Request for Proposal (RFP) for
Sustainable Translation of Academic Digital Tools (STADT) project

1. RFP Background & Objectives

1.1 Wellcome
Wellcome is a politically and financially independent charitable foundation. We improve health for everyone by funding research, leading policy and advocacy campaigns, and building global partnerships. In 2020, Wellcome announced our new 30-year strategy to tackle three global health challenges: mental health, infectious disease, and the impact of climate change on health.

1.2 Translation and Portfolio Integration: Translation Team
Wellcome’s Translation and Portfolio Integration (TPI) team is a key part of Wellcome’s Research Programmes, which include Wellcome’s strategic priority areas of Mental Health, Infectious Diseases, and Climate & Health, as well as the Discovery Research programme. The TPI Translation Team’s purpose is to provide cross-cutting research translation support, to enable the realisation of health impacts from Wellcome’s research in order to tackle the urgent health challenges facing everyone.

1.3 Sustainable translation pathways for academic digital tools
Wellcome’s research portfolio includes a diverse array of projects that aim to produce digital tools. These include digital medical device products (software as a medical device) such as digital interventions for mental health conditions, as well as prediction modelling tools (such as those for predicting climate-related health events or for infectious diseases surveillance and monitoring).

We know that the translation pathway for digital tools developed in academia (referred to here as academia-developed digital tools, ADTs) is complex, highly variable between product types and settings, and can be costly. Many promising ADTs fail to translate into usable, readily available products because research teams do not have the skills, time or resourcing to dedicate to translating their ADT(s). Academic funding often only covers research projects through to the development of the ADT, but as these projects move beyond research funding they can hit a cliff-edge where funding for sustainable and longer-term provision of the ADT to the target audience is not available.

A range of translation routes are available for ADTs, including commercialisation through licencing to for-profit companies or academic spinouts. For some ADTs, for-profit translation may not be the preferred route to achieve real-world impacts. Not-for-profit routes to translation are not widely documented, and it is unclear how compatible this route is with the ongoing financial support needed to maintain ADTs, which can include the costs of technical support for security updates and bug-fixes, maintaining APIs or technical features, and the server costs of running an ADT as an accessible ‘live’ tool.

The accepted best practice route for the development of ADTs is to follow open-source code principles. While this does not preclude commercialisation, open-source code does impact heavily upon discussions related to intellectual property (IP) and can also be perceived to limit or dis-incentivise commercial translation.
At Wellcome, we want to better understand the translation pathways open to ADTs and what barriers researchers face when seeking to navigate these pathways. We’d like to learn from examples of academic groups who have successfully translated their ADT through commercial and not-for-profit pathways, and to hear recommendations on what funders could do to help ensure that the digital tools we fund are able to successfully translate and achieve health impacts.

2. RFP Specification

This section sets out the specification of goods for this RFP exercise. Suppliers should use this section to fully understand Wellcome’s requirements and to inform their response.

2.1 Research Objectives

This RfP is centred on understanding the pathways through which ADTs can achieve lasting health impacts, through successfully navigating commercial and non-commercial translation pathways.

We are commissioning a focussed piece of analysis that will help funders and researchers to understand translation pathways for ADTs, and to suggest actions that funders could take to help support sustainable translation of ADTs.

For clarity, for the purpose of this project the following definitions apply:

- Academia-developed digital tool (ADT): A digital tool that is developed in academia. This would usually be in academic research groups in universities or research institutions, using funding from research grants.
- For-profit translation: The process through which an ADT is developed into a profit-making product that is available for use. One example of for-profit translation could be an app developed by a research group is licenced to a company who host and maintain the app, and charge a fee for people to use it, in order for the company to generate profit.
- Not-for-profit translation: The process through which an ADT is developed into a product that is available for use by its intended users, but where the intended business model does not include making a profit. One example of not-for-profit translation could be where a digital prediction tool is created, and then hosted and maintained by a university who does not charge any costs to the users, or only charges the amount needed to cover costs.
- Open-source code is where the source code for a piece of software is made openly available for others to view, modify, and share.
- Open-source principles: These are a set of principles derived from the open-source software development models and are described [here](https://opensource.com) by opensource.com.

The analysis should include:

1) An analysis of commercial and not-for-profit translation pathways available to ADTs. This will be based on literature reviews, desk-based research and through
consultation with experts in digital tech transfer, commercialisation, and open-source translation. The analysis will include:

a. A mapping of the routes to translation available to ADTs, both for prediction tools and for digital medical devices (SaMD). These routes may include commercial licencing, academic spin out, software-as-a-service among others such as potential not-for-profit translation routes. This mapping should highlight the potential barriers in each translation pathway.

b. An assessment of the impact of open-source licences on translation: Do ADTs based on open-source code principles face additional opportunities or barriers to translation, and if so, what are these?

c. Case studies of health-related ADTs that have successfully translated through different routes. These case studies should include:
   i. a range of types of ADTs (such as prediction tools, software as a medical device, software as a service) aligned to Wellcome’s strategic priority areas (mental health, infectious diseases, and climate & health)
   ii. examples of ADTs developed and successfully deployed and achieving health impacts. Examples should cover ADTs developed and used in both high-income settings and in low- and middle-income settings.
   iii. Examples of ADTs whose development followed the open-source principles, and who have successfully translated.
   iv. approximate costs that were associated with successful translation (may include costs associated with evidence generation, regulatory compliance, ongoing maintenance and running costs), and how these costs were met (e.g., through grant funding, VC funds or others). This includes looking at both for-profit and not-for-profit pathways.
   v. A description of the time taken for ADTs in different contexts to translate.

d. An examination of the interface between not-for-profit ADTs and the commercial sector, e.g., where an ADT relies on input data from a sensor produced by a commercial partner. Are there examples of ADTs that successfully manage this interaction, and if so, how?

2) Suggestions of what could be done to alleviate specific challenges and remove barriers in the translation pathway, including by research funders, in order to maximise the health impacts from ADTs.

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

D1) Formation of a governance/evaluation structure that will consist of (at least) expert consultants (such as academics with experience successfully translating digital tools, organisations hosting not-for-profit digital tools, experts in the translation/commercialisation of open-source code ADTs) and Wellcome contacts.

D2) Draft analysis report.

D3) Final content for analysis report.
D4) Co-design of final report with Wellcome’s branding team, handover of report, and preparation for dissemination.

D5) A slide deck of summary findings and recommendations

D6) A presentation of the findings to the Wellcome team.

The final Deliverables will be agreed at the contract negotiation stage but please note that we expect the final deliverable by May 2024 at the very latest. Wellcome expects deliverables to be made available under a CC BY licence.

We expect the supplier’s team to be diverse in membership and inclusive in practice. We expect the supplier to engage meaningfully with experts by lived experience in all areas where their input could conceivably be of use.

3. RFP Timetable

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>RFP issue to Suppliers or on Contract Opportunities Webpage</td>
<td>WT</td>
<td>22 May 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Submission of Expression of Interest and Supplier Q&amp;A</td>
<td>Supplier</td>
<td>2 June 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Return of Supplier Q&amp;A to Suppliers</td>
<td>WT</td>
<td>12 June 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deadline for RFP Response (Full RFP Proposal)</td>
<td>Supplier</td>
<td>30 June 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>RFP Evaluation Period</td>
<td>WT</td>
<td>w/c 3 July 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Shortlisted Suppliers Informed of Presentations</td>
<td>WT</td>
<td>10 July 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Supplier Presentations</td>
<td>Supplier</td>
<td>11-20th July 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Notification of Contract Award</td>
<td>WT</td>
<td>w/c 24th July 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Contract Negotiation</td>
<td>WT &amp; Supplier</td>
<td>Mid July 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Contract Start Date</td>
<td>WT &amp; Supplier</td>
<td>Early September 2023</td>
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4. Response Format

The following headers support the timetable by providing further detail of the key steps.

Expression of Interest and Supplier Q&A:
Suppliers are asked to submit a short expression of interest by e-mail to RFP@Wellcome.org in accordance with the RFP timetable, which should contain the following information:

- Confirming whether you are an organisation or individual
- If an organisation please provide registered name, address, and registration number.
- A non-binding cost estimate as a single figure in GBP
- Any questions you have about the exercise and activity

Suppliers are provided the opportunity to submit any questions they have about the exercise and the activity. All questions will be collated, anonymised, answered and returned to all Suppliers who have submitted an expression of interest in the RFP process and added to Wellcome's contract opportunities Webpage. Please make sure you ask all questions at this stage. Once Wellcome have responded to all questions if you have any additional questions after this deadline these will not be answered to ensure that this is a fair and equitable process.

Submitting an EOI/Q&A is not a binding commitment to submit a full proposal should your organisational priorities change, you will not then be penalised for future opportunities.

Please note, If you miss the deadline for EOI and Q&A you can still submit a full proposal to Wellcome in line with the RFP timelines.

However, if we have an overwhelming response, we may choose to use this EOI stage as a selective phase, this is at Wellcome’s discretion and we will inform suppliers accordingly.

**RFP Proposal**

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

**RFP Questions**

This section requests responses from Suppliers specific questions in relation to this RFP exercise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Max Words</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Experience:</strong> Outline your experience in the area and how you will work with experts (both Wellcome appointed and others) to cover the gaps in your knowledge. Include any relevant experience completing landscaping analyses.</td>
<td>500 words</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Methodology:</strong> Detail your methodology for completing this analysis, including:</td>
<td>2000 words</td>
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</table>
a) Research methodology (for particular questions around methodology, see section 2, RFP Specification)

b) Proposed project plan including timelines
c) Management plan, including role of team members
d) Plan for engagement with Wellcome during contract
e) Diversity and inclusion planning (how you will ensure that: the literature reviewed, and interviews conducted will be inclusive to different groups of people and locations; your methodology does not introduce bias)
f) Engage with research worldwide, especially research and researchers based in LMICs.
g) Justification of chosen case studies and geographies to focus on as part of this research.
h) Work with Wellcome’s branding team to design and disseminate the final landscaping report.

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<th>3</th>
<th>Delivery &amp; outputs:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Describe anticipated risks and challenges and ways to mitigate them and quality assurance for your work.</td>
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<td>500 words</td>
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| 4 | Please consider Wellcome’s Diversity and Inclusion principles (as described in Section 14 below) and outline previous relevant experience working with researchers based in LMICs. |
| 500 words |

| 5 | Provide a timeline for the work, including key milestones and Deliverables against each of these. |
| 300 words |

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<th>6</th>
<th>Budget:</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide a detailed budget including all costs and expenses, specifying all day rates of individuals involved, the allocation of days between members of the team, and the cost of activities. The budget must include allocation of funds for at least two senior academic consultants.</td>
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<td>300 words</td>
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Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

The evaluation criteria provide an overall sense of how we’ll prioritise different parts of your proposal response. Your proposal will be scored out of 100% and it will be assessed against the following criteria:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Skills and Experience: Does the supplier have the relevant skills, experience, and contextual understanding to deliver this work?</th>
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<td>30%</td>
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<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Coverage: How well are the desired focus areas (as outlined in the specification) covered in the proposed methodology address?</th>
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<td>30%</td>
<td>Quality: Is the proposed methodology aligned with our needs?</td>
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**Utility**: Will the proposed methodology deliver the desired, credible, and useful results?

**Diversity and inclusion**: Are the proposed methodology aligned to our diversity and inclusion principles?

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<tr>
<th>Delivery &amp; Outputs</th>
<th>Communication: Is there a good plan for communicating with the Wellcome team?</th>
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<td>20%</td>
<td>Delivery plan: Is the proposed delivery plan appropriate and achievable by the supplier’s proposed team? How feasible is the delivery plan? Are there significant risks associated with the proposed timelines, and how well are they mitigated?</td>
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| Budget 20% | Value for Money: Is the proposed work within budget and good value for money? |

**Contract Feedback**

This section allows Suppliers to provide specific feedback to the contractual agreement which will be used should their proposal be successful. This is the suppliers’ opportunity to provide negotiation points on Wellcome’s terms and conditions, we will not consider negotiations that are only raised after the contract has been awarded so as not to delay the contracting process. Please ensure you engage with your internal relevant legal contact if applicable. Contract feedback is to be incorporated into your proposal as an annex and in the following format:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clause #</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Proposed Solution/Comment</th>
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Suppliers submitting proposals as a registered company should review Wellcome’s Terms and Conditions which can be found [here](#). 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).

**Wellcome Data Protection Compliance**

Under [GDPR/Data Protection law](#), Wellcome must keep a record of all personal information it is processing (i.e., collecting, using, and sharing). This record will be made available to the Information Commissioner’s Office upon request.

This is Wellcome’s record of data processing activities which meets GDPR article 30 requirements.

Suppliers are asked to complete the [TPSRA2](#) assessment before the Presentation stage for Wellcome to assess how you handle data.
Supplier Presentations

Following a submission of the proposal successful proposals will be invited to a virtual meeting which will last 50 minutes in total and will be a PowerPoint presentation followed by questions and answers session.

5. About Wellcome

Wellcome supports science to solve the urgent health challenges facing everyone. We support discovery research into life, health, and wellbeing, and we’re taking on three worldwide health challenges: mental health, climate and infectious diseases. Find out more about Wellcome and our work at: 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. Disability Confident

The Wellcome Trust is proud to be a Disability Confident Employer (DC Level 2) and we encourage all our partners and suppliers to do the same. More information about this can be found on the government website Disability Confident employer scheme and guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Disability Confident is creating a movement of change, encouraging employers to think differently about disability and take action to improve how they recruit, retain and develop disabled people.

13. 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 Wellcome using the contact details provided in section 15.

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.

14. 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 diversity and inclusion as part of our RFP processes.
15. Wellcome Contact Details

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

Name: Lindsey Atkins-Tamblin (She/Her)
Role: Procurement Manager
Email: RFP@Wellcome.org