



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Request for Proposal (RFP): Facilitator and Science Writer

#	Supplier Question	Wellcome response
1	<b>Agenda Development:</b> How finalized is the agenda? What flexibility exists for collaboration with the Network Steering Committee to refine structure and flow?	The aims of the meeting as set out in the RFP will not change significantly. We expect the supplier to work with the Network Steering Committee to define a meeting agenda and structure that best achieves these aims. Flexibility is available within the logistical constraints of the meeting (i.e. start and end times, number of breakout rooms available)
2	<b>Session Formats:</b> The RFP mentions a mix of longer and shorter talks. Does Wellcome have a preference for specific discussion formats (e.g., panels, roundtables) that have worked well in previous meetings?	The supplier should work with the Network Steering Committee to define the overall agenda, including topics, formats and timings for each discussion item. Please see question 23 below for an example of possible activities based on previous network meetings.
3	<b>Hybrid Participation:</b> With up to 10 virtual attendees, does Wellcome envision full integration into discussions and groupwork, or a parallel engagement track?	Virtual attendees should be integrated into the main discussions. If appropriate, virtual attendees may form an online breakout group if breakout discussions are part of the final agenda.
4	<b>Accessibility:</b> Will interpretation and translation support be provided for non-English-speaking participants?	Meeting participants will be asked about accessibility needs during the registration process. If interpretation and translation are needed, these will be provided.
5	<b>Online Platform:</b> What platform(s) are you considering for hosting the online meeting attendees? What virtual engagement platforms and interactive tools (e.g., Slido, Miro) will be available? Will there be any in-room tech support to ensure seamless virtual participation?	This will be discussed with the supplier; Teams or Zoom are likely to be the online meeting platform, and tools such as Slido are expected to be used by the supplier to collect live feedback during the meeting. The level of in-room tech support will be proportional to the confirmed virtual attendance.
6	<b>Speaker/Chair Prep:</b> Will the facilitator be responsible for coordinating pre-event speaker and session chair	Yes, the facilitator should co-ordinate pre-event speaker and session chair preparation.



	preparation (e.g., briefing moderators, confirming session objectives), or will that be handled internally by Wellcome?	
7	<b>Final Outputs:</b> Beyond live facilitation, are there expectations for post-event summaries or additional deliverables from the facilitator?	<p>The facilitator should aim to bring discussions to a conclusion during the meeting so that outcomes are clearly summarized verbally for the meeting report. If the session plans include collecting data from participants, for example via slido, which cannot be analysed live during the meeting, please indicate within your facilitation proposal how this data could best be made available to the science writer after the meeting promptly and in a usable form. This could include post-meeting data analysis / summary by the facilitator if appropriate.</p> <p>If needed for the meeting report, the facilitator should be willing to answer a small number of post-event queries from the science writer and/or Wellcome within a reasonable timescale, with a short virtual meeting between the parties if necessary.</p>
8	Who is the intended audience for the report? What is the expected level of readability for the report?	The report will be primarily for Wellcome's internal use and will not be published. Readers can be assumed to be familiar with the relevant scientific concepts, but not necessarily to be aware of these six projects and the Pathogen Variants Network.
9	Who (within Wellcome or externally) will have oversight of the preparation of the report?	Wellcome's Epidemics and Epidemiology team will have oversight of the preparation of the report.
10	Will the research teams be available (and willing) for further questions or clarifications during the development of the report?	This can be discussed between the successful supplier and the Network Steering Committee (which comprises PIs from the six research teams).
11	Is the report expected to adhere to a specific style and/or previous report?	No, we expect the supplier to develop an appropriate format within the guidelines set out in the RFP.



12	What will be the feedback mechanism after submission of first drafts of the report? Will detailed feedback and direction be provided?	Yes, Wellcome will provide feedback on the first and any subsequent report drafts.
13	Is there a need to arrange travel logistics for the participants?	No.
14	Will Wellcome provide technical support for managing the hybrid format (for the ~10 online participants)?	Please see question 39
15	Are there any existing templates or preferred formats from previous network meetings that should be followed?	No, we expect the supplier to develop an appropriate format within the guidelines set out in the RFP.
16	Will the facilitator have access to reports/outcomes from the previous two annual meetings to ensure continuity?	No, we expect the supplier to develop an appropriate format within the guidelines set out in the RFP.
17	For the meeting report, what is the expected turnaround time after the meeting?	<p>We suggest the following timetable, but this is to be finalized with the successful supplier:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 October 2025: Supplier provides proposed high level outline report structure to Wellcome for feedback (to be provided by Wellcome within 1 week)</li> <li>• 3 November 2025: Supplier provides full draft for Wellcome feedback (to be provided within 1 week)</li> <li>• 24 November 2025: Supplier provides final draft (Wellcome to provide any final feedback within 2 weeks)</li> <li>• 15 December 2025: Final version including any Wellcome feedback submitted</li> </ul>
18	Will the facilitator be expected to prepare any pre-meeting materials for participants?	Yes. As set out in the RFP, the facilitator will be expected to work with the Network Steering Committee and Wellcome to finalise roles and responsibilities for key participants (e.g. chairs of presentation sessions or breakout groups, poster judges) and



		<p>prepare a short briefing document to ensure that all key participants understand the purpose of their session and their role within it.</p> <p>Additionally, as set out in the RFP, the facilitator will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead a session on priority activities for the final eight months of the network, and how the remaining network activities can best build future outbreak preparedness, including a prioritisation exercise of the options network members put forward. The facilitator should prepare any materials required for this session.</li> <li>• Ensure that feedback is gathered from network members to inform how Wellcome approaches similar network projects in future. Depending on how this session is structured, the facilitator may need to prepare materials for the session (e.g. mentimeter survey or similar).</li> </ul> <p>As the final agenda is developed with the Steering Committee and Wellcome, other items requiring preparation of pre-meeting materials by the facilitator may be agreed.</p>
19	Are there any specific cost items that should be broken out separately in the budget?	Please clearly identify travel costs for all supplier team members within the budget (accommodation and meals will be arranged by Wellcome and do not need to be included in the budget).
20	Will there be meeting transcriptions or recordings?	We anticipate the hybrid meeting being recorded through Teams/Zoom for the purposes of the meeting report. Please include in your proposal any further resources required to capture information during the meeting.



21	The RFQ states that the facilitator should have a solid understanding of infectious disease research. Why is this a requirement?	Many of the meeting discussions will be on the topic of infectious disease research that the network members are carrying out. The facilitator will need to understand enough of the technical content of these discussions to effectively facilitate the sessions.
22	The 10 people online: can you share some reasons why they will not attend in person? What are their levels of expertise? What will their role	<p>This will be predominantly an in-person meeting, but with global participants invited there may be a variety of reasons that people are unable to travel to Bangkok to attend in person. Based on previous meeting attendance, we estimate that up to 10 people may need to attend remotely. Their expertise and role will be the same as the in person participants.</p> <p>It is also possible that, while scoping the meeting format with the Network Steering Committee, relevant individuals could be identified to be invited to give a short virtual talk on a topic of interest to the network.</p>
23	Do you have an estimate of the number of longer talks, short talks, poster presentations, panel discussions, plenary sessions, and breakout discussions there will be? We would like to get a sense of what the main activities are	<p>The agenda is likely to include:</p> <p>One or two longer research talks by each of the six research teams to the whole meeting.</p> <p>A poster presentation session where posters are displayed in a breakout room and meeting participants walk around to speak individually to the poster presenters.</p> <p>Breakout discussions for two or three working groups that are or will be already established prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Sessions on priority activities for the final eight months of the network and on feedback/reflections on the project so far,</p>



		<p>which should be designed by the supplier in partnership with the Steering Committee and Wellcome.</p> <p>The supplier should work with the Steering Committee to confirm whether these activities will best achieve the meeting aims and to schedule additional panel discussions, shorter talks, plenary sessions and/or breakout discussions as appropriate.</p>
<b>24</b>	<p>One role of the facilitators will be to “Work with the Network Steering Committee to finalise the aims and agenda for the meeting”. In our proposal, do you want to hear about potential methodologies that can be used to fulfil your meeting’s aims, or do you have a set agenda and timing of all the presentations. In other words, do you want a facilitator to assist you with the design of your process or something more like a moderator of your own agenda?</p>	<p>We would like the facilitator to take an active role in designing the structure of the meeting to best achieve the overall aims.</p>
<b>25</b>	<p>Are you open to different methodological approaches that might be better suited to achieve your aims than the methods you outline (panel sessions, poster judging, etc)?</p>	<p>Yes, we welcome suggestions of other methodological approaches.</p>
<b>26</b>	<p>The RFQ states that one of the aims of the meeting is to reflect on learning from the network project. Does that refer to what has been learned about pathogen variants or rather about the network itself as a co-ordinating and knowledge sharing body?</p>	<p>The focus of learning and reflection will be about the network itself as a co-ordinating and knowledge-sharing body.</p>
<b>27</b>	<p>Can you share with us the names of the six immunology research projects? We would like to get a sense of their research.</p>	<p>The research focusses on assessing the immunology, virology and structural biology of novel SARS-CoV-2 variants, to generate data that can be used by policy-makers in preventing and controlling Covid-19. Each award also has a focus on capability-building for the research response to future outbreaks of infectious disease.</p>



<b>28</b>	How technical is the research? Is it more about general public health and density or does it go into more technical detail such as DNA, Covid, mutation of genetic strands etc	The research does go into technical detail of immunology, virology and structural biology.
<b>29</b>	Will all sessions be in English? Will interpretation be required?	Please see question 4.
<b>30</b>	How many rapporteurs will be at the event?	No rapporteurs are planned to be at the event outside of any appointed through this RFP. Please include in your proposal for preparing the meeting report all staff that you would require to complete the task.
<b>31</b>	Can US suppliers apply? If yes, do they need to complete any registration process with Wellcome Trust?	Yes, US suppliers can apply. No, an additional registration process is not required only details requested at EOI stage (Company name, company number, address)
<b>32</b>	Does the Wellcome Trust have an established budget ceiling for the opportunity?	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
<b>33</b>	Can one submit one application addressing both proposals?	Yes
<b>34</b>	Please clarify how Wellcome expects the following to materialize: if necessary, a facilitator should be able to bring in additional experts to provide insights and expertise (pg. 2). Would these experts exist outside of the PVN, would Wellcome cover any costs associated with their participation?	If a facilitator plans to bring in external experts, these will be from outside the Pathogen Variants Network and should be identified by the supplier. Please include a description of their role in project delivery and costs associated with their participation in your proposal.
<b>35</b>	Could you please provide more information on the expected participants, nationalities, language, the role you expect the online participants will have during the event? Are there specific demographic groups Wellcome wants to ensure are represented and engaged in the discussions?	Participants are Wellcome-funded researchers from countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the UK. The facilitator should ensure that all participants are effectively engaged.



<p><b>36</b></p>	<p>Regarding language accessibility:</p> <p>A) Will the meeting be carried out in English?</p> <p>B) Will participants require live interpretation services we should quote for, if so, what languages will be used?</p> <p>C) Will any meeting collateral and final report need translation into any languages?</p>	<p>The meeting will be carried out in English and the final report is only required in English. If participants identify a need for live interpretation services when registering for the meeting, Wellcome will arrange this separate to this RFP exercise.</p>
<p><b>37</b></p>	<p>Would you like the chosen provider to quote for the graphic design of any meeting collateral?</p>	<p>As the report is for Wellcome's internal use, we do not anticipate graphic design services to be required.</p>
<p><b>38</b></p>	<p>It appears that there was an in-person Pathogen Variants Network meeting in October 2024. Would you be willing to share the presentation slides with us it would be very useful to give us an idea of the scope and nature of the content (e.g. molecular virology, sequencing, bioinformatics, epidemiology, public health) which would guide us as to the need to engage any additional experts etc.</p>	<p>We are not able to share the slides with potential suppliers at this point. The scientific focus of the research is immunology, virology and structural biology of Covid-19.</p>
<p><b>39</b></p>	<p>Will there be any technical support for hybrid participation (for online attendees)? Or will our team provide this as well?</p>	<p>Please set out in your application what you or your team could provide in terms of effectively running a hybrid meeting over Teams or Zoom with up to 10 online participants. We are aware that a variety of individuals and organizations may apply for this RFP, and additional technical support may be required with practical aspects of the hybrid meeting.</p> <p>Final technical arrangements, including any additional technical support required from the meeting venue or any other third party, will be discussed between Wellcome and the successful supplier at the contracting stage. This will be informed by the number of participants who request online attendance during participant registration (April - May 2025).</p>





40	Will there be assistance available for documentation and harvesting of key insights in breakout groups or will you expect the supplier to provide?	If, as currently anticipated, breakout groups form a relatively small part of the agenda, Wellcome staff attending the meeting can help take notes, and chairs of breakout groups can be asked to report key insights back in a plenary session.
41	What are the main risks Wellcome foresees in delivering this meeting	Previous meetings have had good participation and engagement. Some key delivery risks include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are a lot of potential topics to cover in a relatively short meeting, so effective prioritization and agenda planning will be key to achieving the meeting aims. In particular, achieving meaningful consensus on priority future activities and representative feedback on activities to date will require careful planning to ensure all participants are effectively engaged and discussions are brought to a conclusion in the time available.</li><li>• Travel disruption prevents participants (including Wellcome and suppliers) arriving at the venue in a timely manner.</li><li>• Technical problems prevent effective participation of online participants and/or prevent a clear recording of the entire meeting being obtained for use in preparing the meeting report.</li></ul>
42	What are the key differentiators Wellcome is looking for in an ideal facilitator?	Wellcome will use the evaluation criteria set out in the RFP.
43	What will be the expected delivery date for the final report?	A suggested timetable is set out in question 17.