



Request for Proposal (RfP) for The Grant Management and Secretariat of Europe PMC

1. RFP Background & Objectives

Europe PMC <https://europepmc.org> is an open, global repository that provides comprehensive access to a worldwide collection of life science publications and preprints. It currently holds 43.1 million publications, preprints, and other documents, which are enriched with links to supporting data, protocols, smart citations, and peer reviews, by integrating a range of trusted sources. By overlaying information from a diverse array of sources, Europe PMC plays a crucial role in building robust public tools to enable open access content and data, thus it is a unique piece of open science infrastructure. It is an open, global repository that provides comprehensive access to a worldwide collection of life science publications and preprints from trusted sources. It currently holds 43.1 million publications, preprints, and other documents, which are enriched with links to supporting data, protocols, smart citations, and peer reviews, by integrating a range of trusted sources. By overlaying information from a diverse array of sources, Europe PMC plays a crucial role in building robust public tools to enable open access content and data, thus being a unique piece of open science infrastructure.

Europe PMC is a scientific data service of the Europe PMC Funder Group, in partnership with the European Bioinformatics Institute (EBI); and in cooperation with the National Centre for Biotechnology Information at the U.S. National Library of Medicine (NCBI/NLM). It includes content provided to the PMC International archive by participating publishers. It is hosted by the Research and Literature services team within EMBL's European Bioinformatics Institute (EMBL-EBI), an international, innovative, and interdisciplinary research organisation which aims to make the world's public biological data freely available to the scientific community.

Europe PMC Funder Group is an international consortium of funders who centrally fund and oversee the delivery of Europe PMC on a 5-year funding cycle. Funders within the Group contribute to the cost of delivering the Europe PMC service for the international research community, while also receiving dedicated support to host and enrich the publication outputs that stem from their funded research. Funders' contributions to the cost of delivering Europe PMC are calculated based on their annual research spend, as a percentage of the total annual research spend of the Funder Group. New funders can join Europe PMC at any point within the funding cycle, with contributions to the grant pro-rated to the time remaining on the award. The additional funds are used to support the cost incurred by EBI of supporting the new funder and to support new developments where contributions are greater than costs incurred.

The Funder Group is governed by a Collaboration agreement which sets out funders' responsibilities to the Group, how the Group will be governed, and the financial contributions funders agree to make towards the cost of delivering Europe PMC. Under the current governance model, the Funder Group elects a Funder Committee that contains representation from across the diverse range of funders within the Funder Group. This Funder Committee is



responsible for overseeing the management of the grant award to EMBL-EBI, approving high-level work plans, and providing strategic advice to the grantee. The Funder Committee and EBI receive strategic advice from an external advisory board run by EMBL-EBI, the Europe PMC and Literature Services Scientific Advisory Board.

The Funder Group is supported by Wellcome who, in addition to being a member of the Funder Group, provides project and grant management services to them. Wellcome has carried out this responsibility since the inception of Europe PMC as UKPMC in 2005. In 2022, Wellcome informed the Funder Group that it would no longer be able to provide these services following the end of the current funding cycle in March 2026.

2. Eligibility

Preference will be given to suppliers registered in either the UK or an EU Member state country.

3. RFP Specification

This section sets out the specification of the services for this RFP exercise. Suppliers should use this section to fully understand Wellcome's and the Europe PMC Funder Group's requirements and to inform their response. Wellcome and the Europe PMC Funder Group 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.

On behalf of the Europe PMC Funder Group, Wellcome is seeking to identify a collaborator to deliver the renewal process for the next cycle of Europe PMC Funding (stage 1), and if approved, the services required to deliver and manage that funding cycle on behalf of the Funder Group (stage 2). The current funding cycle will end on 31 March 2026.

The cost of delivering stage 1 activities will be met directly by Wellcome and the collaborator will be required to enter into an agreement with Wellcome as part of this. The cost of delivering stage 2 activities will be shared between the Europe PMC Funder Group as part of their contributions to the funding of Europe PMC.

The activities listed below for the two stages of this work are based on the processes and services currently provided by Wellcome to the Funder Group. They represent the minimum requirements of this RFP.

Stage 1 - Funding renewal process

- (i) Establish a Working Group from within Europe PMC Funder Group to provide advice and oversight on process. The Working Group is required to be governed by a Terms of Reference (drafted by the supplier).
- (ii) Assessment of the ongoing need and value of Europe PMC to the research community.



- (iii) Notify current funders of grant renewal process and seek an 'in-principle agreement' to fund Europe PMC via a grant from April 1st 2026 to 31st March 2031.
- (iv) Develop high-level budget ranges for funding cycle (currently 5 years) working with EBI and the Funder Group.
- (v) Develop all elements of application and assessment process (must include some form of external peer review). These could be a bespoke approach, the organisation's standard process, or adaptation.
- (vi) Working Group sign-off on (v) and set maximum value that can be applied for.
- (vii) Deliver application and assessment process.
- (viii) Calculate and communicate funders' estimated contributions based on maximum award value and costs of managing that award (Stage 2) to enable funders' internal budget approval processes. Provide other documentation to support funders' internal approval processes as required.
- (ix) Draft legal agreement between funders and supplier to facilitate both funding and governance to manage the Europe PMC award if approved. This agreement should govern the services the supplier is delivering to the Funder Group for the entire grant period (stage 2 of this RFP). Historically this legal agreement was referred to as the Funder Collaboration Agreement, a copy of which is available upon request as part of this RFP.
- (x) Revise the legal agreement and associated governance based on feedback from Europe PMC Funder Group.
- (xi) Present outcomes of application process and the available budget based on Funder internal approval processes to Europe PMC Funder Committee. The Europe PMC Funder Committee decides on whether to recommend funding the next cycle of Europe PMC to the Europe PMC Funder Group

The following steps are contingent upon the outcome of the decision meeting, if funding is recommended;

- (xii) Support the Europe PMC Funder Group members in signing the Collaboration Agreement
- (xiii) Once all funders have signed, notify EBI and draft award letter. Target to issue award letter 4-6 months prior to award start date if funding approved.



Gant Chart showing Timeline of Stage 1 activities

Year	2024												2025												2026		
Month	a	m	j	j	a	s	o	n	d	j	f	m	a	m	j	j	a	s	o	n	d	j	f	m	a		
Project Month Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
(i) Create and manage Working Group (WG)																											
(iii) Seek principle agreement from funders																											
(iv) Develop High Level budget ranges																											
(v) Develop application process																											
(v) Develop assessment process																											
(vi) Sign-off of application and assessment process by WG																											
(viii) Calculate and communicate funder contributions																											
(ix) Draft Collaboration agreement																											
(vii) EBI application																											
(vii) Peer review process																											
(x) Revision of Collaboration agreement based on WG feedback																											
(xi) Funder Committee notified of application outcome and approval of funds																											
(xii) Collaboration agreement signed and returned																											
(xiii) EBI informed of application outcome																											
Grant awarded																											
New Award starts																											

Key:	Communication with Funder Group and Funder Committee
	Activities regarding new application and assessment processes developed by supplier
	Activities regarding financial and legal processes developed by supplier
	Communication with Working Group (WG)
	Application submission and peer review process
	Awarding and start of grant

To deliver the above work, the collaborator will be required to interact with the current Europe PMC Governance model. Under this model the Europe PMC Funder Committee retains overall responsibility for this process and will require updates at their biannual meetings. The detailed delivery and management of the stage 1 work will be delegated to the Working Group set up by the Supplier, with Wellcome as the day-to-day working partner and contract owner.

The Europe PMC Funder Group will require updating throughout the process. Wellcome will support the appointed collaborator in engaging with this governance structure, as it retains responsibility of delivering the secretariat until March 2026 (when the current funding cycle ends).

We estimate, from delivering previous renewal rounds that potential collaborators will need to allocate 0.3 FTE plus legal support to meet all the requirements for Stage 1. The allocation of this resource is not evenly distributed throughout the duration of Stage 1.

Wellcome will include within the contract for Stage 1 the following support provisions to facilitate the supplier's delivery of the Funding Renewal Process, as part of the transfer of Europe PMC Funder Secretariat services:

- Provide historical context and briefing on current governance of Europe PMC
- Facilitate engagements with funders individually and through the existing governance structure.
- Provide templates and documentation linked to previous funding renewal cycles.
- Wellcome will not provide the supplier with legal or financial advice.



To facilitate support provision, the supplier will enter into a data sharing agreement with Wellcome.

Stage 2 – Deliver and manage the funding cycle on behalf of the Europe PMC Funder Group

The delivery of activities within this stage will be fixed and governed within the terms of the legal document binding funders and the collaborator to the delivery of Europe PMC funding. However, as a minimum the Europe PMC Funder Group requires:

- (i) Provide grant management services for the duration of the award to EBI, including but not limited to managing payments and financial reporting, and interacting with EBI to ensure effective delivery of the grant.
- (ii) Invoice funders for their contributions to the grant, currently conducted annually in arrears.
- (iii) Deliver the Europe PMC Funder Governance, including as a minimum biannual meeting of the Europe PMC Funder Committee and an AGM for the Europe PMC Funder Group, or an equivalent governance model approved by funders during the renewal process.
- (iv) Support the Europe PMC Funder Group to engage with EBI and the Europe PMC services, including support for consultations/research linked to new developments of the platform or within the Europe PMC governance.
- (v) Promote Europe PMC to other funders and onboard new funders during the funding cycle.
- (vi) Develop bespoke processes for funders who wish to fund Europe PMC but who cannot join the Europe PMC Funder Group.
- (vii) Develop and deliver a renewal process for the next cycle of funding, should the need for Europe PMC remain at that point in time.

As a guide to potential collaborators, the current allocation by Wellcome within the legal agreement for the project management of the Europe PMC Secretariat is 0.2 FTE (items ii-v above). We estimate that a further 0.02FTE is required for the grant management (item i). The allocation of this resource is not evenly distributed throughout the calendar year.

Within the context of this RFP the Europe PMC Funder Group invites applicants to propose other services which may enhance the delivery of the Europe PMC Funder Group, or advance collective funding of life sciences infrastructure.



5. RFP Response

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

Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)

The supplier will need to sign up to Wellcome's NDA in order for us to share further information. Once requested and fully executed. Wellcome can then share supporting information to help you formulate your full proposal.

Wellcome will not consider negotiations on this template and suppliers should sign and return the NDA before supporting information is shared.

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 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

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.

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 we have an overwhelming response, we may choose to use this EOI stage as a selective phase, this is at Wellcome's discretion



RFP Response

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

#	Question	Max Pages
1	<p>Describe how you propose to meet our requirements set out in Stage 1 of Section 3.</p> <p>Include within your response your proposed resourcing for delivering this work. You should make us aware if you envisage using any third parties for the delivery of any aspect of our requirements.</p> <p>If you are proposing to refine existing processes (for example governance structure or requirements of services within Stage 2), please describe how you would consult funders on those changes.</p> <p>Within your proposed governance structure and funder engagement plans please describe your approach to embedding funder diversity within the governance structure of Europe PMC.</p>	5 pages
2	<p>Describe how you propose to meet the requirements outlined in Stage 2 of Section 3.</p> <p>Include within your response your proposed resourcing for delivering this work. You should make us aware if you envisage using any third parties for the delivery of any aspect of our requirements.</p>	3 pages
3	<p>Describe the stages and timeline in which you propose to deliver Stage 1. Please provide a Gantt chart to support this description.</p>	2 pages
4	<p>Provide a cost proposal which details and justifies the proposed costs to deliver Stage 1 and Stage 2 of our requirements.</p> <p>Please set out the costs for delivering Stage 1 and Stage 2 separately. It is understood that some costs to deliver Stage 2 may need to be incurred during Stage 1. These costs should be included within the Stage 1 budget but should be flagged as linked to the delivery of Stage 2.</p> <p>Note: Costs for Stage 1 will be fixed during the contract negotiation stage of this RFP with Wellcome. Costs for Stage 2</p>	2 pages



	will be finalised with the Europe PMC Funder Committee during the delivery of Stage 1.	
5	Describe anticipated risks and challenges that you foresee in delivering Stages 1 and 2 and state ways to mitigate them.	2 pages
6	Provide an overview of your organisation and experience that you have that is relevant to the delivery of the requirements within this RFP. Within this section, please also explain how delivering these requirements fits within your organisation's strategic goals.	2 pages

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Detail	%
Process	<p><i>Coverage:</i> How well are the minimum requirements (as outlined in the specification) covered in the proposed process?</p> <p><i>Quality:</i> Is the proposed methodology aligned with our needs for due diligence of process?</p> <p><i>Utility:</i> Will the proposed methodology deliver the required process?</p>	25%
Experience and Strategic Alignment	<p><i>Skills and Experience:</i> Does the supplier have the relevant skills, experience, and contextual understanding to deliver this work?</p> <p><i>Strategic alignment:</i> Does this work fit within their strategic objectives as an organisation?</p>	25%
Delivery	<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>	20%
Budget	<i>Value for Money:</i> Is the proposed work within your budget and good value for money?	15%
EDI	<i>Do they have EDI policies and are these being put into practice in the proposal?</i>	5%
Funder Engagement	<i>Have they proposed an equitable funder engagement approach that ensures funder diversity is embedded within the governance structure of Europe PMC?</i>	10%
Total:		100%



Contract Feedback

This section allows Suppliers to provide specific feedback to the contractual agreement and Wellcome's standard Terms and Conditions 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 a relevant legal contact if applicable. 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 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 7. below).

Information Governance

Wellcome is committed to upholding data protection principles and protecting your information. The [Wellcome-Privacy-Statement-2023.pdf](#) 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 will be asked to complete the [TPSRA2](#) assessment before presentation stage 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.



6. About Wellcome

Wellcome improves health for everyone by funding research, leading policy and advocacy campaigns, and building global partnerships. Collaborative research that involves a diverse range of people from different fields of interest is key to progress in health science – and to achieving our aim of fostering a healthier, happier world. We’re taking on the biggest health challenges facing humanity – climate and health, infectious disease, and mental health – to find urgent solutions and accelerate preventions. Find out more about Wellcome and our work at: [wellcome.org](https://www.wellcome.org).



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. Equity, Diversity, and 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. 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 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.

9. 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 \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/disability-confident-employer-scheme). 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.

10. 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 costs 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.



11. 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.

12. Funding

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

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. Wellcome Contact Details

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

Name:	Hardip Dhaliwal
Pronouns:	She/ her
Role:	Procurement Officer
Email:	RFP@wellcome.org