



Views of users on the welfare assessment results - A call for proposals to fulfil work-package 4.7.1 of project area SP4 (Implementation) of the Welfare Quality® project

Background: The Welfare Quality® project

Welfare Quality® (WQ) is an EU funded project focusing on the integration of animal welfare in the food quality chain: from public concern to improved welfare and transparent quality.

Animal welfare is of considerable importance to European consumers. Nowadays food quality is not only determined by the overall nature and safety of the end product but also by the perceived welfare status of the animals from which the food is produced. This project aims to accommodate societal concerns and market demands, to develop reliable on-farm monitoring systems, product information systems, and practical species-specific strategies to improve animal welfare. Thirty-nine institutes and universities (representing thirteen European countries) with specialist expertise participate in this integrated research project. The project started in May 2004 and will be completed by May 2009. More information on the project is available on our website www.welfarequality.net.

The call

Sub Project 4 (SP4) is tasked with drawing together some of the work already carried out in the first 3 years of the WQ project to create information resources, to assess ways of maximising the benefit of the findings of the WQ project, and to train those who may use it in the future. We invite written proposals to carry out the specific work package described below. Proposals are welcomed from existing and new partners. (*The latter are advised to contact and/or liaise with research groups already within the WQ consortium to ensure integration of their proposed activity with the ongoing WQ effort*). All proposals received by the deadline will be scrutinised by a panel appointed by the steering committee (SC), and evaluated for timeliness, relevance, quality and added value.

All persons who have submitted a proposal will be notified of the panel decision immediately after the evaluation process has been completed. Enquiries regarding the process can be directed to the SP4 co-ordinator Dr Andy Butterworth +441179289652 andy.butterworth@bris.ac.uk.

Description of task 4.7.1 – Stakeholder consultation on the acceptability of welfare assessment results

Main objective: To quantify the views of stakeholders on the acceptability of welfare assessment results.

Task 4.7.1 Identify the thresholds for acceptability of each welfare assessment measure according to consumers, producers, retailers and relevant experts (Months 36-54)

Objectives of task 4.7.1: To quantify the views of stakeholders on welfare assessment results

Description of the work

This work package will generate information on the views of stakeholders concerning the acceptability of welfare assessment results gathered during the project. This information will contribute to the debate on welfare concerns and may prove of value for policy makers developing welfare policies for organisations or legislation. To quantify the views of stakeholders on welfare assessment results, a web-based system and linked to an interactive system will provide an immediate mechanism for assessing the acceptability of welfare assessment results. The views of consumers, producers, retailers and relevant experts will be gathered by providing them with secure log in to relevant partners. Using interactive web-based techniques, experts will be asked to consider at which level action should be taken to improve the situation. This data will then be submitted and the respondent will receive immediate feedback on the consensus of experts that have submitted previous responses. It appears logical and appropriate that this task builds upon the experience gained in SP2.3 - the sub project which has been developing the aggregation techniques, and which has developed the analysis of the thresholds and critical levels provided by the on farm assessment studies.

The need to link to existing work partners.

Because the welfare assessment system which will be the basis of this work package will have been compiled in existing areas of the WQ project, the successful proposal will demonstrate a clear plan for communication links with the existing teams in WQ operating in these areas, and demonstration of previous knowledge or experience in this area will be considered advantageous. Because of the interlinking of work packages in the WQ project, it is strongly recommended that the applicant make contact specifically with the WP leaders in work packages WP2.2, WP2.3 and WP2.4, and consider a linked application with WP4.7.2.

Milestones and expected results

Month 40. Structure of the interactive consultation tool described

Month 50. First trial use of the interactive tool using assessment reports / information (artificial or anonymised real information) to create the most user friendly interaction between stakeholders and the assessment findings.

Month 54. Demonstration of the operation of the system.

Deliverables

Month 50. The first draft of the web-based system, linked to an interactive system will be demonstrated to provide a mechanism for assessing the acceptability of welfare assessment results.

Month 54. Web based system in place and output from this resource available for use in WP4.8

Expected results

The views of consumers, producers, retailers and relevant experts gathered using interactive web-based techniques will be used to create a report summarising stakeholder views on the assessment scheme results. The output from this WP will be of value in creating the summary reports in WP4.8.

Foreseen budget

This overall budget for tasks within this work area has been fixed, and so a guide amount that can be made available to perform task 4.7.1 is **21,000 EUR**.

It is recommended that proposals are structured to fit within this amount.

The overall value of the proposed work will be a key component of the decision on the suitability of the proposal – the reviewers will be looking for proposals which offer maximum value in terms of coverage (in both depth and extent) of the area to be covered along with evidence of planning to ensure delivery of the requested outcomes within the timescale.

Guide to writing the proposal

The proposal should, as a minimum, state why the applicants expertise, resources, facilities and background make them the most fitting applicant, and should cover the following areas;

- Description of the approach to carrying out the work task.
- Timetable and milestones for activities which will be carried out.
- Proposal for establishing and maintaining links between this work package and others specified in the description of the work task. This should include a timetable for planned meetings with these linked groups.
- Management structure for the team carrying out the work.
- Financial outline for allocation of the funds to areas of the work package.
- Qualifications of the personnel who will carry out the work.
- Description of expected deliverables and their dates of delivery.

Procedure and timetable

	Date
Descriptions of work packages and tender process released	Friday February 16 th '07
Closing date for receipt of proposals	Friday March 30 th '07
Participants to be informed of decision of panel	Friday April 20 th '07
Start of research activity	May '07

Submission of proposal should be by post and by email by the closing date;

a) **By post** – to the SP4 co-ordinator Dr Andrew Butterworth, University of Bristol, Clinical Veterinary Science, Langford, N Somerset, SB49 5DL, UK

b) **By email** to andy.butterworth@bris.ac.uk