



Request for Proposal (RFP) for landscaping common definitions in mental health science

1. RFP Background & Objectives

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 strategy to tackle three global health challenges: mental health, infectious disease, and the impact of climate change on health.

1.1 Mental Health Vision and Mission

Our vision for mental health is a world in which no one is held back by mental health problems. To advance this vision, our mission over the next 20 years is to drive a step change in the ability to intervene as early as possible in the course of anxiety depression and psychosis.

Wellcome has two core goals in mental health:

- A) Improve understanding of how the brain, body and environment interact in the trajectory and resolution of anxiety, depression and psychosis.
- B) Find new and/or improved usable ways to predict, identify, and intervene as early as possible in anxiety, depression and psychosis.

In the next 10 years we are aiming to support a vibrant global mental health science community to produce a pipeline of breakthrough discoveries that are rapidly translated to develop targeted, effective and scalable early interventions in one or more of anxiety, depression or psychosis.

1.2 Common Definitions in Mental Health Science

The development of new pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments for early intervention in anxiety, depression, and psychosis relies on clear and commonly agreed definitions of various important clinical concepts. These definitions include terms such as first episode,¹ clinical recovery,² and treatment resistance.³ While consensus criteria exist for some of these definitions, they are not gathered in a single online location that is easy for researchers to find and reference. Moreover, the global applicability of these definitions is unclear.

Wellcome's *Common Definitions Project* aims to bring much-needed clarity to the field. The first stage of this project involves a detailed landscaping of the mental health research field to scope priority terms that require common definitions, to identify and evaluate existing consensus definitions, to pinpoint gaps that require clear, consensus definition, and to assess the feasibility of achieving such definitions.

¹ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S092493381600660X>

² <https://academic.oup.com/schizophreniabulletin/article/48/4/839/6568399>

³ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6732672/>



2. RFP Specification

This section sets out the specification of services for this RFP exercise. Suppliers should use this section to fully understand Wellcome's requirements and to inform their response. Wellcome will be guided by the supplier as to what is a reasonable budget for this activity as we do not want limit ambition or innovation.

Wellcome are seeking a supplier to undertake a 9-month contract to undertake desk-based research and stakeholder interviews or workshops to scope the landscape relevant to common definitions. What terms require common definitions? Where do common definitions already exist, and how consistently are these used?

We have identified some terms where definitions are currently used differently. These include:

- Treatment resistance
- First episode (e.g., psychosis)
- Relapse
- Remission
- Recovery
- Adherence
- Prodrome
- Drug-induced (e.g., drug-induced psychosis)
- Comorbidity
- Interaction
- Mechanism

We are open to revision of this list and to the addition of further terms (up to a total of 15) to constitute the focus of this landscaping.

Please note that it is beyond the scope of this project to identify common definitions for diagnostic mental health terms such as depression, anxiety, and psychosis.

The deliverables we require to fulfil this contract are as follows:

1	Interim report	3 months: an interim report that identifies priority clinical concepts requiring common definition relevant to early intervention in anxiety, depression, and psychosis.
2	Progress report	6 months: a progress report.
3	Stakeholder / prioritisation workshops	6 months: summaries of interviews/workshops/consultations with relevant stakeholders, including but not limited to researchers, lived experience experts, Wellcome staff and lived experience advisers.



4	Final report	9 months: A report of up to 8000 words that identifies, outlines, and evaluates current consensus criteria for the priority clinical concepts listed in deliverable 1, and specifies current gaps in the definitions landscape.
5	Summary table/ spreadsheet	9 months: A supplementary spreadsheet or table summarising the information from the report detailed in deliverable 2.
6	Recommendation(s) document	9 months: A set of recommendations of up to 2000 words in Word format regarding future work in the common definitions space (e.g., the construction of an online resource; procedures to identify definitions of choice where more than one set of consensus criteria exist; procedures for filling the gaps identified in deliverable 2).

3. RFP Timetable

#	Activity	Responsibility	Date
1	RFP issued on Contract Opportunities webpage	Wellcome	27 th October 2023
2	Submission of Expression of Interest and Supplier Q&A	Supplier	13 th November 2023
3	Return of Supplier Q&A to Suppliers	Wellcome	20 th November 2023
4	Submission of RFP Response (in line with requirements set out in section 5)	Supplier	1 st December 2023
5	RFP Evaluation Period	Wellcome	1 st December – 15 th December 2023
6	Supplier Presentations	Supplier	w/c 2 nd January 2024
7	Notification of Contract Award	Wellcome	12 th January 2024
8	Contract Negotiation	Wellcome & Supplier	January 2024
9	Contract Start Date	Wellcome & Supplier	February 2024



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 the Wellcome contact in accordance with the RFP timetable, which should contain the following information:

- Confirming whether you are / aren't intending on submitting a full proposal
- Ask any questions you have relating to this RFP
- Confirming whether you are submitting a proposal as a registered company or an individual
- If an organisation please provide registered name, address, and registration number
- A non-binding cost estimate as a single figure in GBP

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

Prior to the submission of your full proposal to the RFP, 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. 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.

Full Proposals can be submitted even if a supplier has missed the Expression of Interest stage.

5. RFP Response

Suppliers submitting a full proposal should cover the following areas in their response:

RFP Questions

Suppliers are asked to respond to the following questions as part of their RFP Response:

#	Question	Max words
1	How will you identify terms where consensus definitions are required? How will you ensure you are capturing areas where consensus already exists? How will you assess the feasibility of	600 words



	achieving consensus with specific definitions, and feed this into your proposed action plan?	
2	Who do you consider to be key stakeholders for this work, and how will you engage with different stakeholder groups?	250 words
3	How will you ensure this landscaping is sensitive to the views and priorities of people with lived experience of mental health challenges? How will you involve lived experience experts within your landscaping?	200 words
4	How will you engage with Wellcome during this contract?	100 words
5	How will you ensure a global consideration of definitions, where different cultural and social considerations can impact on the ways in which terms may be deployed and understood? How will you ensure consideration of equity, diversity and inclusion best practice within this work?	150 words
6	What is your track record for projects of this sort? What skills does your team have to enable you to complete this work, including any domain expertise?	150 words
7	Please also complete the attached budget template published alongside this RFP.	NA See <i>Budget-Template-CD</i>

Contract Feedback

This section allows Suppliers to provide specific feedback to the contractual agreement which will be used should their proposal be successful. Wellcome will not consider any requests that are raised after this point. Please ensure you engage with a relevant professional to support your feedback if required. Include your contract feedback in your proposal as an annex in the following format;

Clause #	Issue	Proposed Solution/Comment

Suppliers submitting proposals as a registered company should review Wellcome's Standard terms and Conditions [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 8 below).



Information Governance

Wellcome is committed to upholding data protection principles and protecting your information. The [Wellcome privacy webpage](#) explains how, and on what legal basis, we collect, store, and use personal information about you. This includes any information you provide in relation to this proposal.

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 RFP submission deadline for Wellcome to assess how you handle data.

6. Evaluation Criteria

During the RFP evaluation period the evaluation panel will independently evaluate your proposal against the criteria outlined below. All scores will be collated, discussed and a decision will be agreed on who progresses to the next stage of the procurement exercise.

Criteria	Detail	%
Methodology	<p><i>Coverage:</i> How well are the desired focus areas (as outlined in the specification) covered in the proposed methodology address?</p> <p><i>Quality:</i> Is the proposed methodology aligned with our needs?</p> <p><i>Utility:</i> Will the proposed methodology deliver the desired, credible, and useful results?</p>	40%
Experience	<p><i>Skills and Experience:</i> Does the supplier have the relevant skills, experience, and contextual understanding to deliver this work?</p>	10%
Delivery & Outputs	<p><i>Communication:</i> Is there a good plan for communicating with the Wellcome team?</p> <p><i>Delivery plan:</i> Is the proposed delivery plan appropriate and achievable?</p> <p><i>Feasibility:</i> How feasible is the delivery plan? Are there significant risks associated with the proposed timelines, and how well are they mitigated?</p>	10%
Budget	<p><i>Value for Money:</i> Is the proposed work within your budget and good value for money?</p>	10%
EDI	<p><i>Equity, Diversity & Inclusion:</i> Do they have EDI policies and are these being put into practice in the proposal?</p>	10%
Lived Experience (LE) involvement	<p>Do they adequately consider LE involvement in both the running of the project and within the landscaping/literature itself?</p>	20%



	Total:	100%
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7. About Wellcome

Wellcome is a global charitable foundation established in 1936. Through our work we support science to solve the urgent health issues facing everyone. We fund [curiosity-driven research](#), and we're taking on three of the biggest health challenges facing humanity – [climate change](#), [infectious disease](#) and [mental health](#). We also work with policy makers, run advocacy campaigns, and form partnerships with other organisations to ensure everyone, everywhere benefits from advances in health science. Find out more about Wellcome and our work at: wellcome.org.

8. 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.

9. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Embracing equity, [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. We want to cultivate an inclusive and diverse culture, and as we learn more about barriers that disadvantage certain groups from progressing in our workplace, we will remove them.

Wellcome takes equity, 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.

10. 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.



11. Accessibility

Wellcome is committed to ensuring that our RFP exercises are accessible to everyone. If you have a disability or a long term 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.

12. 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.

13. Funding

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

14. 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.

15. 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.



16. Wellcome Contact Details

The point of contact for this RFP exercise is indicated below:

Name:	Hardip Dhaliwal
Pronouns:	She/Her
Role:	Procurement Officer
Email:	RFP@Wellcome.org