



Request for Proposal (RFP) for Lived experience impact, learning and improvement in mental health science.

1. RFP Background & Objectives

Wellcome supports science to solve urgent health challenges facing everyone. Within this broad mission, Wellcome's Mental Health team is pursuing an ambitious agenda to drive a step change in early intervention in anxiety, depression, and psychosis. You can find more information about Wellcome's Mental Health programme [here](#).

The expertise of people with lived experience of mental health challenges is vital for the success of Wellcome's Mental Health mission. A global team of Lived Experience Advisors shape our strategy, its governance, delivery, and decision-making.

Our team is committed to collaborating with people with lived experience expertise. We define this as the knowledge, insight and expertise that comes from having first-hand experience of mental health challenges, either now or in the past. There are three levels to our lived experience work at Wellcome:

- **Internally.** We collaborate with and work alongside lived experience experts to shape the day-to-day work, thinking, direction and decision-making of the Mental Health team.
- **Funded projects.** We expect the projects we develop or fund to meaningfully collaborate with people with lived experience expertise, and seek to support funded researchers to navigate barriers and challenges to this practice.
- **In the field of mental health science.** We work to integrate lived experience expertise in the broader field of mental health science.

The Wellcome Mental Health team believes that people with lived experience should always be involved in research that impacts them. We are committed to collaborating with lived experience experts in mental health research for ethical and democratic reasons (i.e. "nothing about us without us").

We also understand the *practical* reasons for collaborating with lived experience experts, such as to improve the quality, rigour, and usefulness of the research we fund. We do not know the best methods and approaches of collaborating with lived experience experts in many of the areas we fund (e.g., basic science). With this commission, we want to understand how to optimise the impact of lived experience expertise in our funded research portfolio, identify and encourage best practices, minimise harms and overcome challenges for collaboration, across the different types of mental health research we fund.



2. RFP Specification

Wellcome is looking for a supplier to help us understand the impact of lived experience collaboration in the mental health research projects we fund. We currently have around 80 projects open in our portfolio. These projects focus on understanding the causes of mental health problems, and developing new ways to diagnose and intervene, we estimate that the number of projects will increase by approximately 20-30 projects per year. Our portfolio ranges from basic science to translational research and intervention studies. We recognise that lived experience collaboration can look different across different contexts, and that lived experience practices are more well developed in some scientific areas (and in some locations) than others.

Lived experience collaboration can have various impacts:

- On research, for example, prioritising relevant topics, recruitment, and dissemination.
- On lived experience experts, e.g., confidence, compensation, validation, career development.
- On other stakeholders, e.g., academics/researchers improving their understanding of mental health, or exploring/reflecting on their own lived experiences.

We understand that exploring the impact of lived experience collaboration is complex. To clarify, we are not seeking to justify the purpose or the need for lived experience collaboration. Our aim for this commission is to learn how lived experience expertise is being embedded meaningfully in the studies we fund, the impact it has, and any potential risk associated with tokenistic or minimal lived experience collaboration. We want this commission to contribute to knowledge about best practices in this area.

We will use this commission to guide our future funded research cohorts on how to collaborate with lived experience experts in the most useful way, and to help them gauge the impact of this collaboration throughout a project's lifecycle.

What are we looking for?

We are seeking a supplier to develop and implement an approach to understanding the impact of collaborating with lived experience experts in mental health research. We expect suppliers to engage with relevant stakeholders, collect data (both quantitative and qualitative), and provide insight into advancing best practices in lived experience collaboration. We expect suppliers to work with a selection of the funded research teams from our Mental Health programme (including teams working in various scientific fields, and in different locations). The supplier should develop a rigorous approach to understand the impact of collaboration with lived experience experts within *and* across these research projects, then support Wellcome Mental Health to test this approach with other funded research teams from our Mental Health programme. The supplier should:



- Seek to understand the impact of lived experience in mental health research, using our funded projects as case examples.
- Suggest how the benefits of lived experience collaboration could be optimised across our portfolio in future.
- Identify practices that should be avoided and how, and suggest how any risks associated with collaborating with lived experience experts could be mitigated.

Suppliers should suggest a methodology and approach in their proposal, and we understand that suppliers may wish to suggest an iterative approach. We expect suppliers to address the following:

- How they will evidence and document the impact of lived experience on research, on lived experience experts, on other stakeholders involved in research teams, and on other areas as proposed by the supplier.
- How the approach will be led or co-led with lived experience experts.
- How Wellcome will be able to share and use this information, learning from best practice with other research projects we fund in future.
- How the approach will be developed and piloted before wider rollout.
- How they will co-design the project with the research teams we fund.

We expect this commission to be coproduced, i.e. where a team comprising of different stakeholders¹ works together, shares power and develops the solution to the problem over time. We expect this commission to provide a learning opportunity for project teams in our funded cohorts, so we need an approach that prioritises a safe environment promoting honesty and transparency between stakeholders, the supplier, and with Wellcome.

Working with Wellcome

This project is a contract rather than a research grant, and as such will involve the production of agreed deliverables within a specified timeframe. The project will be managed by a contract manager within Wellcome's Mental Health team, supported by a steering group which will include Wellcome's Lived Experience advisors.

Suppliers should demonstrate how their approach benefits Wellcome's priorities for mental health research and build regular feedback with the Wellcome steering group into their proposal and timeline.

¹ For example, academic researchers, lived experience experts, clinicians, and any overlapping identities between them.



Expertise Required

We are looking for suppliers who:

- Have strong methodological expertise in understanding how to capture learning and impact in a complex system.
- Have expertise in lived experience collaboration in mental health research.
- Understand and can describe the potential sensitivities of this work.
- Have experience of working across different scientific areas relevant to the Wellcome Mental Health portfolio (e.g., basic science, psychosocial interventions)
- Have experience of working in different research contexts (e.g., including low-income and middle-income countries).

Deliverables

The nature of this project means that some important project outputs and deliverables will depend on the supplier's preferred approach or may be iterated over time. Therefore, we would like suppliers to suggest outputs and deliverables in their proposal to meet the aims, ambitions and requirements set out above for this work.

In addition, we would expect the following *mandatory* outputs:

- A final report of approximately 8000 words (including an executive summary), references, appendices, tables, and figures are not included in this word count. To be supplied in Word and PDF formats (we will give guidance to the supplier regarding Wellcome formatting requirements). The report should be suitable to be shared externally, e.g., on Wellcome Open Research. This is vital, as this commission also aims to inform lived experience collaboration in the wider mental health research ecosystem.
- Internal progress reports throughout the project, for example, after each iteration. These reports should outline the process followed, with examples, guidelines and provide recommendations for the next stage.
- A 45-minute presentation to the Wellcome team at the end of the project, including recommendations on how we can implement the approach in a wider cohort of people we fund.

3. RFP Timetable

This is a one-stage application process (it is not necessary to submit an 'expression of interest'). Suppliers should submit a full proposal, please see section 4 for more details on how to do this and the table below for the relevant dates. We welcome collaborations and partnerships in this commission but would expect one supplier to be the lead contact and project management point. Suppliers are invited to suggest a timeline that suits the needs of the project, with a maximum duration of three years (beginning with the contract start date listed below).



The timeline is listed below:

#	Activity	Responsibility	Date
1	RFP issued on the Contract Opportunities webpage	Wellcome	29 July 2024
2	Deadline for suppliers to ask questions about the RFP	Supplier	09:00 BST 07 August 2024
3	Return of Supplier Q&A to Suppliers	Wellcome	13 August 2024
4	Submission of RfP Response (in line with requirements set out in section 4)	Supplier	09:00 BST 15 September 2024
5	Supplier presentations	Supplier	21-23 October 2024
6	Notification of Contract Award	Wellcome	31 October 2024
7	Contract Negotiation	Wellcome & Supplier	End of November 2024
8	Contract Start Date	Wellcome & Supplier	TBC W/C 13 January 2025

4. Response Format

Supplier Questions

Prior to the submission of your proposal, Suppliers are provided the opportunity to submit any questions they have about the exercise and the activity, please submit these to RFP@wellcome.org before the date listed above. All questions will be collated, anonymised, answered and returned to all suppliers. Please make sure you ask all questions at this stage. Once Wellcome has 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 proposals

Suppliers who are invited to submit a full proposal should do so in a readily accessible format (e.g., Word, PDF, PowerPoint, etc.). Suppliers submitting a proposal should cover the following areas in their response:

#	Section	Max words
1	Outline your understanding of why Wellcome is interested in commissioning this work. Outline your proposed methodology to achieve the scope of the work. Please include any reference to key stakeholders and plans for engagement.	2000
2	Outline the proposed project team with a brief description of their relevant experience.	500



3	Summarise how lived experience has informed your overall project (<u>note</u> , we also expect lived experience to be embedded throughout the whole proposal), including how you will collaborate with lived experience experts in leading and co-leading the work.	500
4	Describe what you consider to be the key risks or complexities of this project? Explain how you will account for (or address) these as part of your proposed plan.	300
5	Outline your approach to equity, diversity, and inclusion in relation to your proposal.	250
6	Propose a delivery plan outlining project deliverables, timelines, and approach to working with Wellcome.	N/A
7	Complete the attached budget template which is published alongside this RfP.	N/A, see Budget Template

When contacting Wellcome with your proposal, please be sure to include the following information:

- Confirming whether you are an organisation or individual.
- If an organisation, please provide registered name, address, and registration number.

Evaluation Criteria

During the RFP evaluation period the evaluation panel will independently evaluate your full 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.

Assessment criteria	%
How well the proposal meets the RFP specification and demonstrates potential for impact.	40%
Track record and expertise of the potential Supplier(s).	25%
Strength of the proposed plans for collaborating with lived experience experts in the design, delivery and leadership of the project.	25%
Value for Money	5%
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	5%
Total:	100%

Contract Feedback



This section allows Suppliers to provide specific feedback to the contractual agreement which will be used should their proposal be successful. This is the suppliers' opportunity to provide negotiation points on Wellcome's terms and conditions.

Wellcome will not consider negotiations that are raised in your response to this proposal, i.e., 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 6 below).

Data Protection

Wellcome is committed to upholding data protection principles and protecting your information. The [Wellcome privacy statement](#) 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 UK 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 UK [GDPR article 30](#) requirements.

Suppliers will be asked to complete the [TPSRA2](#) assessment before presentation stage for Wellcome to assess how you handle data.

Supplier Presentations

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

5. 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).

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. Accessibility

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

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

All our content should be WCAG 2.2. AAA compliant. Any documents being provided to Wellcome must pass accessibility requirements. If you are unable to produce accessible documents, budget must be set aside to employ a suitable agency to do this work.

9. 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.

10. Funding

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

11. 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.

12. Environmental sustainability

Wellcome is playing its part tackling the climate crisis through its mission-driven Climate & Health strategic programme.

In addition, our [Sustainability programme](#) aims to address the environmental impacts and carbon emissions of our activities and operations.

Our suppliers have a key part to play delivering on our sustainability ambitions.

We expect all our suppliers to take active steps to:

- Address their environmental impacts, for instance as part of a certified Environmental Management System.
- Reduce the carbon emissions of their products and services, for instance by adopting Science-Based targets and plans to deliver them.
- Embed environmental considerations in the sourcing and delivery of goods and services to Wellcome, across all stages of their life cycle.

13. Wellcome Contact Details

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

Name: Rebecca Giles
Pronouns: She/her
Role: Procurement Officer
Email: RFP@wellcome.org