25%
Appropriateness of approach and team in relation to the RFP objectives (Question 2 & 4)	50%
Value for Money (Question 3)	25%

RFP Presentations

The presentation sessions will follow this agenda:

- 5 mins for introductions
- 30 mins to be used at the supplier's discretion, i.e., can be a PowerPoint presentation, video presentation, or structured discussion.
- 20 minutes for questions and clarifications from the Wellcome panel
- 5 minutes for questions and clarification from the suppliers

If invited to the presentation stage, suppliers will also be asked to complete the tasks described below pertaining to 'Contract Feedback' and 'Information Governance'.

Contract Feedback

This section allows Suppliers to provide specific feedback to the contractual agreement which will be used should their proposal be successful. Contract feedback is to be incorporated into your proposal as an annex and in the following format;



Clause #	Issue	Proposed Solution/Comment

Suppliers submitting proposals as a registered company should review this [document](#). Individuals submitting proposals as a sole trader (not registered) should review this [document](#).

Individuals submitting proposals through their own personal services company please highlight this to the Wellcome contact immediately (see point 7 below).

Information Governance

Suppliers are asked to complete the [TPSRA2](#) assessment before the RFP submission deadline for Wellcome to assess how you handle data.

5. About Wellcome

Wellcome exists to improve health by helping great ideas to thrive. We support researchers, we take on big health challenges, we campaign for better science, and we help everyone get involved with science and health research. We are a politically and financially independent foundation. Find out more about Wellcome and our work: wellcome.org.

6. Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality

Prospective Suppliers should be aware that inappropriate publicity could have a serious effect upon Wellcome's business. The information contained within this document or subsequently made available to prospective suppliers is deemed confidential and must not be disclosed without the prior written consent of Wellcome unless required by law.

7. Prospective Suppliers Personnel - IR35 and Off Payroll Working Rules

Before the RFP response deadline, Prospective Suppliers must make the Wellcome Contact aware if they are intending to submit a proposal where the services will be provided by any individuals who are engaged by the Prospective Supplier via an intermediary i.e.

- Where the Prospective Supplier is an individual contracting through their own personal services company; or
- The Prospective Supplier is providing individuals engaged through intermediaries, for the purposes of the IR35 off-payroll working rules.

8. Independent Proposal

By submission of a proposal, prospective Suppliers warrant that the prices in the proposal have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, agreement or understanding for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices, with any other potential supplier or with any competitor.



9. Funding

For the avoidance of doubt, the output of this RFP exercise will be funded as a **Contract** and not as a Grant.

10. Costs Incurred by Prospective Suppliers

It should be noted that this document relates to a Request for Proposal only and not a firm commitment from Wellcome to enter into a contractual agreement. In addition, Wellcome will not be held responsible for any costs associated with the production of a response to this Request for Proposal.

11. Sustainability

Wellcome is committed to procuring sustainable, ethical and responsibly sourced materials, goods and services. This means Wellcome seeks to purchase goods and services that minimise negative and enhance positive impacts on the environment and society locally, regionally and globally. To ensure Wellcome's business is conducted ethically and sustainably, we expect our suppliers, and their supply chains, to adhere to these principles in a responsible manner.

12. Accessibility

Wellcome is committed to ensuring that our RFP exercises are accessible to everyone. If you have a disability or a chronic health condition, we can offer adjustments to the response format e.g. submitting your response in an alternate format. For support during the RFP exercise, contact the Wellcome Contact.

If, within the proposed outputs of this RFP exercise, specific adjustments are required by you or your team which incur additional cost then outline them clearly within your commercial response. Wellcome is committed to evaluating all proposals fairly and will ensure any proposed adjustment costs sit outside the commercial evaluation.

13. Diversity & Inclusion

Embracing [diversity and inclusion](#) is fundamental to delivering our mission to improve health, and we are committed to cultivating a fair and healthy environment for the people who work here and those we work with. As we learn more about barriers that disadvantage certain groups from progressing in our workplace, we will remove them.

Wellcome takes diversity and inclusion seriously, and we want to partner with suppliers who share our commitment. We may ask you questions related to D&I as part of our RFP processes.



14. Wellcome Contact Details

The single point of contact within this RFP exercise for all communications is as indicated below;

Name: Bilal Mateen

Role: Clinical Technology Lead, Data for Science and Health

Email: b.mateen@wellcome.org

15. Wellcome Contact Details

The evaluation panel for this RFP exercise will consist of the following individuals;

- Natalie Banner, Understanding Patient Data Lead
- Bilal Mateen, Clinical Technology Lead, Data for Science and Health
- Becky Knowles, Project Officer, Data for Science and Health
- Simon Hall, Senior Policy Officer, Policy Team
- Madeleine Thomson, Our Planet, Our Health (OPOH) Priority Area