



RFP N100021

Strategic Foresight Partnership

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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 are taking on the biggest health challenges facing humanity – climate and health, infectious disease, and mental health – to find urgent solutions and accelerate prevention. Find out more about Wellcome and our work at: [wellcome.org](https://www.wellcome.org).

If you are interested in working with Wellcome on this activity, please review the information below. This document outlines the activity for which Wellcome is seeking proposals, the timetable, the questions suppliers must complete, and how to engage with us further. To ensure your response is successful, please read the full document and answer all questions in the relevant sections. All responses must be submitted via the Oracle portal. Responses submitted outside the system will not be accepted.

All suppliers are required to register on Oracle if they have not already done so. Please allow at least three working days before the final submission date to ensure you complete your registration and receive approval in time to meet the deadline.

The first stage is open only for Expressions of Interest (EOI) and questions; all other sections are locked. After Wellcome addresses the questions and uploads responses, the next round opens. Only suppliers who are successful at the EOI stage will be invited to submit a full RFP response.

Wellcome Contact Details

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

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Table of Contents

1 Synopsis	4
1.1 Background and Objectives	4
1.2 Specification	5
1.3 Timetable	9
1.4 Guidance on Submission and Process	9
1.5 Contract Terms and Conditions	10
2 Responses Required	11
2.1 Section 1. Expression of Interest and Questions	11
2.2 Section 2. Full Proposal submission	13
2.3 Section 3. Methodology	13
2.4 Section 4. Delivery and Outputs	14
2.5 Section 5. Experience	15
2.6 Section 6. Budget	15
2.7 Section 7. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	16
3 Evaluation Criteria	16
4 General Information	18
4.1 Data Protection	18
4.2 Equity Diversity and Inclusion	18
4.3 Disability Confident	18
4.4 Accessibility	18
4.5 Independent Proposal	19
4.6 Funding	19
4.7 Costs Incurred by Prospective Suppliers	19
4.8 Environmental Sustainability	19

1 Synopsis

Wellcome is seeking a supplier to help us and other research funders make better use of strategic foresight. As a sector, research funders need to take a longer-term view because of our responsibility to support scientific ecosystems, and because we invest in emerging fields and solutions often before there is established evidence. Therefore, it is important that we and other research funders take advantage of foresight approaches that help us make the most of our longer time horizons. While many foresight toolkits exist, they are often designed for industry or government rather than the specific needs of research funders.

We want to work with a supplier who can help us: convene a group of research funders, understand which cutting edge foresight approaches are best suited to our sector's needs and context, potentially test promising approaches, and provide advice on applying those foresight approaches to ensure they drive action. Across the engagement, we want to share our findings openly so the sector as a whole can use them.

The ultimate aim is to strengthen long-term decision making across the research funding community and help shape future scientific and health research priorities.

1.1 Background and Objectives

At Wellcome, we need to operate over longer time horizons. That is partly because of our independence, financial capacity and track record over 90 years and also because of our role as a health research funder. As a sector, research funders need to take a longer-term view because of our responsibility to support scientific ecosystems, and because we invest in emerging fields and solutions often before there is established evidence.

Therefore, it is important that we and other research funders take advantage of foresight approaches that help us make the most of our longer time horizons. There are many foresight toolkits that describe a wide range of foresight methods and techniques. However, these are often aimed at industry or government and are not tailored to the needs of research funders.

We therefore want to work with other research funders to understand what foresight approaches are best suited to our sector's needs and context, and how to embed approaches that help us:

1. Make better, more future-proof decisions on our long-term strategic direction.
2. Shape our short-, medium- and long-term mission investment portfolio.
3. Convene research sector stakeholders around shared visions for the future and best practice in foresight.

We have done foresight in the past, and departments at Wellcome like our Discovery Department and Policy & Partnerships Department have used foresight tools and techniques such as horizon scanning or scenario development to help shape direction. Other stakeholders in the research funder sector will have undertaken similar exercises in the past too, so there is an opportunity for us to be more intentional and systematic about how we use foresight to drive our work. As outlined above, we are not starting from scratch, and we can build on past and current foresight work across the sector to define what approaches are best suited to our needs and context.

Aims, objectives and key questions

We are looking to contract an external Supplier to work with us to better understand and pilot cutting-edge foresight tools and techniques that are best placed to drive action for research funders and focus on the long term. We would aim to share our findings on what the best foresight tools for research funders are with other sector stakeholders to drive action beyond Wellcome's walls.

Therefore, from this work we would like to ensure that Suppliers help us answer three questions that form the basis for the objectives of this engagement:

1. What are the use cases of strategic foresight for research funders (prioritising health examples where possible), given our sector context and needs?
2. What are the foresight approaches that are best suited to help us and the sector respond to those use cases?
3. How can we convene research funders (like UKRI, CIFAR, ERC, HHMI, among others) to support the sector's use of foresight methods and tools, especially on common strategic questions? *For example, this might involve: agreeing principles for using foresight, piloting a selection of methods and tools to test their value, providing advice on embedding foresight in decision making, etc.*

The contracted Supplier would work directly with the Strategy Development & Impact team at Wellcome to answer the above questions.

We know that there is often a risk that foresight exercises remain theoretical. We want to avoid that in this engagement. Our aim is that this engagement drives action for research funders; it should help us take a longer-term approach and make decisions that lead to greater impact.

1.2 Specification

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

Scope and requirements

The engagement might follow four broad phases, although we expect the Supplier to shape plans and delivery with us:

- **Phase 0:** Collaborate with Wellcome to convene a collective of research funders who are well placed to share their perspective on foresight approaches, pilot methods, tools, and guide later phases of this project.
- **Phase 1:** Build use cases for foresight approaches for research funders, based on an assessment of sector context, best practice and capability.
- **Phase 2a:** Leverage the use cases to develop and mature a set of principles and practical guidance for how research funders can use foresight methods and tools on common strategic questions.
- **Phase 2b:** (optional, depending on feasibility), Pilot foresight methods and tools on some of the common strategic questions raised in earlier phases.
- **Phase 3:** Finalise advice with Wellcome and the sector on applying foresight approaches, including learnings on how to organisationally implement and embed best practice foresight approaches for research funders (potentially based on pilots conducted).

Across the work, we would expect outputs to be published in engaging, open-access reports so the wider sector can benefit.

We are particularly keen to understand how prospective Suppliers use cutting-edge foresight tools and methods to surface novel insights that can shape the strategic direction of research funders. As a sector at the forefront of science and innovation – we are looking for Suppliers to push us beyond traditional methods. We also want to ensure any foresight approaches we develop and use account for a diverse set of perspectives and sources, reflecting Wellcome's focus on global impact.

When considering what foresight approaches are best suited to research funders, we expect the Supplier to consider the full scope of foresight. That is from trying to identify the things that are on the horizon that we do not yet know (e.g. with horizon scanning) through to forecasting what the future might look like that could shape research funders priorities and approach (e.g. with scenario planning) and everything in between and beyond.

We have illustrated the type of questions we might expect to use strategic foresight approaches to help us answer below. They cut across the future of our operating context, our direction, and our required capabilities.

- What forces could shape our strategic direction? *E.g. What health threats could emerge from climate, ecological, or geopolitical instability that current systems are not prepared for?*

- What futures should we prepare for now? *E.g. What scientific capabilities will be essential for global health research in 2035?*
- How might research funders need to evolve as institutions? *E.g. What organisational capabilities might we need to build or strengthen to respond to emerging trends?*
- How might changes in public perception, support and trust of government, philanthropy and research institutions affect the mechanics or strategies of research funders?
- Which areas/disciplines/fields of research hold the most promise in the future and which areas have already made their most important contributions in the past?
- Which frontier areas of research (that most people have never heard of) have the potential to complete transform the world in 20-30 years from now?

For now, this is a purely illustrative set of questions. We would expect to work with the Supplier and the group of research funders to agree the strategic questions we think foresight approaches could add most value.

Expectations

We expect the Supplier to produce at least two primary deliverables (with option for an additional report based on piloting the chosen foresight approaches, depending on feasibility and timelines), in line with the above questions and phases:

- An event that convenes a group of research funders to surface use cases for foresight approaches and sector best practice.
- An open-access report that provides:
 - An overview of the strategic foresight approaches and tools best suited to research funders' context and needs, based on some common use cases
 - Advice on applying foresight approaches, including learnings on how to organisationally implement and embed best practice foresight approaches for research funders
 - (And separate personalised advice for Wellcome based on our specific context and mandate, but in line with the above content).
- (Optional) A pilot foresight report based on testing the tools and mechanisms against agreed strategic questions, versions of which should be shared both internally to inform Wellcome decision making, and externally with sector stakeholders.

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.

RFP Timetable

We anticipate a focused, timebound engagement of **approximately 12–16 weeks**. We expect to commence procurement in April, and select the Supplier by June/July, with kick-off in September.

We are looking for proposals that demonstrate:

- A clear understanding of the research funder context, the specific needs and demands this presents, and how foresight approaches should be applied to meet them
- Deep expertise in how foresight can drive longer-term thinking and more effective action (ideally in a research funder context), combined with the skill and humility to convene a collective of research funders.

1.3 Timetable

#	Activity	Responsibility	Date
1	RFP issue to Suppliers	Wellcome	20-Apr-2026
2	Submission of Expression of Interest and Supplier Q&A	Supplier	01-May-2026
3	Return of Supplier Q&A to Suppliers	Wellcome	15-May-2026
4	Submission of RFP Response	Supplier	05-Jun-2026
5	RFP Evaluation Period	Wellcome	08-Jun-2026 to 19-Jun-2026
6	Supplier Presentations	Supplier	06-Jul-2026 to 10-Jul-2026
7	Notification of Contract Award	Wellcome	Mid July 2026
8	Contract Negotiation	Wellcome & Supplier	
9	Contract Start Date	Wellcome & Supplier	14-Sep-2026

1.4 Guidance on Submission and Process

Submission:

- Suppliers submitting a full proposal should answer the following questions listed below
- All sections should be completed as fully as possible for Wellcome to review and score your responses once the submission period is closed. Please ensure you attach all information.
- Supplier's responses should be submitted via the Oracle portal. Once you have submitted your response you will be notified that it has been received
- Suppliers are allowed to revise their submitted response until the close date.
- Throughout this process Wellcome will ensure you are notified and contacted when you have been successful and unsuccessful

Supplier Presentations:

- Following a submission of the proposal successful proposals will be invited to an in-person or virtual

meeting the duration will be confirmed. This may comprise of a PowerPoint presentation, demo etc (depending on the activity) followed by question and answers session. We may also require a brief follow-up call after these presentations.

1.5 Contract Terms and Conditions

Wellcome will be looking to put a contract in place using Wellcome's Standard Terms and Conditions. Suppliers submitting proposals should review Wellcome's Standard terms and Conditions [document](#)

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

2 Responses Required

* Response is required

2.1 Section 1. Expression of Interest and Questions

1. Suppliers are asked to submit a short expression of interest via Oracle in accordance with the RFP timetable, which should contain information pertaining to the questions below. 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 has issued responses, no further questions will be accepted in order to ensure a fair and equitable process.

We will review expressions of interest to ensure that proposals fit within the scope of the RFP. Where we are satisfied of this, we will invite organisations to submit a full proposal to the RFP in accordance with the RFP timetable. Please note that you should only submit a full proposal to the RFP if you have been invited to do so.

Submitting an EOI is not a binding commitment to submit a full proposal should your organisational priorities change, you will not then be penalised for future opportunities

- *2. Outline your proposed approach to this work (max. 500 words)

Attachments not allowed

*3. Please provide brief responses to the following questions (max 500 words in total)

1. What specific foresight expertise does your organisation offer, particularly in relation to supporting research funders?
2. How does your team's profile and experience align with the requirements outlined in this brief?
3. What evidence can you provide of successfully helping clients embed foresight practices to influence and shape strategy?

*4. A non-binding cost estimate as a single figure in GBP

*5. Confirm if you are a company or individual. If you are a company, please provide full company name, address, and company registration number.

*6. Any questions you have about the exercise and activity.

2.2 Section 2. Full Proposal submission

1. We are looking for proposals that demonstrate:

- A clear understanding of the research funder context, the specific needs and demands this presents, and how foresight approaches should be applied to meet them
- Deep expertise in how foresight can drive longer-term thinking and more effective action (ideally in a research funder context), combined with the skill and humility to convene a collective of research funders.

Proposals should effectively answer the questions outlined below and can be set out in the format the providers see fit, but should contain a written component (Word/PDF, PowerPoint or equivalent).

We reserve the right to adjust the full RFP proposal questions after the expression of interest stage, so we can reflect on potential suppliers' input at the EOI stage (e.g. clarification questions or responses to EOI questions).

2. After you have reviewed each of the questions in the below Sections 2.3-2.7:

- Methodology,
- Delivery & outputs,
- Experience
- Budget,
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI).

Please upload a single document detailing your proposed response, ensuring you keep within the word limit as specified for each question. Please note some questions may not have a word limit.

We have locked down your ability to answer directly in the sections below to ensure we avoid repetition of your responses, for Wellcome to receive a consolidated document.

2.3 Section 3. Methodology

1.

What do you view as the specific role of foresight for research funders? How will your approach surface the specific foresight approaches that are best suited to research funders' context and needs? (max 2 pages)

Please answer Yes or No if you have included your answer into your full proposal as per section 2.2

2.

How will the approach draw on cutting-edge tools and technology to surface novel foresight insights that can drive action? (max 2 pages)

Please answer Yes or No if you have included your answer into your full proposal as per section 2.2

3. How will the approach get the most out of the collective of research funders? (max 1 page)

Please consider the following in your response:

- Utilising expertise & sharing knowledge
- Collaboration
- Synthesis & Insight development)

Please answer Yes or No if you have included your answer into your full proposal as per section 2.2

2.4 Section 4. Delivery and Outputs

1.

Propose a delivery plan outlining project deliverables, timelines, and approach to working with Wellcome. (max 2 pages)

Please only state Yes or No to this question to confirm if this has been added to your full proposal response as per section 2.2

2.

How will you make sure the proposed foresight approaches are grounded in practical organisational decision making that can drive impact and longer-term thinking, rather than remaining as theoretical exercises? (max 2 pages)

Please only state Yes or No to this question to confirm if this has been added to your full proposal response as per section 2.2

3.

How will you ensure the collective of research funders are set up to take action on the back of the engagement, and use the findings to embed best practice foresight approaches? (max 1 page)

Please only state Yes or No to this question to confirm if this has been added to your full proposal response as per section 2.2

2.5 Section 5. Experience

1.

Please outline the level of senior involvement you propose across key activities (e.g. convening, internal and external stakeholder management, day-to-day delivery) and functions (e.g. oversight, strategic guidance, quality assurance). (max 1 page)

Please only state Yes or No to this question to confirm if this has been added to your full proposal response as per section 2.2

2.6 Section 6. Budget

1.

Please provide a detailed budget including all costs and expenses, specifying all day rates of individuals involved.

- Time contribution and roles of the various team members (if supplier is a team)
- Costs (including a comprehensive breakdown of expenses, including how many FTEs and number of days that will be required)

Please only state Yes or No to this question to confirm if this has been added to your full proposal response as per section 2.2

2.7 Section 7. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

1.

Outline your EDI policies and how you will ensure equity, diversity and inclusion considerations are embedded throughout the planning, development and delivery of the project? (max 1 page)

Please only state Yes or No to this question to confirm if this has been added to your full proposal response as per section 2.2

3 Evaluation Criteria

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

Criteria	Details	Weight %
Expression of Interest and Questions	Supplier Questions and Answer section	N/A
Full submission Proposal	This section is for the Supplier's submission of the consolidated full proposal document which includes all the question requirements for section 2.	N/A
Methodology	Coverage: How well are the desired focus areas addressed in the proposed methodology? (<i>The focus areas are outlined in the specification</i>) How suitable and innovative are the proposed foresight approaches? Quality: Is the proposed methodology aligned with our needs? Utility: Will the proposed methodology deliver the desired, credible, and useful results?	30%

Delivery and Outputs	Delivery plan: Is the proposed delivery plan appropriate and achievable? Feasibility: How feasible is the delivery plan? Are there significant risks associated with the proposed timelines, and how well are they mitigated?	20%
Experience	Skills and Experience: Does the supplier demonstrate relevant skills, experience, and contextual understanding to deliver this work? Is there a clear and credible description of the proposed approach, including the scope, process, and outputs for each deliverable (e.g. <i>convening activity, report, and any potential research tasks</i>)?	20%
Budget	Value for Money: Does the proposed commercial model represent good value for money in relation to the scope, quality, and outcomes of the proposed work	20%
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	Do suppliers have appropriate EDI policies and are these clearly reflected in the proposal? Is a broad range of global perspectives embedded in the proposed foresight approaches?	10%
Accessibility	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.	N/A
Total:		100%

4 General Information

4.1 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.

Successful Suppliers will be asked to complete a TPRM and TPSRA assessment this is for Wellcome to assess how you handle data.

4.2 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.

4.3 Disability Confident

The Wellcome Trust is proud to be a Disability Confident Employer (DC Level 2) and we encourage all our partners and suppliers to do the same. More information about this can be found on the government website [Disability Confident employer scheme and guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). Disability Confident is creating a movement of change, encouraging employers to think differently about disability and take action to improve how they recruit, retain and develop disabled people.

4.4 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.

4.5 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.

4.6 Funding

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

4.7 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

4.8 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.