



Request for Proposal (RFP) to outline the likely or proven impact of one promising approach to preventing or addressing anxiety and/or depression in the workplace, with a focus on those under 25, based on inferences drawn from the available evidence or theoretical frameworks

1. RFP Background & Objectives

The Wellcome Trust ('Wellcome') is the world's second highest spending global charitable foundation. It is both politically and financially independent. Wellcome supports scientists and researchers, takes on big problems, fuels imaginations, and sparks debate.

As part of our mission, we are working proactively to tackle some of the world's biggest health challenges. In 2019, we announced that Wellcome was making a five-year, £200 million commitment to transform how we understand, fund, prevent and treat anxiety and depression in young people (14-24) by creating a mental health priority area in order to ensure that no one is held back by mental health problems. Our [mental health programme strategy](#) can be found on our website. All prospective suppliers are encouraged to read this in detail.

The global cost of mental illness through lost productivity, absences and staff turnover is estimated to be around \$2.5tn annually. The corporate wellness market was predicted to hit \$11.3bn by 2021. As a result, many well-meaning companies are experimenting with a number of interventions to improve staff mental health – including, for example, unlimited holidays, in-house yoga, mindfulness, bans on out-of-hours emails – but we don't know what works for whom, in what context, and why. The urgency of focus is added to by the current pandemic which provides additional challenges, but potentially also opportunities, for supporting workplace mental health.

Wellcome is already working with a range of international initiatives committed to using research to help organisations in their efforts to improve workplace mental health. These include:

- The [World Health Organization](#) who is producing guidelines on workplace mental health that will be available at the end of 2021 and who are leading on systematic reviews of the current evidence to inform evidence-based recommendations.
- The [World Economic Forum](#) who have launched a global dialogue series to discuss the ideas, tools and architecture in which public and private stakeholders can build an ecosystem for health promotion and disease management on mental health.
- [One Mind at Work](#) is a collaboration of organisations who have been developing best practice for workplace mental health and well-being.
- The Global Organisation Initiative (GBI) is an international organisation-led collaboration whose mission is to advocate for - and accelerate - positive change for mental health in the workplace on a global basis.
- [The City Mental Health Alliance](#) (CMHA) is a global membership organisation that works with businesses, at both a senior leadership and operational level, to help them transform their workplaces into mentally healthy environments.

- [What Works Wellbeing](#) is an independent collaborating centre that develops, and shares, robust and accessible global wellbeing evidence to improve wellbeing and decision making that is used by governments, organisations, and civil society.

To support and advance these efforts, whilst avoiding duplication of effort, Wellcome is launching this request for proposals to focus on insights about selected promising approaches at the most granular level possible. This complements our recent commission on [core components for anxiety and depression in young people more generally](#).

As with the former commission, the current request for proposals focusses specifically on anxiety and depression in youth, as this is the focus of Wellcome's Mental Health Priority Area and seeks to build insights as to what may be “best bets” for focused attention and research going forward.

We take anxiety and depression to be loose verbal descriptions of constellations of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that exist on a continuum, and have been classified as entities by historical consensus and which hold people back in life. We are not looking at approaches that address every day emotional responses of low mood or anxiety that are part of life's ups and downs. We are happy for the applicant to provide their own definition of anxiety or depression as the focus for their proposal as long as it can be fitted within the above broader approach we are taking. Some applicants may choose to take a diagnostic framework, some may not.

We are inviting suppliers to nominate just ONE approach that they think may be amongst the most promising for preventing or addressing anxiety and/or depression in young people in the workplace. While we are looking for a focus on young people in line with our strategic focus, we recognise that approaches would not necessarily be different for the rest of the workforce.

Approaches could range from pay structures to mindfulness apps. Further possible examples from the literature are listed on page 4. We recognise that a mixture of approaches may in fact be required, but our request at this point is for suppliers to focus on one specific approach that they regard as amongst the most promising to allow more detailed consideration of what works for whom in what contexts.

We seek proposals to undertake a review of the evidence of the one nominated promising approach in the workplace to prevent or address anxiety and depression, with a focus on young people. This research should consider what works for whom, in what context, and take as broad and as global a perspective as possible, including in both low and high resource settings.

We are very aware that direct evidence of workplace mental health is still at an early stage so we encourage suppliers to consider submitting proposals that can draw diverse areas of research, or data they themselves hold, in order to infer lessons that may be applied in a specified workplace context.

Proposals submitted can be for up to £45,000. Please note that value for money is part of the assessment criteria.

2. RFP Specification

Applicants must commit to producing a 4,500 word review that answers the following question: **Outline the likely or proven impact of your nominated promising approach to preventing or addressing anxiety and/or depression in the workplace, with a focus on those under 25, based on inferences that you can draw from the available evidence and theoretical frameworks.**

Suppliers may choose to focus on workplace mental health in a particular context, such as during a pandemic. This could include consideration of those who are critical to a pandemic response or delivering essential public services (“key workers”) or a newly dispersed workforce, but we are equally open to proposals that address other key workplace issues that are relevant pre-COVID-19 and will remain relevant in the future. We are also open to suppliers focusing on a particular workforce such as by choosing an industry or focusing on a particular population e.g. by looking at a specific age group (as long as it includes those under 25). However, any chosen category must encompass at least 10 million people worldwide.

A full timetable can be found on page 5 but key dates include:

- An Intention to Respond submitted via an online form by **12 May 2020, 5pm BST**
- Full proposals (1,500 words max) submitted by email by **22 June 2020, 5pm BST**
- Work to start on **20 July 2020**
- Potential opportunity to present initial findings at the 4th Annual One Mind at Work Global Forum in September 2020
- Final report (4,500 words max) submitted by **21 October 2020, 5pm BST**

Eligibility: who can apply?

- Applicants can come from any sector e.g. businesses, universities, charities or commercial, but **the lead must have a proven track record of high-quality research in workplace mental health.**
- We particularly encourage collaborative applications. We envisage that most applications will include a team comprising one lead applicant and up to two additional team members with complementary expertise.
- We encourage applications from anywhere in the world, provided the applicant can accept work that is contracted from the UK. We are keen to encourage diverse geographical coverage across both the global north and global south.

We are looking for applicants who can critically consider and synthesise evidence from across diverse research communities to develop new, or reinforce existing, hypotheses which they are able to convey concisely to non-specialists.

We are thus looking for applicants with evidence of sufficient background expertise combined with the potential for creative thought, together with skills to present information in an accessible way.

Please note that whilst all final outputs must be produced in English, the substantive work and literature reviewed can be in other languages. However, the supplier must translate the final outputs into English prior to submission and must have sufficient English to communicate with Wellcome and the wider network of organisations using English.

The work must be able to be conducted between 20 July 2020 and 21 October 2020 with the final report submitted by 21 October 2020, 5pm BST.

In the full proposal applicants should include:

1. How they propose to outline the focus of their review in terms of:
 - a) which approach they will consider e.g. from physical activity to fairness of workplace procedures (see below for further examples)
 - b) what population they will consider e.g. general workforce, dispersed workforce, key workers in time of pandemic
 - c) which geographical parameters they will use e.g. worldwide or specific countries
2. What approach and methodology they will use – what literatures they might draw on and what methodology they will use to draw rigorous inferences.
3. Where relevant: how they propose to draw on existing data they hold with detailed description of the nature of those data (including overall numbers, years of collection, age range covered and key data included) and any statistical analyses to be conducted.

Out of scope:

1. We are **not** seeking to commission systematic reviews of the entire literature. Rather we seek focused reviews and inference building from diverse literatures or evidences to aid more detailed future research.
2. Apart from analysis of existing datasets **already held by the applicant organisation and already immediately accessible to the lead applicant**, we will not fund primary research.

Using themes put together by [What Works Wellbeing](#), approaches could fall in to one of five categories:

Theme	Constituent concept	Some selected approaches - it is at this level that the proposal needs to be specified. These are not intended as exhaustive lists, rather to illustrate possibilities.
Health	Healthy activities and recovery	e.g. Provision of exercise classes, provision of nutritious food
	Mental health and support	e.g. Training employees to support others, mindfulness training, stress management training programmes
Security	Work conditions	e.g. Fair employment, flexible working, provision of support whilst off with mental health problems and on return to work
	Financial security	e.g. Permanent contracts, workplace financial advice, hardship funds
Environment	Physical and systems	e.g. Length and/or method of commute, quality of facilities in workplace, air quality, lighting
	Culture	e.g. Fairness of workplace procedures, openness to discussing mental health, mental health policies widely understood and effectively implemented
Relationships	Line manager	e.g. Quality of relationship with manager, manager's expertise in supporting mental health problems
	Others at work	e.g. Quality of relationship with colleagues, social groups, mental health support
Purpose	Engagement	e.g. Job satisfaction, volunteering opportunities
	Job quality	e.g. Opportunities for career development, workload management, autonomy

We ask applicants to choose ONE promising approach that is implemented in a workplace for preventing or addressing anxiety and/or depression, with a focus on young people. As noted in the table, the examples are purely for interest, applicants can choose any example they would like to propose as amongst the most promising.

The supplier is asked to produce a review of the evidence and allied materials (as detailed below) that answers the following question: **Outline the likely or proven impact of one promising approach to preventing or addressing anxiety and/or depression in the workplace, with a focus on those under 25, based on inferences that you can draw from the available evidence and theoretical frameworks.**

All selected suppliers will need to answer this by producing the following, which must be emailed to Wellcome by 5pm BST on 21 October 2020:

1. Insight Analysis Report formatted as an academic article. The exact specification for the style and format will be provided to suppliers at the time of contract. It is likely to be of up to 4500 words and max 50 references
2. One page lay narrative summary for a CEO audience
3. A video of up to two minutes explaining what you found and what you make of it
4. A presentation slide deck of up to 15 minutes summarising your Insight Analysis Report

3. RFP Timetable

#	Activity	Responsibility	Date
1	RFP issue to Suppliers	Wellcome	Tuesday 28 April
2	Submission of expression of interest to RFP (via an online form, please click here to access the form or use the link on our website)	Supplier	5pm BST on Tuesday 12 May
3	Submission of Supplier Q&A to Wellcome Contact (via expression of interest form)	Supplier	5pm BST on Tuesday 12 May
4	Response to queries raised in Expression of Interest shared with all Suppliers via email	Wellcome	5pm BST on Tuesday 19 May
5	Submission of RFP Response	Supplier	5pm BST on Monday 22 June
6	RFP Evaluation Period	Wellcome	Tuesday 23 June to Thursday 9 July
7	Notification of Contract Award	Wellcome	5pm BST on Friday 10 July
8	Contract Negotiation	Wellcome & Supplier	Monday 13 July to Friday 17 July
9	Proposed contract start date following agreement of contract	Wellcome & Supplier	Monday 20 July
10	Midway check in by provision of brief written update and group or individual phone call	Wellcome & Supplier	Monday 7 September
11	Draft final report submission date	Supplier	5pm BST Wednesday 21 October
12	Wellcome response to draft final report including phone calls as relevant	Wellcome	Monday 9 November – Tuesday 10 November
13	Final report submission date, with any amendments	Supplier	5pm BST Friday 20 November
14	Proposed contract end date	Both	Friday 27 November

4. Response Format

Expression of Interest

All potential applicants are asked to submit an intention to respond via an online form by **5pm BST on 12 May 2020**. Please follow [this link](#) to access the form.

The intention to respond must include answers to the following key questions:

- Name, email address, country and professional background of lead applicant
- The ONE approach to be reviewed
- Will your proposal focus on supporting people in the context of COVID-19? If so, please give further details
- Is your proposal seeking to focus on a specific group e.g. a particular workforce, sector, age group, geography? If so, please give further details
- Are you proposing to analyse data you already hold as part of your review? If yes, please give brief details. Please note analysing data is not a requirement.
- Please enter any clarifying questions about the RFP that you would like to ask

Please note: expression of interest information will be shared as part of aggregate information about approaches being suggested as well as the types of professionals and geographies making applications. Your personal details will not be shared.

All queries raised will be collated and answered by an FAQ response or other material to address common queries. This will be emailed to all those who have submitted an expression of interest. No personal details of those submitting questions will be shared but the substance of the questions may be.

Please note you can only be a lead applicant on one proposal but may be part of the team on additional proposals.

Due to likely high levels of interest, we cannot commit to answering individual enquiries.

Written Proposal

There is no selection or filtering process between expression of interest and full proposal.

No feedback will be given to individual proposals at this stage, though general comments may be made when we issue our response to queries raised in expression of interest via email.

All applicants who submit an expression of interest are eligible to submit a full proposal.

Applicants may only submit full proposals in the absence of an expression of interest in exceptional circumstances and by prior agreement with Wellcome.

Full proposals of **no more than 1,500 words** must be submitted by email to workplacementalhealth@wellcome.ac.uk by 5pm BST on 22 June 2020 using the RFP Response Template available as a [separate download on our website](#).

This asks for the following details:

- Details of the lead applicant
- Proposed ONE approach, including brief reasons for choice (max 200 words):
- Is the focus prevention of anxiety and/or depression or intervention for existing problems?
- Definition of anxiety and/or depression being used (max 50 words):
- If your proposal is Covid-19 specific, such as focusing on dispersed or key workers, please provide details (max 50 words):
- If your proposal is focused in another way, such as on geographical context, specific age group, specific business workplace community, please provide details (max 50 words):
- Proposed methodology to review and draw inferences from the evidence in relation to your ONE chosen approach including timeline (max 700 words):
- If you are proposing to analyse your own data as part of this project, please describe how you propose to draw on existing data you hold and explain the nature of those data (including overall numbers, years of collection, age range covered and key data included) and any statistical analyses to be conducted (max 200 words):
- Details of lead applicant(s) expertise and track record (including up to three relevant publications and academic background. Please include links to online publicly available professional details where possible (max 400 words):
- Details of other applicant(s). Please provide their role in the project and brief overview of expertise (max 200 words):
- Please append a cost proposal in Excel format which is annotated to include full details and justifies the proposed costs. This should include details of the hourly rate and number of hours to be contributed by each member of the team, plus any proposed ad hoc consultancy fees. Any costs related to this work are in scope. The maximum cost permissible is £45,000 exclusive of VAT.
- Please give details of two referees who Wellcome can contact as part of this RFP process, should you be shortlisted:
- Please append a letter of support in PDF format from the lead applicant's organisation, including details of who will be acting as the signatory on any contract if awarded.

When providing the referees, please include their contact name, organisation, brief overview of work you had provided for them, email address & telephone number (including country code). Please see the [Wellcome Privacy Statement](#) for more on our commitment to safeguarding personal information in accordance with data protection law.

Assessment Criteria

Proposals will be assessed using the following criteria:

- **Evidence of expertise, skill set and track record** (35% weighting) in relation to the task as per the eligibility criteria laid out above, including evidence of:
 - collaboration between academics and workplaces
 - ability to undertake rigorous and balanced academic review
 - ability to consider information arising from different types of expertise
 - ability to develop coherent inferences from review of literature and form new hypotheses
 - ability (where relevant) to analyse and present data appropriately
 - ability to present ideas in coherent and non-technical language

- ability to complete projects on time and within budget.
- **Strength of the proposed approach** (50% weighting) to addressing the key research question including:
 - good rationale for core approach and definitions of anxiety and/or depression chosen
 - understanding of the question being asked in line with the rationale behind the commission
 - selection of an appropriate methodology and approach that combines rigour and balance with opportunity for creative thought
 - evidence the approach will consider evidence from across different expert communities and diverse geographies
 - likelihood of the proposal being achievable within the budget and time allocated.
- **Justification and value for money** (15% weighting) for the proposed costs via a richly annotated Excel spreadsheet or Excel spreadsheet plus accompanying notes.

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

Supplier Q&A

Prior to the submission of your RFP response, Suppliers are provided the opportunity to submit any questions they have about the exercise when they submit an intention to respond.

Suppliers submitting proposals should review this [document](#) which lays out our terms and conditions.

Contract Feedback

This section allows Suppliers to provide specific feedback to the contractual agreement which will be used should their proposal be successful. Contract feedback is to be incorporated into your full proposal as an annex and in the following format:

Clause #	Issue	Proposed Solution/Comment

5. About Wellcome

Wellcome exists to improve health by helping great ideas to thrive. We support researchers, we take on big health challenges, we campaign for better science, and we help everyone get involved with science and health research. We are a politically and financially independent foundation. Find out more about Wellcome and our work: wellcome.ac.uk.

6. Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality

Prospective Suppliers should be aware that inappropriate publicity could have a serious effect upon Wellcome's business. The information contained within this document or subsequently made available to prospective suppliers is deemed confidential and must not be disclosed without the prior written consent of Wellcome unless required by law.

7. 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 e.g.:

- 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.

8. 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.

9. Funding

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

10. 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.

11. Sustainability

Wellcome is committed to procuring sustainable, ethical and responsibly sourced materials, goods and services. This means Wellcome seeks to purchase goods and services that minimise negative and enhance positive impacts on the environment and society locally, regionally and globally. To ensure Wellcome's business is conducted ethically and sustainably, we expect our suppliers, and their supply chains, to adhere to these principles in a responsible manner.

12. 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.

13. Diversity & 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. 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.

14. Wellcome Contact Details

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

Name: Beck Smith

Role: Policy and Advocacy Lead, Mental Health Priority Area

Email: workplacementalhealth@wellcome.ac.uk