

The Neighbourhood Group Request for Proposal (RFP) For the Evaluation of the National LIP Secretariat Pilot Project FAQ

1. **Would it be fair to assume that this consulting engagement could be completed remotely?**
 - Yes, all the work can be completed remotely, including via zoom meetings and focus groups.

2. **Are you able to share some indicators that speak to the scale or size of the National LIP Secretariat? (e.g. annual budget, # of FTEs working on the secretariat etc.)**
 - The project employs approximately 5.5 full time employees, though the number varies a bit year to year.

3. **Are you able to share the primary reasons for conducting this evaluation exercise - for e.g. is it to provide evidence for additional funding, lead to ongoing program improvements, act as a medium to gather member feedback etc?**
 - The project was a new initiative. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine how well it has met the different objectives of our primary stakeholders (LIPs across Canada) with a view to possible adjustments/improvements in the next funding period (2025-2030.)

4. **Can this RFQ be shared?**
 - Yes, please feel free to share with your networks.

5. **In addition to appendices A through D and the Project Schedule, are you also looking for a separate proposal document? If yes, are there guidelines around length and content that you are looking for?**
 - The guidelines for proposal submission are described in section 3 of the RFQ. This section describes the requirements for the proposal document, including the written evaluation criteria as per below. There are no specific guidelines on specific length of submission, but the process is not intended to be onerous:
Written Rated Evaluation Criteria
The Evaluation Team will score each qualified Proposal on the basis of the rated requirements. Vendors are advised to present the requested information clearly and concisely. The information should be relevant and given in context to this particular project proposal. Vendors should also note and provide detail about any part of their proposal that does not meet one or more of the stated requirements.
Company Overview and Understanding of Requirements

The Vendor should demonstrate an understanding of the requirements by describe how the Vendor will deliver the services outlined in Section 2 of this RFP. This description should include, but not be limited to, the information in the scoring table.

Project Schedule

The Vendor should provide a project schedule demonstrating understanding of The Neighbourhood Group's timeline. The project schedule should include all activities, milestones, and timelines for the completion of deliverables outlined in Section 2. It should be noted that the number of workdays and/or hours in the Project Schedule is expected to match with the costing information provided by the Vendor as part of Appendix B.

6. Are you able to provide a rough order of magnitude budget for this work?

- The RFQ lists the budget for this project as falling between \$ 9,000 and \$ 11,000, inclusive of tax.

7. Are you hoping for a local candidate? You mention in-person interviews in the RFP - could these be done virtually?

- All the work can be completed remotely, including via zoom meetings and virtual focus groups. The successful candidate's organization/company can be based anywhere in Canada.

8. Aside from the key project deliverables, what are some of the traits or relationship goals you look for in a project partner for a long term project like this one? (ie. timing of recurring project meetings, previous experience with consultants which you've either liked or disliked, specific skills or expertise you'd be excited about etc.)

Why is this the right time for this project? What contexts, goals, etc. inspired this RFP process?

Is there a page limit to our proposal for the project?

- We are not looking for long term partners or to design a new project. We are looking for a one off evaluator for an existing project. We are hoping for a consultant able to apply an equity lens and ideally having some familiarity with the challenges faced by newcomers to Canada. The frequency of meetings will be determined through negotiation with the successful applicant for the RFQ. In general, we are looking for adherence to proposed project timelines, reliability, and open and consistent communication. The timelines and goals are explained in the RFQ. There is no page limit to the proposal.

9. How many distinct groups of stakeholders are expected to be engaged as part of this work? How will they be engaged (e.g. survey, focus group, individual meeting etc.)?

- The exact number of stakeholder groups will be determined by the consultant in collaboration with NLS staff, but is expected to be in the 5-7 range. The type of engagement will depend on the nature of the group and will be determined jointly by the consultant and NLS staff and Executive Committee.

10. Could you please describe the term ‘equity professional practice’ as used on page 9 in the proposal evaluation matrix in more detail?

- The specific phrase reference reads: “*Relevancy of skills and experience based in equity professional practice that sets Vendors apart from competition.*” In this context “equity professional practice” means we are looking for applicants with experience in applying an equity lens to program evaluations, an understanding of the principles underlying equity especially in the context of work with newcomer and racialized populations, and evidence of prioritizing equity in their own organization/company.

11. Per paragraph 3 of section 2.3 of the document, can you please confirm what data the NLS Secretariat staff and the NLS Executive Committee will be responsible for collecting and reviewing?

- As per paragraph 3, copied below, the NLS Secretariat staff will assist the Consultant in an advisory capacity by jointly reviewing and identifying relevant research questions, critiquing proposed methodology, pointing out and making available relevant NLS documentation and helping outreach for interviews and focus groups. It will be the Consultant’s responsibility to collect and review information and data.

Evidence gathered will be from both primary (interviews, focus groups, etc.) and secondary (project documents, data, etc.) sources using qualitative and quantitative data. The NLS Secretariat staff and the NLS Executive Committee will assist the evaluator in collection and review of information, identification of research questions, methodology, etc.

12. Within the RFP it is stated that “NLS Secretariat staff [...] will assist the evaluator in collection and review of information [...]” - does this include assisting in the collection of primary data (coordinating surveys/conducting interviews)? Please describe the capacity of your staff/organization to assist in the collection of primary data.

- The NLS staff will assist with outreach to relevant stakeholder groups. The Consultant will be responsible for conducting focus groups/interviews and collecting and analysing all data.

13. Given the importance of qualitative data (captured through interviews, and/or focus groups) and the limited budget available to conduct the evaluation, we suggest the use of a Large Language Model (LLM) Artificial Intelligence (AI) tool. We have significant experience in the safe and appropriate use of tools like Claude 3.5 Sonnet to expedite qualitative analysis. Would TNG be open to use of an LLM/AI tool in this way?

- There is nothing to prevent an applicant for this contract from proposing using AI as one of their analytical tools. However, it would improve that applicant's chances of success to also clearly explain in the application the scope and purpose of using such a tool, as well as the safety and appropriateness of its use and safeguards put in place, specifically with regards to possible AI bias and privacy concerns.

14. We see that TNG as well as the Municipality of Jasper host the LIPS that co-lead the NLP Secretariat. What level of involvement do you expect the Jasper LIP will have in this evaluation project? How do you foresee the current post-fire recovery process in Jasper to impact this project, if at all?

- Jasper LIP is an equal partner in the National LIP Secretariat Initiative. However, only one member of the 6 person NLS staff team is physically based in Jasper Municipality. It will be the responsibility of the two project leads (Jasper and TSLIP) to determine how to work around the needs of that staff person so that project timelines are not impacted.