

**Embedded social researcher (or team) to support Wellcome’s Institutional Research Culture Community
Supplier Q&A**

#	Question	Answer
1.	<p>Budgeting: Can you share the anticipated time that may be needed over 2.5 years (e.g. 50% FTE)?</p> <p>Are there any budget anchors that can be shared?</p> <p>Is there a limit on or are there expectations around the inclusion of operational costs in the budget?</p>	<p>We do not have a set amount of time that we expect suppliers to spend working with the community. However, we do not anticipate that this contract will require a full-time position.</p> <p>Wellcome will be guided by the supplier as to what is a reasonable budget for this activity, as we do not want to limit ambition or innovation. Proposals are in part assessed on value for money and as such we would expect to see a detailed budget breakdown (for example on time and resources) to allow Wellcome to feedback as needed with the awarded supplier.</p> <p>No, but see above point, we expect to see a detailed budget breakdown to allow us to assess Value for Money.</p>
2.	<p>What is the expected level of commitment & incentives amongst the CoP members to participate and share learnings? Do we need to actively design our processes to enhance that? Are there any existing collaborations between the 40+ institutions which could be tracked?</p>	<p>Community of Practice (CoP) member institutional teams have varied commitments and incentives to participate and share, some of which we are aware of (or have set), some of which we are learning. All applicants to IFRC were aware that “successful applicants will take part in Wellcome-organised meetings with a network of other awardees to share best practise and successes from their work”, i.e. this expectation has been set from early on, now expanded optionally to applicants who did not receive funding. The expectation of participation is formally written into award letters for CoP member institutions funded through IFRC. Participation is optional for institutions who applied but weren’t funded through IFRC. All were invited and most have opted to be members.</p> <p>More importantly, we are aiming to convene the community in a way that is engaging to members and aligns with collective needs, and that this will form a motivation to participate. We have begun to engage with teams through a survey and informal conversations to understand each team’s perspective, what they would want from the community, and any concerns. We are happy to share anonymised collective outcomes of these initial engagements with the supplier (once selected) to help shape their activities but we do not expect the supplier to have in depth knowledge of this context in advance. We do anticipate the supplier will be aware of the role of incentives for community convening in general, and open to learning with us about what enhances engagement and sharing in this CoP.</p> <p>Some examples of incentives to participate are gaining new collaborations (some teams are more connected than others), being part of sector-level discussions and action, engaging with Wellcome and the funding landscape around research culture, and contributing to values/mission-driven work with similarly motivated individuals. Examples of barriers include worries about time or resource</p>

#	Question	Answer
		<p>required to participate; how a community this size will foster meaningful interactions; how well this community will complement existing initiatives and networks around research culture; and how well it will meet the needs of different types and sizes of institution, as well as diverse needs and interests within institutional teams.</p> <p>There are many existing collaborations between subsets of the 40+ institutions, some of which are on research culture. Many of these are networks extend beyond this community. We are developing an awareness of this landscape and aim to work with the supplier to complement existing collaborations. This CoP should aim to contribute positively to this landscape by e.g. linking up conversations that may be occurring separately across the sector and working with existing groups to share learnings as widely as possible beyond this CoP.</p>
3.	<p>Given the sensitive nature of the topic, how is the current relationship with Wellcome as a funder expected to influence the research team's response? For example, the dependence on research funds from Wellcome in the future may influence the information that may be shared by the team.</p>	<p>Wellcome's role as a funder inevitably shapes our relationship with each institutional team in this community. This relationship will be different depending on whether they have received IFRC funding. We are mindful that this shapes the interactions that Wellcome has with teams and that e.g. teams may be more reluctant to share challenges than successes directly with Wellcome staff. This is understandable. Our aim is to set up the community so teams do feel able to share as openly as possible. For instance: we have been clear upfront that "this community is not an oversight or assessment mechanism from Wellcome. We hope to create safe spaces where you can share insights and challenges from your project openly, knowing that this will not impact your current or future funding." We will also be clear that learning from challenges and "what doesn't work" is an aim of IFRC funding and this community. There may also be some spaces where it is important for Wellcome staff not to be present to allow open sharing. Having said this, some teams are keen for Wellcome to be present at events as equal members of this community, offering openness and humility about our own equivalent challenges.</p> <p>The supplier is an important intermediary in this relationship. We hope that the supplier will become a trusted contact point one step removed from Wellcome, and that this will foster open sharing for the mutual benefit of teams, also allowing the supplier to fulfil their support and research roles for the community. The supplier should provide confidentiality to teams within the research and community relationships they develop, building trust and being clear about boundaries on which information is and is not shared with Wellcome.</p>
4.	<p>Do you anticipate any specific challenges that we might face while working with the institutions?</p>	<p>There are many potential challenges that we also hope will form an interesting part of this opportunity. We will mention a few examples here.</p> <p>Member teams will come from different positions to this community. Some are funded by IFRC and some are not, which changes their incentives to engage as well as resourcing. By including all institutions who applied to IFRC in this community, we introduce the challenge that it could feel two-tiered, and some teams have raised this as a potential concern. However, non-funded teams have been largely keen to participate. For the supplier as well as Wellcome, this increases the challenge of how set the tone of the community to be inclusive and equally welcoming to all. Additionally, the community, while including 40+ teams, does not include all institutions who would be interested. This introduces a challenge of how to communicate appropriately outside the community, maximise a collective benefit and reduce siloing. This communication is part of the supplier's role.</p> <p>Institutions also come to the community at different points in developing their research culture activities beyond IFRC and have different levels of other funding to support this. They are also different sizes and types of institution, with varied geographies, and different levels of connection to existing research culture networks. There are a diverse range of roles, demographics, and levels of</p>

#	Question	Answer
		<p>seniority within each institutional team. Wellcome and the supplier face the challenge of developing an inclusive practise that anticipate these different needs and perspectives.</p> <p>The supplier should be aware that member teams (and individuals within them) will have different incentives to participate in the community including the supplier's activities and research. Member teams' participation and attitudes to this will largely develop organically depending on the value they see in it. Suppliers should be conscious of this when establishing relationships with teams. Some teams and individuals will face significant time pressures and view community activities as additional/burdensome (unless or until trust is established) while others will be keen to spend time participating in the community and engaging with the supplier. The supplier will also need to work sensitively with teams to work out the best way of gathering collective learning across the community that does not "step on the toes" of individual teams' projects or dissemination plans.</p>
5.	Can you please share backgrounds and the areas of study of the researchers that are expected to be part of Wellcome's Institutional Research Culture Community?	<p>Please find all the information about the scheme and who was invited to apply via this link: https://wellcome.org/grant-funding/schemes/Institutional-Funding-for-Research-Culture#call-at-a-glance-28af. This publication (https://wellcomeopenresearch.org/articles/8-525) contains the titles of the funded projects. Shortly, we will be adding the summaries of the funded applications to our website. However, this may not be before the RFP submission deadline.</p> <p>The applications that we received were on a wide variety of topics. They can be grouped into the below themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership - Equitable partnerships - Sustainability - Career Development - EDI - Engaged Research - Collaboration - Open Research - Reward and Recognition
6.	Would the contractor have access to Wellcome's design and comms team to support the publication of communications and learning outputs, or should they include that within their bid?	<p>The contractors should not anticipate having access to Wellcome's Design and Comms team. Please include this within your bid.</p> <p>Please note all our content should be WCAG 2.2. AAA compliant. Any documents being provided to Wellcome must pass accessibility requirements.</p>
7.	How would you expect the contractor to work with the Wellcome team? Would you hope for regular meetings? In person? online?	<p>We usually request the supplier sets up regular meetings online once the contract is in place. Meetings are usually once every two weeks but may change as the project progress.</p>
8.	How many people do you expect to be attending the events in total?	<p>Each project team contains approximately 5 to 15 members. In the kick-off event, we anticipate offering each team 4 places in person (so we expect ~200 in-person attendees, including Wellcome staff) and a set number of places online, which is to be determined depending on the online platform that we select. We expect the mid-way event and final event to be of a similar size to the kick-off event, but this could change depending on the venue selected. Any additional events are likely to be significantly smaller in size.</p>
9.	Do you have any existing research ethics policies you would expect to be taken into consideration?	<p>We have this policy for research involving human participants that we encourage you to take into consideration: Research involving human participants policy – Grant funding Wellcome. This policy does not go into detail on specific considerations and challenges for the ethical considerations of being an embedded/ethnographic researcher in a community. We are looking for a supplier who can bring and demonstrate experience, understanding, and awareness of the key challenges in this area. You may wish to consult policy or guidelines specific to this kind of</p>

#	Question	Answer
		research: if you are based in an institution with relevant ethics guidance please take this into consideration. You may also wish to consult the answer to Q15 about safeguarding.
10.	Will the supplier and Wellcome enter an NDA given the potential for sensitive information? Will Wellcome provide that NDA contract?	We don't expect the supplier to enter into a specific NDA, but the overall contract that the successful supplier will enter into will cover confidentiality and data protection, amongst other things.
11.	Who is / does this programme fund participants time for engagement? Does Wellcome reimburse community participants costs or is there expected to be pass through costs as part of the bid whereby the supplier funds participants for travel and expenses?	In many cases, the program does not fund participants' time for engagement. The instances when the participants time will be funded would be when individuals' salaries are paid by the Institutional Funding for Research Culture grants. Wellcome, however, will book and pay for travel and accommodation (when required) to facilitate attendance at the events.
12.	Will Wellcome or the Supplier fund any access requirements for attendees to ensure barriers to those from working class, caring and disabled scholars are able to fully participate?	<p>Wellcome is committed to funding a range of access requirements to ensure that all members of the community are able to fully participate within the community. For example, at the hybrid kick-off event, the following are available as standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step-free access to all floors in the building • Men's, women's and gender-neutral and accessible toilets • Blue badge parking (two parking spaces) • A fixed induction loop at reception on the ground floor, and portable induction loops • A dedicated prayer room • A baby feeding space with fridge for milk storage • Vegetarian and vegan catering (other dietary needs and requests can be catered for) <p>For online and in-person attendees, the following will be provided as standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to all written materials in advance where possible • Access to information about attending teams and their work, to provide familiarity with the context, in advance • Auto captioning for any presentations • Recordings of any presentations, with the consent of presenters <p>We also welcome requests for any of the following where these would help attendees engage in the event. Below are some examples and we welcome attendees to email in confidence if they have any other access requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable costs to cover caring responsibilities • BSL interpreters • Access to hardware (laptops and/or tablets) <p>We are committed to ensuring that these access provisions are at all of the events that take place for the community and welcome suggestions from suppliers on how we can make our events more inclusive.</p>
13.	Does Wellcome or the supplier identify and invite the community those eligible participants? How does selection occur to ensure diversity of voice? Including (i) hierarchy - a range of career stages and (ii) protected characteristics.	Wellcome has already invited all the teams who applied to the Institutional Funding for Research Culture call to be part of the community. Participants can be anybody working in any capacity on research culture projects at the team's institution. They may for example include lead or co-applicants on the teams IFRC application, anyone working on a project proposed or funded through IFRC, and those working on other research culture projects at the team's institution. For each event, all the teams will be asked to nominate who they would like to attend in person and online. We have strongly encouraged teams to select a diverse cross-section of individuals to attend within each format, for example, considering a range of roles and levels of seniority and diverse intersectional identities/demographics.
14.	Will Wellcome or the supplier be responsible for I.T infrastructure that will support the community? e.g. Slack/Teams or other digital community methods.	We anticipate that Wellcome will be responsible for the IT infrastructure that supports the community. However, if your team has expertise in this area or access to infrastructure that could

#	Question	Answer
		be used, please indicate this in your proposal. We have begun to ask teams about their preferred infrastructure. There may be a preference for using infrastructure that everyone has routine access to already, but this is up for discussion. The supplier isn't expected to maintain this infrastructure, but they may be expected to use it to fulfil their role, e.g. communication within the community.
15.	<p>Will Wellcome or the supplier be responsible for duty of care / safeguarding developing and oversight of processes to tackle any issues arising from the community whereby a participant may experience negative wellbeing effects from participation i.e. discussions that might trigger emotional responses?</p> <p>Essentially will there be a named contact at Wellcome should the need to provide wellbeing support arise?</p>	<p>Wellcome will be responsible for the safeguarding of any participant's presence at the events organised by Wellcome. The supplier will then be responsible for their conduct and the implications of their research and activities when working with participants. Wellcome has a Safeguarding Lead who can be contacted if support or advice on this is required once the supplier is in post.</p> <p>We include terms in our contracts that require suppliers to take reasonable steps to protect people from harm and to inform us of any incidents of harm. Suppliers should account for this in their costings, proposal and risk assessment.</p>
16.	In the RFP, you mention the use of some form of online digital community space to support engagement and communication, without becoming burdensome. Is this something you see the successful contractor building as well as maintaining? Do you have a preference for the technology platform?	Please see response to Q14
17.	Is the first meeting date, June 6th, definite or could it be moved?	This date is now confirmed and cannot be moved.
18.	How do you anticipate engaging those who did not receive funding in ways that feel appropriate and add value to them? Is there, for example, the opportunity to provide ways for them to shadow similar projects that did receive funding?	This is an important question: see answers to Q2 Q4 and Q19. Membership in this community is optional to institutions who applied but were not funded through IFRC. However, most if not all have opted to participate at least to some degree. We anticipate both funded and non-funded team's participation and attitudes to this will largely develop organically depending on the value they see in the community for their team. When we have spoken to teams in this position in introductory conversations, we have heard that they are keen to gain new collaborations (some teams are more connected than others), be part of sector-level discussions and action, engage with Wellcome and the funding landscape around research culture, and contribute to values/mission-driven work with similarly motivated individuals. There may be more ways we can add value and some funded teams have indicated they are happy to share knowledge opportunities such as the idea you mention of shadowing similar projects. Opportunities like this are not yet systematically in place, but we encourage this and welcome any ideas that the potential supplier wishes to include in their proposal or discuss with us if they receive the contract.
19.	As a researcher deeply committed to rethinking the way we conduct research, centering the importance of those with the lived experience, I am conscious about the importance of long-term motivation and active participation on behalf of the institutions. Thus, I would like to understand better the motivation and possible incentives especially for the non-funded teams, who will be required to put an effort in their participation during an extended time.	This is an important question: see answers to Q2, Q4 and Q18. Note that non-funded teams are not required to participate but we hope we will develop the community in a way that is valuable for them. It is part of the supplier's role to provide a feedback and evaluation mechanism for the community, and as part of this we would hope the supplier can help develop our understanding of incentives for non-funded teams, how they are experiencing the community, and how we can improve this experience and make it as valuable as possible for non-funded teams.
20.	As a supplier based outside the UK, Am I eligible?	Yes. Suppliers based outside the UK and Republic of Ireland can apply. However, when assessing applications, we will also be considering the carbon impact of the proposal.
21.	<p>Travel expenses</p> <p>Can we confirm that the events and convenings are being resourced and run separately to the budget that we submit?</p> <p>Funded projects have a built in incentive to participate in the community of practice. Does this include any funding for them to attend events? For example, should travel and accommodation be included in our budget, or is it already included in theirs?</p>	<p>Yes, there will be three Wellcome-convened events that are resourced and run separately to the budget submitted by the supplier. Any other events and convenings that arise will also be resourced separately to the budget that the supplier submits, except for the supplier's own attendance, preparation and analysis costs. See also Q25.</p> <p>Wellcome will book and pay for travel and accommodation (when required) to facilitate attendance at these three events for all member institutional teams (regardless of whether they are IFRC-funded teams or not).</p>

#	Question	Answer
	Should the contractor include a separate budget line for travel expenses?	The contractor should budget for their own travel costs, and yes please do include a separate budget line for this. This is part of the recommendation that the supplier should budget for "event attendance and associated preparation and analysis time for a minimum of 8 in-person community events around the UK and Republic of Ireland and an additional 5 online community events. Additionally, include a budget for any interactions with teams that you expect beyond the events, such as online meetings and visits." This is an estimate of the number of events that may arise in total which would be useful for the supplier to attend as part of their role.
22.	We would be very keen to bring in the voices, expertise and experience of people who have not had their needs met, or found research culture to be non-inclusive. We are experienced in this work and would manage the dynamics sensitively and safely. A portion of our budget would be allocated to resourcing these people well. Do you anticipate any issues from your perspective with that approach?	This is an interesting suggestion but was not a specified part of the RFP so prospective suppliers do not need to include this to be competitive. We would be interested to find out how the potential supplier in question would propose to do this methodologically. Please note that it would not be in the scope of the role to identify a new group of people to bring into the community separate from the supplier and the already invited teams. However, there could be ways for the supplier to ensure their work brings in these voices, for instance in their approach to working with member teams (i.e. paying attention to the research culture experiences within those teams), or if the supplier team includes individuals with these perspectives.
23.	What incentive to non-funded projects have to participate?	See Q2, Q4, Q18 and Q19.
24.	Is it possible for two companies to collaborate and present a joint bid?	Yes. We usually contract with a single supplier and list other collaborators as sub-contractors
25.	Please could you provide further clarity about roles and responsibilities across the social researcher(s) and Wellcome? For example, will Wellcome co-ordinate (e.g., set up the events, invite participants, identify venues (if in person) etc.) the 8-10 events, or will this be the social research team? Will Wellcome facilitate events the 8-10 events, or would this be the social researchers?	<p>Wellcome is taking on full responsibility for organising the first (kick-off) event and the social researcher(s) are only expected to attend and begin enacting their role at this event. For the other two main Wellcome-convened events, we expect the organisation of the event to be more of a collaboration between Wellcome and the supplier. Wellcome is likely to still take responsibility for logistics such as booking venues, organising invitations, and contracting for any additional functions beyond what can be provided by ourselves and the supplier, which may include extra facilitation. However, we would like to work with the supplier in designing the purpose and form of these events to best align them with the evolving needs of the community. We may also be working in collaboration with another host institution for these later events to enable more geographical distribution of events. We do not require the supplier to take on a facilitation role. However, you are welcome to propose methodologies in which facilitation is part of your role.</p> <p>For any smaller events (arising organically from community members' collaborations or convened by Wellcome in response to community interest) split of roles and responsibilities will depend on how the event was initiated and who is leading. For example, if it was proposed by a group of member teams, they may take a larger role and leading and Wellcome and the supplier may offer support. However, the supplier is not expected attend all smaller events of this kind: only where this is reasonably practical, appropriate for the role and with the consent of the organising group.</p> <p>Our recommendation is for the supplier to budget for attendance, preparation and analysis time for 8 in-person around the UK and Republic of Ireland and 5 online events in total (including the 3 main Wellcome-convened events). This is an estimate of the number of events that may arise in total which would be useful for the supplier to attend as part of their role. The supplier is not expected to organise or run these events, so does not need to budget for this. They may wish to budget for time working with Wellcome to design the second 2 main Wellcome-convened events, as above: this could be incorporated within expectations of time spent meeting with Wellcome about the project. If the supplier would like to organise an event in response to community demand, responsibilities and funding support can be discussed on an ad hoc basis with Wellcome.</p>

#	Question	Answer
26.	It would be helpful to clarify the aims and objectives and potential formats of the three large events. How much, if any, time is expected to be in plenary/small group working?	<p>The overall aim of the kick-off event is to support teams to learn about each other's projects and form new connections. We also hope to hold some time for teams to discuss cross-cutting themes of shared interest. As there is a large number of teams, we anticipate participants spending most of the event in one of 3-4 sub-groups, grouped thematically.</p> <p>There is an emerging consensus from teams to include the following components in the kick-off. This is not yet confirmed, and we are still having input conversations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing information about research culture projects at each institution (regardless of IFRC funding outcome) before the kick-off, so that the event can focus more on interaction than dissemination. This information could take the form of team responses to a set of prompts. • Very short lightning talks (e.g. 1 minute) that allow teams to be linked with their areas of interest or projects, focused by a single prompt that is relevant and across teams, for example: "What is a key motivation (or challenge) for research culture work at your institution?", or "Where do you want your institution's research culture to be in 2-5 years?". • Generous tea, coffee and lunch breaks to enable attendees to connect and network. • Cross-cutting facilitated discussions on themes of common interest. • Careful attention towards accessibility and the online component of the hybrid event. • Acknowledging shared values and priorities that could positively shape this community, including collaboration over competition; placing emphasis on people over hierarchy or role distinctions; creating space to be honest about challenges; and awareness of diverse institutional circumstances, needs and strengths as well as commonalities. <p>As of yet, we don't know exactly what the mid-way and final events will focus on. The midway event may need to be a space where teams can share problems they are coming up against but this will need to be determined by input from the community closer to the time. The final event will likely be a showcasing of the progress of each of the organisations in their area of focus. We would like to work with the supplier in designing the purpose and form of these events to best align them with the evolving needs of the community.</p>
27.	How much, if any, support will be available from the Wellcome Communications Team e.g. in disseminating learning outputs?	We do not anticipate that the Wellcome communications team will have capacity to support with disseminating the outputs from the community.
28.	What are the expectations in terms of the time, attendance and continuity of grant holders to participate?	<p>See Q2. Community members include both grant holders and those who applied to IFRC but did not receive funding. Formally, some participation is expected from CoP member institutions funded through IFRC - this is written into award letters. Participation is optional for institutions who applied but weren't funded through IFRC, but most have opted to be members. Minimal participation would look like institutional team arranging for some members of the team to participate in each of the three main events over two years (and associated preparation, e.g., contributing information to be circulated in advance). It would also involve responding to engagement from the contracted social research team to support and conduct research in the community.</p> <p>More involved participation could look like actively developing a collaborative group within the community to work on a particular collective challenge and arranging or attending follow-up smaller events on this. It could also look like keeping track of and contributing to communications about the community outside of the main events. We anticipate both funded and non-funded teams' participation and attitudes to this will largely develop organically depending on the value they see in the community for their team.</p>
29.	Can you describe in greater detail your expectations for an 'embedded' researcher(s)?	Our expectations for this role are flexible and will depend on the perspective and experience the supplier brings to this project. By "embedded", we mean that the social researcher(s) would not be an external observer completely independent of this community, but by conducting their role they would become part of it, and their research methods would be collaborative with the community.

#	Question	Answer
30.	Is there appetite for the social researcher to set up, manage and run an online community space?	Please see response to Q14
31.	Please could you provide any expectations you have of numbers of participants from each HEI attending the smaller events, both online and in-person.	Currently, we are not sure what the focus of the smaller events would be. Teams may want to convene around specific themes e.g. leadership or by location e.g. Northern England. In these cases the participants could range from potentially 10-50, in a variation of online and in person.
32.	Is Wellcome open to receiving costed options from bidders? E.g. including or excluding facilitation services?	Yes, we are open to this approach
33.	Can the social research organisation be a charity rather than a registered business? a. If so, is there any objection to the team being consultants for that charity rather than directly employed by them? b. Would we have to inform the Wellcome Contact in accordance with point 7 of the RFP? c. Is it allowed for Board members of the charity who are not part of the research team to be employed at institutions who are funded through the institutional research culture programme?	Yes, we would be open to that. Eligibility criteria are published in the RFP. If IR35 off-payroll working rules apply please inform us. Please inform us of any potential arrangements at the time you submit your proposal. As stated in the RFP we cannot consider applications from prospective suppliers currently affiliated to any of the 43 organisations invited to IFRC (see List of invited institutions on the scheme page for a full list).
34.	How will the schedule of payment instalments and deliverables operate for this project, or is this negotiated as part of the contract?	Yes, this will be negotiated as part of the contract.
35.	Can a team member who is consulting for the research organisation submitting a proposal also hold a substantive employment contract with a university funded through the institutional research culture programme, or would this make the whole proposal ineligible? For clarification, the employment contract would not include a role in the institutional team who applied for or who are delivering the institutional research culture project.	Nobody from the supplier team can be a direct employee of a university that applied for the Institutional Funding for Research Culture scheme. Note that some other situations could also create a perceived conflict of interest that affects eligibility, such as contracting for an individual IFRC project team as well as this community-level role.
36.	Have all invited institutional teams (funded and not) agreed to participate fully in the Institutional Research Culture Community for the duration of the programme? If so, have the requirements of participation been confirmed or agreed to by all participants?	Most institutional teams have agreed to join the community. We have not heard back from three organisations but expect that at least two of these organisations will join the community. All of the funded teams have been informed that participation in the community is a condition of their grant. However, as of yet, no specific requirements of participation have been put together.
37.	Are there any goals specific to the development of the IFRC community of practice programme that suppliers should consider in developing a proposal?	The goals for this community are currently broadly specified, as in the RFP: "to share learning, insights, and progress towards addressing research culture challenges each institution has identified and is working on. Additionally, we want to enable this community to be a vehicle for driving positive research culture change at a sector level, by providing opportunities for collaboration, mutual support, coordinated action, and open sharing of knowledge and resources beyond the community". We are taking a flexible approach to ensure that this process is informed by the needs and aims of member teams. Our initial surveying and conversations with member teams are ongoing but these are helping us to identify goals that could collectively serve the community and the Wellcome team supporting it. We are happy to share anonymised collective outcomes of these initial engagements with the supplier, once awarded, to help shape their activities but we do not expect the supplier to have in depth knowledge of this context in advance.
38.	Should Wellcome's overarching mission or goals with this project (or broader strategic vision) change over the course of the engagement, what opportunities will the supplier have to negotiate the terms of the changes to their programme?	We do not anticipate any changes in the mission or goals of this project. If over the course of the engagement there is a change based on engagement with the community, we would expect changes in scope or goals to be raised as part of regular engagement with the Wellcome Team and would be subject to negotiation as a variation to the contracted terms. See also Q40.

#	Question	Answer
39.	Is there a defined change protocol to amend the MSA/SOW if such changes are required to successfully complete the proposed engagement? If not, would this need to be addressed/proposed by the supplier?	We would expect changes in scope or goals to be raised as part of regular engagement with the Wellcome Team and would be subject to negotiation as a variation to the contracted terms.
40.	If significant staffing or leadership changes occur within Wellcome during the course of the engagement, are there protections in place to secure the continuation of the IFRC programme?	Wellcome has conducted a thorough review of its strategy over the last few years, and so any funding or activity going forward should align with our new strategy. As a charity, we do need to ensure that our funding is used for charitable purposes, and so we need the right to terminate our grants (under our standard grant conditions) where, for example, we have concerns about progress being made towards the outputs of the award in question, financial irregularities or concerns, or misconduct. We therefore cannot guarantee the continuation of any single scheme, but we are committed to fund in areas that align with our strategy, as the IFRC programme does. The contract with the embedded social researcher (or team) is slightly separate, but could be impacted for example if there are problems with the quality of deliverables (which applies regardless of any changes on the Wellcome side). The Wellcome team responsible for convening this community and providing a contact point with the embedded social researcher (or team) could theoretically change, but there would be an expectation staff from this or a related team continuing to support this community for the duration of the IFRC grants and social researcher contract.
41.	To what extent would Wellcome like the work to include an assessment of the selection-process (specifically the element of partial randomisation) for the awards, e.g. whether it resulted in the best possible allocation or how this allocation mechanism may have influenced culture and perceptions among the recipients and non-recipients?	It is not compulsory for the supplier's work to include this (it was not a specified part of the RFP) and we would not expect this to be a dominant aspect – we are conscious this could be a very significant evaluation project in its own right. However, the supplier's social research on community members' experiences and collective learnings across the community are clearly related to experiences of the funding scheme including partial randomisation. We are interested in this learning, especially as it may continue to strongly shape experiences in the community. Therefore we suggest that if you have given this aspect particular thought, that you do include it in your proposal while ensuring that the proposal still places emphasis on all of the four objectives specified in the RFP.
42.	What secretariat services will exist for the community of practice independently of the services we would provide? I.e., does/will Wellcome (or another party) have communications and/or organisational staff and resources in place to convene the community of practice and organise (parts of) its activities (and if so, what are these?), or would the embedded team take on a role approximating to a secretariat?	<p>Apart from the services the supplier will provide, members of Wellcome's Research Culture & Communities team have some of their time allocated to leading this project from the Wellcome side, and this is how the community has been convened so far (i.e. all contact with member teams, initial survey, introductory conversations, kick-off event organisation). We also have internal teams who support specific aspects, such as an events team who supports the main Wellcome-convened events, and we may contract for other event support such as extra facilitation if needed.</p> <p>Our Research Culture & Communities team will be your contact point as a supplier and we will continue to have some of our time allocated to supporting this community. How much this corresponds to a secretariat function may be a matter of interpretation and negotiation as to what works best for all parties. Some of the supplier's services could be considered part of this function, such as providing a feedback and evaluation function, and communicating about their work across/beyond the community. However, the supplier is not expected to take on primary responsibility as a contact point or administrative support for the community. We encourage a specific articulation of how you would like to see this split of responsibility in your proposal.</p>
43.	The timeframe between the RFP being issued and the final deadline is short. Given Wellcome's ambition to change research cultures, could the deadline for submission of FRP Response be moved back to allow more time for the creations of diverse teams, as is envisaged in the RFP.	<p>We are unable to move the timelines for this RFP as we need to contract a supplier to be in place for the kick-off event in June. We take this feedback on board and will endeavour to provide longer timelines moving forward.</p> <p>If you are interested in applying for future contract opportunities, please register your details here.</p>

#	Question	Answer
		You are contacted via email when new requests for proposals are uploaded to Wellcome's website, which ensures you are kept notified as soon as possible of new contract opportunities. There may also be occasions when we contact you about contract opportunities that are not listed on the website as well.
44.	Is the expectation that the team is made up of people from one organisation or could it include individuals from multiple organisations?	The team can be from a single organisation or multiple organisations.
45.	Would there be an option for individuals from an organisation to be matched with others that have expressed an interest in this RfP? Resonating with the desire to change research cultures, this would give greater opportunity for part-time staff to be involved in the research where their individual capacity may be limited due to e.g. caring responsibilities.	This is an interesting idea, but in this case we are working to a strict timeline and therefore don't have time to facilitate the matching of individuals ahead of the RFP deadline.
46.	Is Wellcome interested in exploring differential experiences between different types of project, types of institution, 'types' of researcher, or simply looking for insights into the experience of the participants as a group?	We would be very interested in exploring how experiences differ among individuals in the community.
47.	Are you expecting us to sample from the institutions, or are you intending that we involve all of them in all phases of data collection, including whether or not they have received funding?	We would like suppliers to include all institutions, who have chosen to join the community, in all phases of data collection.
48.	Will Wellcome collect and share institutional and demographic data on the organisations and the people involved in their teams, or is the expectation that we would collect this?	Ahead of the kick-off event we will share the summaries provided by teams and a list of who will be attending in person and online. Wellcome won't be able to share this data about the teams engaged in the community. If the supplier feels it is important to gather certain demographic data as part of their research process, they should have their own methodology and ethics considerations for this.
49.	What is the expectation or hope about the longevity of the community of practice beyond the funded life of the project?	The community is expected to run for a minimum period of 2 years, corresponding approximately to the duration of funded IFRC projects. The supplier's contract will be 2.5 years to cover this duration and allowing for some additional evaluation and reporting time. Our hope and expectation is that during this period of time, we will learn how well this community is meeting the needs of member teams: if it has served an initial purpose and would no longer continue formally; or whether there is appetite and justification for it to continue in a similar or different form. We hope that the supplier's feedback and evaluation objective would inform our expectations on this, in an ongoing way.
50.	Are there any limits expected on budget allocations to cover international travel to in-person convenings?	Wellcome will cover all institutional member teams' international travel to events, if required. The supplier should include costs for their own travel to events, please also see Q55. International travel to visit teams based outside the UK and Republic of Ireland can be discussed and considered on a per-case basis with Wellcome and do not need to be included within the proposal.
51.	What parameters, if any, does Wellcome Trust anticipate as relevant to budget allocations for relationship development and trust building with the 43 institutional teams?	We do not have specified parameters on this as the supplier's team size and preferred methodology will shape their approach. We do recognise that the number of member institutional teams is significant so are open to the potential supplier's proposal of what is realistic for their context. We also encourage the potential supplier to consider the perspective of member institutions, who will come into the community and interactions with the supplier with very different incentives (see Q2, 4, 18, 19). This might mean that some teams are keen to receive an in-person visit from the supplier and invite them to meet all members of the team; other teams may be less open or responsive and an in-person visit may not make sense. We would suggest allocating budget so that you have the potential to visit at least half of the teams in-person once. You may alternatively propose to build relationships through online meetings with individual teams (and the in-person community events) if this is most realistic for your team and you believe it will be effective for the role purpose.

#	Question	Answer
52.	Regarding the feedback and evaluation mechanism to be provided as part of this project– to what extent does Wellcome Trust expect that this mechanism include structures and processes of accountability to respond to findings and insights generated by the mechanism? Is institutional accountability also an intent of this RFP, or is the scope more focused on a mechanism to enable meaningful feedback on research culture change over time without need for institutional commitments to accountability?	This community – and the embedded social researcher(s) role - is not an evaluation or accountability mechanism for institutions' individual IFRC project outcomes. Each project has its own evaluation mechanism and responsibility for institutional accountability. The community and embedded social researcher(s) role is focused instead on experiences and learning at a collective level across projects. Importantly, this includes teams who are not on funded IFRC projects but are also doing research culture work. The social researcher's feedback and evaluation role is also focused at this collective community level, so that there is a mechanism of accountability within the community, and we can be responsive to members' experiences and any need to change what we are doing in convening the community. Sometimes this might include feedback relating to experiences on individual IFRC projects or the IFRC scheme in general (see Q42), as there may not be a clear boundary with the community experience. It may be helpful to think about this feedback and evaluation mechanism as institutional accountability for Wellcome in convening this community (rather than accountability for the funded institutions).
53.	To what extent does Wellcome Trust hope that findings and results of this project will align with or deliver insights specific to Wellcome's focus areas of mental health, infectious disease, and climate and health?	This scheme aims to drive positive research cultures at the institutions that Wellcome provides a significant level of funding to. We hope that the community may also drive sector-level improvements. The findings of this project, however, are not expected to deliver insights specific to Wellcomes focus areas.
54.	Our company has held informal discussions with individual universities funded as part of the IFRC scheme to provide independent evaluation of their projects. If we were to be awarded any of these individual university projects, would that affect our eligibility to be considered for this Wellcome project?	If you were to be awarded one of these individual project roles, it would create a perceived conflict of interest as you would be affiliated with specific project teams as well as working to support the community as a whole.
55.	Does the embedded social researcher or team of researchers need to reside in the UK?	There are no limits on the geographical location of the supplier. However, we expect the supplier to attend community events and conduct social research in-person and online in the UK, Republic of Ireland and potentially international context, and potentially visit member institutions across these geographies over the course of the 2.5-year role. We will also be considering the carbon impact of proposals when carrying out our assessments.
56.	Could you provide a summary of the main themes and priority challenges relating to research culture identified in the IFRC applications, both successful and unsuccessful? Can you share the outcomes of the introductory conversations with member teams ahead of the first convening, to help us understand their current needs and aims, and to better align the proposal to their priorities?	<p>Please find all the information about the scheme and who was invited to apply via this link: https://wellcome.org/grant-funding/schemes/Institutional-Funding-for-Research-Culture#call-at-a-glance-28af. This publication (https://wellcomeopenresearch.org/articles/8-525) contains the titles of the funded projects. Shortly, we will be adding the summaries of the funded applications to our website. However, this may not be before the RFP submission deadline.</p> <p>The applications that we received were on a wide variety of topics. They can be grouped into the below themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leadership - Equitable partnerships - Sustainability - Career Development - EDI - Engaged Research - Collaboration - Open Research - Reward and Recognition <p>We are happy to share and discuss anonymised collective outcomes from surveys and introductory conversations with member teams, once awarded, to help shape the supplier's activities but we do not expect the supplier to have in depth knowledge of this context in advance of their proposal.</p>

#	Question	Answer
57.	Please provide the names of any foreign institutions involved to enable us to assess any potential real or perceived conflicts of interest.	Institutions outside the UK and Republic of Ireland who have co-applicants on the institutional funding for Research Culture applications - and from which we would not be able to accept applications - are Malawi Liverpool Wellcome Trust Clinical Research Programme, Centre for Sexual Health and HIV AIDS Research Zimbabwe and Mahidol University. Within the UK and Republic of Ireland, the same situation applies to Ulster University, Health Research Charities Ireland (HRCI) and the British Science Association.
58.	In terms of methods of social research, are there any expectations or preferences in relation to what type of research methodologies and quantitative/qualitative techniques shall be employed?	There are no expectations or preferences beyond those mentioned in the RFP: “the supplier should have a social research or equivalent expertise and skillset suitable for conducting research within a community, in a way that appropriately seeks consent, buy-in, and involvement from community members. For example, as a supplier, you may have a skillset suited to ethnography, participant observation, interviewing and co-creation, but we are open to a range of equivalent backgrounds. You should be able to demonstrate experience and understanding of the challenges and ethical considerations of being an embedded researcher. You should have qualitative analytical skills appropriate for bringing together and concisely capturing learning across multiple projects and community interactions.”
59.	It is important for us to build a horizontal, trust-based relation between researchers and participants, overcoming the traditional boundaries and making the community co-participant in the obtention and interpretation of the results, as well as paying very careful attention to inclusivity, possible barriers of exclusion and power dynamics. In that sense, is the team expected to design an inclusion strategy should special attention be paid to inclusion needs of any specific collective within the community and if so, have they expressed any specific petition in relation to the research? E.g. People with disabilities, LGBTI+, belonging to ethnic or religious minorities,	We would expect teams to consider how they will promote inclusion within their research methodology. We have not been informed of any specific inclusion needs but if we become aware of any, we will share this information with the supplier (if agreed with the participant). See also Q12.
60.	Who are the primary audiences for the findings and recommendations?	The primary audience for the findings and recommendations would be people interested in Research Culture/EDI at research institutes across the UK and the RoI and other funders.
61.	What is the deeper WHY of this exercise? What is the ultimate purpose of the research project? What would need to happen, or how would it have to be, so that you consider that the project has been a success?	<p>If this community– and the embedded social researcher(s) role – has been a success, the research culture work of the institutional teams in this community will be more than the sum of its parts. Through the embedded social researcher(s) role, this collective work will be documented and shared so that “what works and does not work” to drive positive research culture change (including generalisability of this) can become well known in the UK and Republic of Ireland research sector. This relates to objective (ii) and (iv) in the RFP.</p> <p>If objective (i) and (iii) are also a success, we will have learned about the social effects and/or other impacts of convening this community, in the context of the IFRC funding scheme, and how we can learn from this intervention and improve the experience for members in an ongoing way. This is important at a human level as a form of accountability when convening a community, to ensure it continues to meet the needs of members in an area of collective endeavour (noting: the supplier’s role is not just to research but to support and be part of the community). Deeper research “why” questions could be: what can community convening achieve in terms of driving research culture improvement? Can it drive positive research culture change at a sector level? Has it succeeded in this instance, and if not how could this be done better in the future?</p>
62.	What would you consider to be the most important attitudes and characteristics that the research team should have in order to have a satisfactory and successful collaboration?	This answer assumes that “research team” refers to the embedded social researcher(s) (i.e. the supplier), and that successful collaboration refers to the relationship they build with member teams in this community, and with Wellcome. Beyond the characteristics specified on p. 4-5 of the RFP (<i>What are we looking for in a supplier?</i>), we think that important attitudes and characteristics would be: humility, empathy and openness in working with and bringing together diverse perspectives and across this community including Wellcome; flexibility to adapt to the evolving needs of this community; and the capacity to be a critical friend when working with us in Wellcome – being

#	Question	Answer
		willing to advocate for the needs of community based on your insight and expertise, while also working productively within the scope of the project.
63.	Are there any new developments since the release of the RFP in December worth knowing ahead of writing a proposal?	Nothing outside the points covered in this Q&A
64.	It would be useful to have a sense of what plans are in place already for the June 2024 kick-off event, and any further details regarding themes and/or objectives of this event.	See Q26
65.	What role(s), if any, do you anticipate the contractor taking in designing/delivering the CoP events? What role(s), if any, do you anticipate the contractor taking in convening the CoP? Who will be responsible for these activities?	See Q25 and Q42
66.	More broadly, we'd like to understand the positionality of the social researcher. Would we serve a co-facilitation role or be positioned more as an outside observer?	The social researcher(s) would not be an outside observer completely independent of this community, they would be positioned as a member of the community – albeit with a specific role – and their research methods would be collaborative with the community. We are looking for a supplier who can bring and demonstrate experience and understanding of this kind of embedded research and the challenges and nuances involved. We do not expect the supplier to take on a facilitation role at events if this conflicts with participant-observation or co-creation activities. However, prospective suppliers are welcome to propose methodologies in which facilitation is part of their role.
67.	Are there any restrictions regarding the geographic location of the supplier, so long as they are able to be present for the CoP convenings?	There are no limits on the geographical location of the supplier. However, we expect the supplier to attend community events and conduct social research in-person and online in the UK, Republic of Ireland and potentially international context, and potentially visit member institutions across these geographies over the course of the 2.5-year role. We will also be considering the carbon impact of proposals when carrying out our assessments.
68.	Deliverable #4 (conducting "relationship-building and research through interactions with each of the up to 43 institutional teams outside of community events") could be quite a significant commitment of project resources and time, if to be done meaningfully across diverse actors at each of up to 43 institutions. Further specification of anticipated scale/level of effort for this deliverable would assist us in developing an appropriate methodological approach.	See Q51