

**Solicitation Number: 1000251302**

**National Knowledge Exchange Roundtables in Collaboration with Indigenous Peoples on Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID)**

**Questions and Answers #1 to #28**

**October 27, 2023**

**Question #1**

In preparing our response to the RFP bearing the Solicitation # 000251302, Traditional Knowledge Exchange Roundtables, I notice the following with respect to travel:

Section 3.1, under "Contract Includes" mentions "paying for travel". However, Section 4.3 clearly states "This contract will not pay for travel."

My question: Is travel part of this contract? If not, how are we to hold meetings if we are not covering travel?

**Answer #1**

To clarify, any travel must be paid by the vendor.

Please refer to Section 4.3 in SOW in "1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2" for updated text.

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**Question #2**

How many participants will be included in each of the 12 Roundtables?

**Answer #2**

The 6 in-person/virtual hybrid roundtables should have a maximum of 20 in-person participants each, with no limit for virtual participants. Virtual-only roundtables do not have a participant limit.

In collaboration with Health Canada, the Contractor will plan the structure, format and design of culturally safe in-person/hybrid and virtual roundtables, in Phase 1 of the project, in collaboration with the Project Authority. See also Answer to Question #7.

Please refer to Section 3.1 in SOW in "1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2" for updated text.

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**Question #3**

The payment schedule indicates Phase 3 payment is 70% of the budget is payable March 31, 2024. The invoicing instructions indicate payment is only processed once invoices for all work completed are received. We understand that our company would be responsible for arranging and making payment for all travel-related costs for in-person roundtables and that the locations of the six have not yet been determined. The number of participants for each is also not known. Therefore, it is very difficult to accurately predict costs to be included in a fixed price. For example, an event in Nunavut would cost a lot more than one in Winnipeg. Travel costs are also volatile. The bid is asking for a fixed price that includes

travel which puts a lot of risk on our company with all of the unknowns that could affect final costs. In addition, managing the cash flow related to travel costs may see our company going into debt at a level of \$200,000 or more depending on delays in reimbursement by Canada. What can be done to reduce the risk and to ensure participants receive fully paid travel and travel advances in addition to honoraria if applicable?

**Answer #3**

Regarding invoicing/risk management of travel costs, we have altered the payment schedule to reduce the risk for the Contractor with respect to travel and logistical arrangements. Please refer to Section 3.1 and Section 6.7.3 in “1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2” for revised payment schedule.

Regarding the number of participants, please refer to Answer #2.

Regarding location of roundtables, this is to be determined in conjunction with the Project Authority once the Contract has been awarded. The Contractor can plan to conduct 6 in-person roundtables in a range of geographic locations, keeping within the allotted budget, which can include rural, remote, urban locations across Canada.

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**Question #4**

In planning engagement, it would be helpful to know how much assistance Health Canada is able to provide in identifying possible roundtable participants. Please provide more detail on what is expected of the bidder in reaching out to Indigenous organizations to identify Elders, Knowledge Keepers, organizations and networks to plan, organize and facilitate the round tables?

**Answer #4**

The intention is for the Contractor to work with Health Canada and Indigenous Partners to develop stakeholder and participant lists. Health Canada will share their stakeholders lists, including contacts from Indigenous organizations and networks, and facilitate introductions with Indigenous organizations and experts already working with Health Canada. It is also expected that the Contractor will use their networks to create suggested participant lists for roundtables and promote the national knowledge exchange roundtables to recruit participants as needed.

It is the Contractor’s responsibility to contact and invite all participants, including identifying and inviting Elders and Knowledge Keepers. The Project Authority and Contractor will maintain a consistent line of communication throughout the duration of the project.

Please refer to Section 3.1, 3.1B, 4.1 in SOW in “1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2” for updated text.

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**Question #5**

We understand work is underway by Health Canada in this area that includes partnering with Indigenous people and organizations to gather viewpoints and lived experience of their community members on end-of-life care and MAID. Our intent would be to build on that work and not to duplicate efforts by reaching out to the same organizations on similar questions. How would that coordination work?

**Answer #5**

The Contractor will work closely together with Health Canada during the planning stages of the project to coordinate, strengthen and build upon existing engagement processes and activities.

Refer also to Answer #4.

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**Question #6**

We also note that engagement is already underway with Health Canada and Indigenous Partners, including a survey gathering viewpoints and lived experience related to MAID. This RFP also seeks to engage Indigenous People in the context of the MAID legislation. Since this RFP is part of the multi-stream engagement process already underway, how are we expected to connect and or coordinate efforts?

**Answer #6**

Please refer to Answer #5. In addition, the Project Authority is coordinating all activities related to the broader engagement and will work with the Contractor to connect and coordinate efforts between this project and the other engagement activities.

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**Question #7**

Is there an estimate of the number of participants that will be invited to attend the roundtables the bidder is expected to recruit? Are there different levels of attendance expected for virtual and in person events? During the co-design, co-development process is there a willingness to use ceremonial and circle approaches to some of the roundtable events if requested, particularly with Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

**Answer #7**

Please refer to Answer #2 regarding the number of participants and expected level of attendance for virtual and in-person events.

There is most definitely a willingness to use ceremonial and circle approaches for some (or all) of the roundtable events, particularly with Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

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**Question #8**

PR3 on page 10 asks for detailed project descriptions and references. PR4 to PR7 only ask for project descriptions. Please clarify.

**Answer #8**

Project descriptions are required for PR4-7 as well.

Please refer to Section 4.1.1.2 in “1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2” for additional clarification.

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**Question #9**

Term: The contract appears to be designed for June 2024 completion (3.1.B), but in section 6.4.1 the period of the contract is from date of signing to March 31, 2025. Is it possible to extend the timelines for this project to the full window of the contract, ending March 31, 2025?

**Answer #9**

The deliverables and the timelines for this project cannot be changed. The deliverables for the contract area designed for completion by June 30, 2024 completion (3.1.B), and the period of the contract stated in Section 6.4.1 has been updated in “1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2” to September 30, 2024.

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**Question #10**

Number of Events: Is there any flexibility regarding the number and composition of the roundtables? Specifically, is there openness to convening fewer roundtables, without sacrificing the diversity and quality of voices?

**Answer #10**

As stated in Section 3.1 of the SOW in the RFP, roundtables can be combined into multi-day events with various audiences or be individual sessions. In this way, there is flexibility in the composition of the roundtables, as long as a geographical range of in-person events are held and diversity and quality of voices are not sacrificed.

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**Question #11**

Data: Are there policies in place with respect to data sovereignty and other data-related issues related to Indigenous participants?

**Answer #11**

The [2023–2026 Data Strategy for the Federal Public Service](#) commits to advancing a whole-of-government approach to the management and sharing of Indigenous data. Data protocols will be determined in Phase 1 of the project and will include how data is handled and stored, how consent is obtained, as well as considerations around privacy. Protocols will support as much as possible to principles of First Nations Principles of Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) and also data protocols for Inuit and Métis.

In addition, as stated in 6.3.2, “Health Canada has determined that any intellectual property rights arising from the performance of the Work under the resulting contract will belong to Canada, for the following reasons, as set out in the Policy on Title to Intellectual Property Arising Under Crown Procurement Contracts: the main purpose of the Contract, or of the deliverables contracted for, is to generate knowledge and information for public dissemination.”

Please refer to Section 3.1B in SOW in “1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2” for updated text.

**Question #12**

Participant Payment: Are you open to other models of payment, and does Health Canada have existing payment schedules that determine the amounts paid to Elders and Knowledge Keepers for participation?

**Answer #12**

Other models of payment besides service payments are acceptable for Elders, Knowledge Keepers, people with lived experience and others providing Indigenous Cultural Knowledge. Health Canada does not have existing policies that determine the amounts to be paid to Elders and Knowledge Keepers for participation.

Please refer to Section 2.2 of the SOW of “1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2” for updated language.

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**Question #13**

Is there openness to a response to this RFP that:

- Excludes travel and accommodation costs
- Excludes participant payment costs
- Recommends a number of participants per roundtable
- Reduces the number of roundtables
- Recommends the roundtable locations
- Expands the timeline of the project to March 2025 and otherwise meets the requirements of the RFP as it stands?

**Answer #13**

It is not possible to change the parameters of the RFP as described above. However, please refer to the Answers in brackets pertaining to:

- Recommends a number of participants per roundtable (Answer #2)
  - Reduces the number of roundtables (Answer #10)
  - Recommends the roundtable locations (Answer #3)
  - Expands the timeline of the project to March 2025 and otherwise meets the requirements of the RFP as it stands? (Answer #9)
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**Question #14**

Do you require any subcontractors to be identified in the proposal? Meaning, could we decide the subcontractors later on? We may choose or not choose to use a sub-contractor on an as needed basis and would like to know the parameters.

**Answer #14**

Please refer to clause “6.3.1 General Conditions 2010B (2020-05-28), General Conditions - Professional Services (Medium Complexity)” of the RFP, specifically the link attached to “2010B”. Within the 2010B General Conditions (GC’s) you will find the following clause below regarding subcontracting:

*2010B 06 (2013-06-27) Subcontracts*

- 1. The Contractor may subcontract the supply of goods or services that are customarily subcontracted by the Contractor. In any other instance, the Contractor must obtain the prior consent in writing of the Contracting Authority. The Contracting Authority may require the Contractor to provide such particulars of the proposed subcontract as he considers necessary.*
- 2. Subcontracting does not relieve the Contractor from any of its obligations under the Contract or impose any liability upon Canada to a subcontractor.*
- 3. In any subcontract, the Contractor agrees to bind the subcontractor by the same conditions by which the Contractor is bound under the Contract, unless the Contracting Authority requires or agrees otherwise, with the exception of requirements under the Federal Contractors Program for employment equity which only apply to the Contractor.*

Here is the link for easy access: <https://buyandsell.gc.ca/policy-and-guidelines/standard-acquisition-clauses-and-conditions-manual/3/2010B/22#subcontracts>

Please also see Answer #15.

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**Question #15**

Does the subcontractor need to be Indigenous or an Indigenous Business?

**Answer #15**

Please refer to clause “1.2 Set-aside under the Federal Government Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business (PSIB)” of the RFP, specifically the link attached to the text “Annex 9.4”. This link will send you to the rules regarding the set-aside program for Indigenous businesses, which should answer your question, here is the link for easy access: [https://canadabuys.canada.ca/en/how-procurement-works/policies-and-guidelines/supply-manual/chapter-9-annexes#\\_9-4](https://canadabuys.canada.ca/en/how-procurement-works/policies-and-guidelines/supply-manual/chapter-9-annexes#_9-4)

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**Question #16**

If we are 100% Indigenous owned business, are we allowed to subcontract with a non-Indigenous company?

**Answer #16**

Please refer to Answer # 15.

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**Question #17**

I used to work with the Federal Government, and left my position with ISC in 2014. Obviously, I still hold pension benefits, but I won't be drawing down on them for another 15 years or so. I see we would be required to disclose my previous employment, but wondering if I am still eligible to submit a bid for this project? Also wondering in reviewing your disclosure wording about this section, does that mean my personal pension amounts will be disclosed publicly on the website? I wasn't clear and would appreciate you clarifying.

**Answer #17**

Yes, you can still bid regardless if you are a former public servant, please refer to clause "2.3 Former Public Servant" in the RFP, it should answer your questions. There are links attached to some of the wording under this clause. Please refer to the link attached to the text "Guidelines on the Proactive Disclosure of Contracts"; here is the link for easy access: <https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=14676> .

Your personal pension amounts will **not** be disclosed publicly on the website.

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**Question #18**

Is travel included for the participants and contractors as part of this budget? We were confused after reading the proposal and then landing on Section 4.3.

**Answer #18**

Please refer to Answer #1.

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**Question #19**

Detailed Scope Clarification: Could you provide more specific details about the expected deliverables for the Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) roundtables? Are there any particular outcomes or data Health Canada anticipates receiving from these discussions?

**Answer #19**

Health Canada anticipates receiving quantitative and qualitative data and information based on roundtable themes. The primary methods used in the deliverables and reporting will be qualitative. The primary objective of the engagement is to hear the diverse views, experiences and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples on MAID. Interim summaries of individual roundtables should provide summaries of the content of each roundtable by theme. The final report must summarize findings from all roundtables, analyze findings and provide recommendations with cross-linkages to MAID policy and legislation.

Health Canada will provide key source documents for context (Section 4.1 of the SOW), including a background guide on MAID to the Contractor in late 2023 that will provide more clarity on potential

themes, considerations and potential guiding questions for the roundtable planning, facilitation and reporting. Please see 2.2 Objectives of the Requirement, 3. Requirements, specifically 3.1B Work Phases, and 3.4 Reporting Requirements for more information.

Please refer to Section 3.1B in SOW in “1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2” for updated text.

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**Question #20**

Participant Selection and Demographics: How are participants for the MAID roundtables being selected or identified? Are there specific demographic or experiential criteria that must be met for inclusion in the roundtable discussions?

**Answer #20**

Refer to Answers #5 and #6. Please also refer to the SOW in the RFP in Sections 2.2 - Objectives of the Requirement, and 3.1A - Target Audiences.

Please refer to Section 3.1 and 3.1B in the SOW in “1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2” for updated text.

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**Question #21**

Travel Expenses for Roundtable Participants: Will Health Canada cover travel, accommodation, and per diem expenses for participants of the roundtables, or is this the responsibility of the contracted vendor? If the latter, are there any guidelines or limitations on budget per participant or overall that we should be aware of?

**Answer #21**

Please Refer to Answers #1 and #2.

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**Question #22**

Data Handling and Privacy: What are the expectations regarding handling sensitive data collected during the roundtables, especially concerning participant privacy and data security? Are there specific protocols, standards, or legislation (such as the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, PIPEDA) that the contractor is expected to follow?

**Answer #22**

Please refer to Answer #11.

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**Question #23**

Post-Roundtable Deliverables: Beyond hosting the roundtables, what are the expectations for post-event deliverables? For example, are we expected to provide a comprehensive report, statistical analysis, participant feedback, or a strategic plan based on the discussions?

**Answer #23**

Please refer to the SOW in the RFP, specifically, Section 3. Requirements, 3.1B Work Phases, and 3.4 Reporting Requirements for more information. Also, refer to Answer #19.

Please refer to Section 3.1 and 3.1B in SOW in "1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2" for updated text.

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**Question #24**

Given the complexity and importance of this project, we feel ill-prepared to respond to the RFP with the detail and diligence you require without clarification on some key areas as outlined in the questions we submitted (please see below). Should you consider extending the submission date of this proposal to provide some additional time once the responses to any Q & A you received have been shared with prospective proponents, we would be honoured to submit a considered response.

**Answer #24**

The submission deadline was November 2, 2023 at 2:00pm EDT, however, due to the RFP amendment, The new end date of this solicitation is November 8, 2023 at 2:00PM EDT, please refer to title page of "1000251302 - RFP - Amendment #2".

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**Question #25**

Could you kindly confirm the exact submission deadline for the proposal?

**Answer #25**

Please refer to Answer #24.

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**Question #26**

Given the depth and scope of the opportunity presented, would Health Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada consider granting an extension to the proposal submission deadline?

**Answer #26**

Please refer to Answer #25.

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**Question #27**

We noted that the RFP mentions travel arrangements. Can you provide clarity on whether travel expenses are covered within the contract?

**Answer #27**

Please refer to Answer #1.

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**Question #28**

Regarding payment terms, is there any flexibility in the deliverable milestone invoicing or payment distribution?

**Answer #28**

Please refer to Answer #3.

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