



EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT CANADA (ESDC)

Request for Information

INDIGENOUS BUSINESSES



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1. PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) would like to increase the number of Indigenous businesses who bid on and receive procurement contracts from the department. Recognizing that identifying barriers is a first step to reach this goal, we are reaching out to Indigenous businesses for more information on their experiences with federal procurement processes. We want to know what is working, and what we need to do differently, so that more Indigenous businesses bid on our procurement opportunities.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This is not a bid solicitation process, and no contract will result from this request. Participation in this Request for Information (RFI) is not a condition or prerequisite for the participation in any potential subsequent solicitation. Please note that respondents will not be reimbursed for any cost incurred by participating in this RFI. ESDC is collecting responses to this RFI for information purposes and to inform ESDC's internal procurement strategy. As a result of this RFI, ESDC may develop a list of Indigenous Businesses readily registered or eligible to be registered in the Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) [Indigenous Business Directory \(IBD\)](#) that may be used by ESDC to increase federal contracting opportunities for Indigenous businesses.

2. HOW TO PARTICIPATE

As part of this RFI, Indigenous Owned or -led Businesses are invited to respond to an online questionnaire:

[Employment and Social Development Canada Request for Information](#)

The questionnaire takes approximately 10 minutes to complete.

You may also download the Word version of this questionnaire attached to this RFI (see the document list below) to complete and submit your responses by email.

The questions of Part 1 are intended to guide you through the key issues we would like to better understand.

Part 2 is a short, multiple-choice questionnaire regarding Requests for Proposals published by ESDC in the past year that had been intended for Indigenous Vendor audiences and which received little to no bids from vendors registered to the [Indigenous Business Directory](#). The questionnaire seeks to garner information about why bids were not submitted and should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete.

In Part 3 we ask you to tell us about your business.

You may answer all or some of the questions. If you would prefer to respond via phone or email, please reach out to us at NC-SOLICITATIONS-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca and we will set up a conversation.

Thank you for your time and insights.



2.1. Closing Date and Submission of Responses

This is an ongoing request that will remain published for a period of six months and the responses will be evaluated regularly. You are invited to submit your response at your earliest convenience.

- a) **Time and Place for Submission of Responses:** Suppliers interested in providing a response by email are invited to send their response to the Contracting Authority at NC-SOLICITATIONS-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca by August 30, 2024 14:00 Eastern Daylight Time (EDT).
- b) **Identification of Response:** Each respondent should ensure that its name and return address, the solicitation number and the closing date appear legibly on the response.
- c) **Responses after the Closing Date:** We also welcome any information that will be shared after the deadline. Please send responses to NC-SOLICITATIONS-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca after the closing date.

2.2. Enquiries

Please address all enquiries about this RFI to the Contracting Authority:

Name: Melissa Proulx
Title: Procurement Specialist
Employment and Social Development Canada
Asset Management Policy and Procurement

Address: 140 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, QC K1A 0J9

E-mail address: NC-SOLICITATIONS-GD@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca

Canada reserves the right to not respond to questions received after the closing date or to any question not related to this RFI. Enquiries that are of a proprietary nature must be clearly marked "proprietary" at each relevant item. Items identified as "proprietary" will be treated as such, except where Canada determines that the enquiry is not of a proprietary nature. Canada may edit the questions or may request that the respondent do so, so that the proprietary nature of the question is eliminated, and the responses will be made publicly available through the Government Electronic Tendering Service (<https://canadabuys.canada.ca/>).

Changes to this RFI may occur and will be advertised through an amendment on the Government Electronic Tendering System. Canada asks Respondents to visit [CanadaBuys](https://canadabuys.canada.ca/) regularly to check for changes.



2.3. Treatment of Responses

- a) **Use of Responses:** Responses will not be formally evaluated. However, the responses received may be used by Canada to develop or modify procurement strategies or any draft documents contained in this RFI. Canada will review all responses received by the RFI closing date. Canada may, at its discretion, review responses received after the RFI closing date.
- b) **Review Team:** A review team composed of representatives of the client (where applicable) and ESDC will review the responses. Canada reserves the right to hire any independent consultant or use any Government resources that it considers necessary to review any response. Not all members of the review team will necessarily review all responses.
- c) **Confidentiality:** Respondents should mark any portions of their response that they consider proprietary or confidential. Canada will handle the responses in accordance with the Access to Information Act.
- d) **Follow-up Activity:** Canada may, at its discretion, contact any respondents to follow up with additional questions or for clarification of any aspect of a response.