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# GUIDANCE ON IMPACT ROADMAPS

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# Wellcome Solutions Department

## Guidance on Impact Roadmaps

### What do we mean by an Impact Roadmap

- An articulation of activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact and how these link. The impact roadmap makes explicit: causal pathways, assumptions, and evidence.
- An Impact Roadmap encourages a more holistic understanding of a context and the role of your project within that context. This level of perspective often strengthens design, implementation, continuous learning and adaptation, and ability to deliver desired impacts.

### Why we are asking for this:

- To ensure that all projects have a clear articulation of how they are expected to lead to impact, beyond shorter term outcomes
- To consistently collect, understand and report on, this information to monitor projects' plans and progress towards impact
- To demonstrate how your project aligns with our internal strategies and measures.

### It should also help:

- Identify blockages or risky pathways that need to be managed
- Identify opportunities e.g. where other partners/events/circumstances could contribute to an intended outcome
- Prompt you to weigh the evidence behind each assumption of change and highlight evidence gaps that need to be filled or monitored

### Key Definitions:

- **Impact:** the long-term, significant and sustainable changes that you would like to see occur as a result of the project. This will occur after the end of the project and is usually expressed as a single concept. We recognise that the funding we provide are for projects which are inherently risky; by articulating a *hoped-for* impact, this is not understood as a statement that that such impact *will* be achieved.
- **Outcomes:** the short- and medium-term changes resulting from outputs. These should be clear by the end of the project and are usually the objective of the project. The outcomes together can be seen as preconditions before impact can be delivered. We usually expect 1-3 of these.

- **Outputs:** the tangible changes or benefits that result from the activities during the project.<sup>1</sup> We usually expect 3-6 of these; they are produced, controlled and attributed to the award.
- **Targets:** specific, measurable milestones that help track the progress towards outcomes.

Questions to help draft an impact roadmap: You must ensure that the impact roadmap is robust and supported by high quality indicators. There are some questions below to help with this:

1. **Clear Flow:** Is it easy to understand how the project will move from producing outputs to achieving outcomes and then making an impact (recognising that pathways to impact are not always linear)?
2. **Understandability:** Could someone without prior knowledge of the project easily grasp its goals and methods by just looking at the document?
3. **Value and Impact:** Will the project's outcomes and impact contribute meaningful evidence and create significant change?
4. **Indicators:** Have indicators been set up for the project's impact, outcomes, and outputs?
  - **Impact Indicators:** Do they measure the long-term goals the project aims to support (with some indicative timeframes of when these might be delivered)?
  - **Outcome Indicators:** Do they define the expected changes and who will benefit from them?
  - **Output Indicators:** Do they reflect the visible results of the project's activities?
5. **Output to Outcome:** Are the outputs likely to lead to the desired outcomes? What assumptions does this depend on? Is there a sensible number of outputs for each outcome?
6. **Outcome Statements:** Do these address:
  - What change is expected?
  - Who will experience this change?
  - Where will the change take place?
7. **Outcome to impact:** Are the outcomes together likely to lead to the desired impact? What assumptions does this depend on?

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. if we were funding a training project, the outputs wouldn't just be deliverables in the sense of training materials, but would include the number of people trained, number of sessions delivered and perhaps even something about the creation of networking opportunities across fields

## 8. General Indicators:

- Are the indicators focused on what will be measured, not what will be achieved? Try to relate them to existing strategies where possible.
- Are all indicators clearly defined, measurable, and tied to the project's intervention?
- Should you use quantitative or qualitative indicators? A solid framework combines both types.
- Can all indicators be realistically collected and provide reliable data?
- If a proxy indicator is used, is it suitable and representative for the situation?
- Have baselines been set? Should they be divided by sex, gender, and geography?
- Is the baseline data sturdy and trustworthy?
- Limit indicators to a maximum of three per output/outcome/impact.

## 9. Targets:

- SMART Criteria: Targets should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Milestones help measure progress towards these targets.
- Are the targets and milestones realistic and achievable?
- Do they consider the time needed for the project to get started?

## 10. Project Design Plan:

- Have other projects or actors that will contribute to the achievement of the outcomes (and the impact) been identified? How will participation of key stakeholders will be encouraged throughout the project's lifecycle.
- Are key external factors, including risks that could influence the achievement of impact, identified with appropriate mitigation strategies in place? Is there a strategy in place to monitor and mitigate risks?

## Process:

- Please provide a draft pathway to impact to Wellcome. Please ensure this is no longer than one slide or one side of A4.
- The Wellcome team will consider it and provide feedback. Part of this exercise will be to help the Wellcome team link your approach and indicators up with internal Wellcome strategic documents and measures, so your project and anticipated impact will clearly link into our general understanding of our funding portfolio.
- The Wellcome team will agree a final form impact roadmap with you, which will form the basis of future reporting.
- The impact roadmap must be agreed within six months of the start of your award. You will be able to discuss and agree adjustments to the impact roadmap throughout your project.