



Request for Proposal (RFP) for Open-access measures in mental health (psychometric and data science expertise)

We wish to engage individual(s) or organisations that can review and evaluate the use or further adaptation of existing platforms, such as GitHub or PubPub, to enable open access of mental health measures.

The Supplier(s) will bring together expertise in:

- The use of self-report measures in mental health research;
- Standards of psychometric evidence;
- Open-access research infrastructure; and
- Open-source version control systems.

This will be a short-term assignment, taking place over a maximum of 4 months (with a go/no-go milestone part way through), contributing towards Wellcome's [Mental Health strategy](#), specifically, our work supporting [common metrics in mental health](#).

1. RFP Background & Objectives

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

Wellcome Mental Health: vision and mission

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

Field Building

To support breakthroughs in understanding and intervention, we need a vibrant field of mental health research that is collaborative, coherent, and focused. A coherent field will build shared understanding of concepts, definitions, and metrics, taking into account the need to recognise the inherent complexity and plurality of mental health science and its histories, as well as the need for continued innovation.

Common Metrics

Wellcome is a member of the International Alliance of Mental Health Research Funders' Common Measures Board for Mental Health Science and is thus committed to identify and adopt common measures in mental health science. This will make it possible to compare outcomes across studies and, in time, data from different studies can be combined effectively to answer crucial research questions. Currently, we have identified and agreed measures for child and adult depression and anxiety, and adult functioning. We have also commissioned a supplier both to help review the implementation of these common metrics and to facilitate selection of a measure for psychosis.



Challenge

For the potential benefits— more meaningful comparison of research and easier harmonization of data – of common measures to be realised, they need to be as widely used as possible. To enable global use across a variety of contexts, common measures should be: low burden, supported by evidence, **accessible**, and **widely acceptable**.

Acceptability: common measures should capture the outcomes most important to people accessing support and should be appropriate to the context they are used in. In some cases, this means translations or adaptations are necessary to ensure measures are understandable in different languages and cultures. Where an adaptation has been developed, it is important to understand the methods or process adopted, the changes that have been made (and their rationale), and whether there is evidence that adapted versions are appropriate and equivalent in performance to the original.

Accessibility: for all research to be able to use common measures, they must be easy to use. Accessibility of measures may refer to several aspects, for example, understanding the technical administration of measures, there being no financial limitation in their use, or having permissible copyright arrangements. However, it is also important that those interested in using a measure are able to find the right one with confidence. At present, there are limited options for open access sharing of a developed measure. Measure items are often drawn from manuscript publications, with potential for errors in transcription and reproduction. Further, although many adaptations or translations of a particular measure may exist, the adapted versions and any associated evidence are often very difficult to find in the literature (or may not have been published at all).

Wellcome seeks technical support from individuals or organisations that can evaluate a range of options and develop an innovative proposal for where and how mental health measures might be made open access, preferably making use of existing systems or platforms.

2. RFP Specification

We are seeking a supplier to develop a model and associated technical specification to support the collation, curation, and open access of self-report measures in mental health research. The model will:

- allow the research community to develop and upload measure iterations, adaptations, or translations. This will include a clear versioning system that can track item and measure-level adaptations to static self-report questionnaires over time and across different languages, with a means to cite the specific version used.
- house measure items in a machine-readable format, and able to support applications, for example, transposing items into an electronic survey platform.
- enable the inclusion of granular rationales for proposed changes or cite evidence at either the item or measure level, specific to version.

The proposed model should also include:



- consideration of standards of psychometric evidence. It should propose an approach to governance that balances community development of adaptations or translations, with the consistency needed to support a common measures approach (for example, a way to approve new versions that meet a certain threshold of evidence).
- consideration of how such a system might be used for self-report measures that are adaptive, rather than static.
- [if the proposed platform can be used for a range of content, in addition to self-report measures] a way to house a collection of measures, and index or categorise them appropriately, e.g. ontologically.
- an overview of the associated logistical requirements and costs of developing and implementing the model, as well as its ongoing support.
- consideration of how far the proposed approach would extend or apply to other areas of health, or beyond self-report measures.

Deliverables and activities

The deliverables of this work will include:

1. Project plan (Week 1). Where organisations or individuals are working together, this should clearly specify the range of relevant activities, timelines and milestones, and clearly specify the division of work.
2. Platform landscaping (Week 5). Conduct a timely review (over a period of no longer than 4 weeks) of available options or existing platforms for hosting mental health measures. This may include existing repositories, but it also may include options like GitHub or other open-source models that others have tried to use for equivalent products, or that may be adapted for this purpose. Develop a brief options paper, of no more than 6 pages, for discussion with the Wellcome Mental Health team and discuss this during a session lasting up to 90 minutes.
3. Technical specification (Week 12-16). Following the result of the options paper—which also presents a go/no-go decision on the continuation of the work—develop a versioning system that meets the desired specification, summarizing the approach as a written report of up to 15 pages, plus appendices.
 - Conduct initial pilot user testing and consultation with key stakeholders to ensure it would meet a range of researcher requirements.
 - Provide a clear overview of the governance model and a proposal for implementation and options, including logistics and resourcing, for ongoing management.
 - Provide a detailed risk register of potential risks or unintended consequences of this approach.
 - This should include an initial 'how to' guide for those who might use the versioning system, in MS Word and PDF format.



4. Attend either weekly or fortnightly check-ins with the Wellcome Mental Health team, including members of our lived experience team, to update on progress, check scope, and discuss/address challenges. We expect the supplier to meaningfully and ethically involve and collaborate with people with lived experience expertise in the design and delivery of the project, as relevant to the deliverables. We anticipate for this activity, that one or two Lived Experience Advisers in the Wellcome team will help steer the project.
5. Provide up to two presentations to share findings and the proposal—either as an interim update, or as a final recommendation—to the Wellcome team and to the Common Measures Board. This should be presented as a slide deck of no more than 15 slides plus appendices.

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.

Individuals or organisations may apply to this opportunity. We do not expect that all of this expertise will necessarily come from one person we also welcome proposals from individuals with some of the advertised expertise, but who could be paired with applicants.

Essential skills or experience: We are looking for specific expertise in: the use of self-report questionnaires used in mental health, standards of psychometric evidence, open-access research infrastructure, and open-source version control systems. All suppliers should have strong written communication and information synthesis skills.

Desirable skills or experience: Experience specific to mental health and an understanding of the mental health research landscape is desirable.

3. RFP Timetable

#	Activity	Responsibility	Date
1	RFP issued on Contract Opportunities webpage	Wellcome	29 July 2024
2	Submission of Supplier Q&A	Supplier	5 August 2024
3	Return of Supplier Q&A to Suppliers	Wellcome	13 August 2024
4	Submission of RFP Response	Supplier	26 August 2024
5	RFP Evaluation Period	Wellcome	9 September 2024



6	Supplier Presentations	Supplier	10-12 September 2024
7	Notification of Contract Award	Wellcome	25 September 2024
8	Contract Negotiation	Wellcome & Supplier	October 2024
9	Contract Start Date	Wellcome & Supplier	November 2024

4. Response Format

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

Expression of Interest and Supplier Q&A

Suppliers are asked to submit a short expression of interest by e-mail to the Wellcome contact in accordance with the RFP timetable, which should contain the following information.

- Confirming whether you are 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
1	Please provide a summary for up to three team members, which includes a narrative statement (up to 500 words) regarding their existing expertise, role in the project, and suitability to meet the specification.	2 pages (plus references/publications)
3	Provide an outline demonstrating your proposed methodology to achieve the scope of the work. Please include any reference to further resources, expertise, or any plans for engagement that you intend to draw on in its completion.	Up to 1000 words
4	What do you consider the key risks or complexities of this project to be? Explain how you will account for or address these as part of your proposed plan.	300 words
5	Outline how you will attend to equity, diversity, and inclusion in completion of the specification.	250 words
6	Please also complete the attached budget template published alongside this RFP	N/A

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Detail	%
Methodology	How well the proposal meets the RfP Specification. <i>Coverage:</i> How well are the desired focus areas (as outlined in the specification) covered in the proposed methodology address? <i>Quality:</i> Is the proposed methodology aligned with our needs? <i>Utility:</i> Will the proposed methodology deliver the desired, credible, and useful results?	35%
Experience	<i>Skills and Experience:</i> Does the supplier have the relevant skills, experience, and contextual understanding to deliver this work?	35%
Budget	Value for Money	15%
EDI	Does the supplier have an approach to EDI and/or specific policies and are these being put into practice in the proposal?	15%
Accessibility	<i>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. *</i>	[N/A]



	Total:	100%
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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. Please ensure you engage with a relevant legal contact if applicable. Contract feedback should be incorporated into your proposal as an annex in the following format

Clause #	Issue	Proposed Solution/Comment

Suppliers submitting proposals as a registered company should review Wellcome's Standard terms and Conditions [document](#).

Individuals submitting proposals as a sole trader (not registered) should review this [document](#).

Individuals submitting proposals through their own personal services company please highlight this to the Wellcome contact immediately (see point 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 proposal successful proposals will be invited to a virtual meeting which will last 50 minutes in total and will consist of a 20 minute PowerPoint 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