



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

## Develop a Disability Inclusive Workplace Accreditation Program

Reference Number: 26689

### **ISSUE DATE AND TIME**

Monday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, at 10am EST

### **CLOSING DATE AND TIME**

Friday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 3pm EST

### **CONTACT**

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*Bidders are advised to read and respond appropriately to all sections of the Request for Proposal. Bidders unable to provide all services described herein need not bid. All costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this RFP are the responsibility of the bidder and will not be reimbursed by Tourism HR Canada. Tourism HR Canada cannot accept proposals from bidders with a real or perceived conflict of interest.*

### **TOURISM HR CANADA**

Tourism HR Canada is a pan-Canadian not-for-profit organization with a mandate aimed at building a world-leading tourism workforce. Tourism HR Canada facilitates, coordinates, and enables human resource development activities that support a globally competitive and sustainable industry and foster the development of a dynamic and resilient workforce.

Funded in part by the Government of Canada, Tourism HR Canada works on behalf of all constituency groups that make up the tourism sector's labour market, including employers, labour unions, national and provincial/territorial associations, government, and equity groups.

Tourism HR Canada provides equal access to procurement opportunities and encourages proposals from diverse suppliers.

More information on the organization can be obtained at [www.tourismhr.ca](http://www.tourismhr.ca).

## **PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

Tourism HR Canada is seeking a qualified contractor to develop a national accreditation program aimed at recognizing workplaces (businesses) that foster a culture of disability inclusion.

This will include the criteria that define the required standards of practice (i.e. the Accreditation Criteria), the accreditation process, supporting information and tools, and guidance to administer the program. The contractor will also facilitate the accessor training and field testing.

The program materials and tools are developed in English. Tourism HR Canada will handle all translations to French. However, the contractor should be able to deliver any workshops or training in both official languages; a subcontractor may be hired by the contractor to complete this task.

This program will be delivered on an online platform, this should be taken into consideration while developing the program.

## **BACKGROUND, CONTEXT**

According to the 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability, 27% of Canadians aged 15 years and older had one or more disabilities that limited them in their daily activities. However, only 62% of working-age adults (25 to 64 years of age) with disabilities were employed. Among those working-age adults with disabilities, 348,830 people were employed in tourism industries.

Census data shows a significant increase in tourism workers reporting disabilities, difficulties, or long-term conditions, from 12.3% in 2011, to 32.6% in 2021. The data underscores the importance of creating accessible and inclusive tourism businesses for both workers and consumers.

Tourism HR Canada was recently awarded a federally funded three-year, pan-Canadian project. The Belong project aims to:

- provide data, training, resources, and services to increase awareness of disability inclusion;

- enhance the understanding of the significant benefits of hiring, retaining, and promoting persons with disabilities; and
- strengthen employers' capacity to build inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible workplaces.

Part of the Belong project, the accreditation program is intended to recognize and promote businesses or communities that foster a culture of disability inclusion, with an emphasis on making it easier for persons with disabilities to acquire well-paid jobs and build careers in the tourism sector. The program is intended to be responsive, comprehensive, cost-effective, scalable, and sustainable.

## **PROJECTED KEY PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

This voluntary accreditation program grants time-limited recognition to businesses or communities for demonstrating compliance with the accreditation criteria. Accredited businesses foster a culture of disability inclusion for both employees and consumers. The program enables tourism businesses to attract and retain qualified workers and for businesses or communities to access lucrative travel trade networks and new visitor/consumer markets.

We are looking for your best recommendations and expertise in developing a world class scalable accreditation program for workplaces, with the key project activities listed below.

### **1. Program Development**

- Develop a comprehensive work plan aligned with project requirements.
- Conduct a thorough environmental scan on and considering:
  - Similar accreditation programs in Canada and foreign countries.
  - Potential functionality requirements to administer the program by gaining a basic understanding of Tourism HR Canada's existing learning management systems and their capacity to host and administer the new accreditation and to identify potential new functionality that would be required.
  - Similar learning management systems/platforms to make recommendations should Tourism HR Canada's existing platforms not suffice.
- Create the national criteria containing explicit, measurable, and attainable standards to inform the key elements of the accreditation program, including:
  - Accreditation model and process
  - Role of the administrators, assessors and auditors, and other principal players
  - Program policies and procedures

- Administration and assessment tools and materials
- Develop the program communication and promotion Plan. Tourism HR Canada will hire a public relations and marketing firm to identify branding and appropriate language throughout the program launch, however, the contractor must provide lead time, written materials for training, and guidebooks to the PR/marketing firm.
- Establish the program cost structure, including re-accreditation timeline and proposed pricing structure/suggested retail price.

## **2. Assessor Selection and Training**

- Define selection criteria for qualified assessors.
- Create an assessor administration and contingency plan.
- Develop training materials for assessors.
- Conduct a minimum of two online Train the Assessor workshops with all cost covered by the contractor.
- Collaborate with Tourism HR Canada to recruit assessors.

## **3. Field Testing**

- Create a framework to conduct field testing with at least 15 tourism businesses of different sizes, with different types of products or services, in different regions of Canada.
- Develop field testing tools and materials to support relative parties.
- Collaborate with Tourism HR Canada to recruit participating businesses.
- Administer the entire field-testing process.
- Host two webinars in total for all participating tourism businesses to help them understand the assessment process and how to use the field testing tools and materials.
- Review field testing results and feedback to make necessary adjustments and finalize the accreditation program structure and tools.

## **4. Program Reporting and Support**

- Attend kick-off and regular weekly/bi-weekly check-in meetings.
- Submit interim quarterly progress reports.
- Address ancillary contractors' (editor, designer, or translator identified by Tourism HR Canada) requests for clarification on program content.

## **KEY DELIVERABLES**

As part of the contractual agreement, the successful proponent will deliver:

1. A comprehensive work plan that minimally includes methodology, complete list of activities, timelines, relevant parties' engagement and consultation plan, assessor administration and contingency plan, field testing plan, project communication plan, and reporting requirements.
2. An environmental scan report with recommendations.
3. The Accreditation Criteria to inform the key elements of the accreditation program.
4. The accreditation program and related administrative tools with field-testing feedback integrated, and proposed cost structure.
5. The Assessment Guidelines and tools for assessors, with assessor contingency plan and training materials.
6. A minimum of two online Train the Assessor workshops are delivered.
7. The field-testing framework, administration, and necessary tools.
8. Two webinars hosted in total for all participating tourism businesses for the purpose of field testing.
9. Interim quarterly progress reports.
10. All source files and Underlying Works related to content, tools and resources created.

## **PROJECT TIMELINES**

The project is anticipated to start in September 2024 and must be completed by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

## **PROJECT COSTING**

The total project budget is inclusive of all consultants' efforts to a maximum of \$130,000.

The bidder is to supply a complete quote for the work to be performed, including anticipated disbursements such as travel costs, courier costs, and other costs that are incidental to the consultant's time and expertise on the project.

The awarded contract value will be based on the proposed plan and consultation with Tourism HR Canada project staff.

## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF A BIDDER**

1. The qualified contractor is expected to comply with the guiding principles contained in the Accessible Canada Act, notably:
  - Involve persons with disabilities in the development of the program, it's policies and procedures;

- Include the principles of equality, anti-discrimination, participation, and inclusion; and
  - Consider the multiple, and intersecting forms of marginalization and discrimination faced by individuals.
2. The bidder must complete the project by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025.
  3. The bidder must demonstrate:
    - 1) **Expertise in Developing Accreditation Programs:** Extensive experience and expertise in developing and implementing accreditation programs aimed at recognizing businesses; designing comprehensive assessment tools and criteria for evaluating workplace inclusivity; training materials and resources to support accreditation standards.
    - 2) **Research Experience:** Extensive experience in data collection, analysis, and synthesizing information; facilitation of focus groups, workshops, and consultations to gather input and feedback; program evaluation of impact and outcomes.
    - 3) **Communication Skills and Capacity:** Excellent written and verbal communication skills in both French and English; ability to produce clear and comprehensive reports, guidelines, and accreditation documentation; capacity to deliver presentations and training sessions effectively.
    - 4) **Knowledge in Disability Inclusion and Accessibility:** In-depth knowledge in diversity, equity, disability inclusion, workplace accessibility and accommodation, including knowledge of accessibility standards and best practices.
    - 5) **Project Management Ability and Experience:** Extensive experience working on projects of a similar nature; the ability to carry out project activities and complete all deliverables by the indicated project timelines.

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

### FORMAT AND CONTENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposal must also include the following:

1. Contact Information:
  - Name, title, address, phone number, email address, and website.
  - Name and email address for any team members assisting in the project.
2. Relevant Experience:

- Detailed information on consultant’s expertise, related work experience, necessary capacity.

### 3. Proposed Work Plan

- A statement summarizing the bidder’s understanding of the project objectives and scope.
- A detailed description of the methodology to be used to inform and develop the program.
- A detailed description of the specific activities to be conducted at each stage. Minimally, the work plan must include:
  - relevant parties’ engagement strategies
  - proposed timeline for each activity
  - identified milestones and deliverables
  - detailed budget and proposed payment schedule
- An annotated summary of the final deliverables.
- Special considerations and unique challenges the bidder will account for in executing the project, and risk mitigation strategies used to address these challenges.

### 4. Project Costing

- A comprehensive breakdown of the cost estimates associated with each activity.

### 5. References from Past Clients

- Contact information of two past clients where similar scope of work was achieved. For each reference include:
  - the individual’s name, address, phone number and email address
  - name of the project and a brief description of the work completed

### 6. Sample of Work

- The proposal must include at least one sample of a previously completed accreditation program. The bidder may direct reviewers to the program if public or online. Portions may be redacted to protect private information as needed.

Other than the Sample of Work, the proposal must not exceed 15 pages. If the bidder deems any material submitted to be proprietary or confidential, the bidder must indicate this in the relevant sections of the response.

## **PROPOSAL SCORING**

Proposals will be evaluated by a selection committee representative of the key relevant parties. A bidder will be chosen based on their eligibility (the minimum requirements) and response to the enclosed service requirements and evaluated according to the criteria listed below.

Virtual interviews may be scheduled with bidders, particularly if two or more proposals are closely rated and/or more information is needed. All applicants will receive written notification of Tourism HR Canada's decision regarding their proposal. Decisions are not subject to an appeal. The selection process is expected to be completed by September 06<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

### Bidder's Qualification and Capacity (40%)

- Organization's overall capabilities based upon understanding of project scope and activities.
- Project team's qualifications and experience of accreditation program development as outlined in the minimum requirements of bidder.
- Demonstrated expertise and capacity to deliver assessor training.
- Demonstrated expertise and capacity to conduct field testing.
- Knowledge of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility principles.

### Proposed Work Plan (50%)

- Understanding of project, including clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness of proposal.
- Quality of methodology outline.
- Outline of deliverables and how they will be met, including a realistic and detailed timeline with milestones and deadlines.
- Strategies and plan for involving key relevant parties.
- Identification, explanation, and justification of modified tasks and/or unique challenges expected.
- Creative and innovative approach to the project.

### Estimation of Project Costs (10%)

- Budget allocations should be commensurate with the level of activity in the work plan and reflect value for effort.
- Budget details aligning with each project activity.
- Competitiveness to other bidders.

## SUBMITTING THE PROPOSAL



- All proposals must be submitted in English in PDF format to: [egriffiths@tourismhr.ca](mailto:egriffiths@tourismhr.ca) no later than August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 3pm EST. No other submission format will be accepted.
- All proposals must be marked with the bidder's name and reference the title of this project: Disability Inclusive Accreditation Project.
- Multiple emails per RFP submission will be accepted.
- An email acknowledgement of each submission received will be sent to the bidder.
- Submissions will NOT be returned.
- Late or incomplete proposals will not be accepted.
- Tourism HR Canada is not responsible for bids that fail to reach Tourism HR Canada by the submission deadline.
- Any proposal may be disqualified if it deviates from the submission instructions in the RFP.

#### RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

- Tourism HR Canada reserves the right to:
  - modify the conditions of the RFP, at any time up to the closing draft and time
  - request or negotiate changes in a proposal, to accept all or part of a proposal, or to reject any or all proposals
  - to withdraw this Request for Proposal (RFP) and/or any item within the RFP at any time without notice
  - to disqualify any proposal which does not adhere to the RFP guidelines.
- Tourism HR Canada may, at its sole discretion, select no provider for these services if, in its determination, no applicant is sufficiently responsive to the need.

#### **RFP INQUIRIES**

Inquiries are welcomed until August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 4:00 pm Eastern Standard Time and should be made via email only to Emily Griffiths at [egriffiths@TourismHR.ca](mailto:egriffiths@TourismHR.ca). Please include 'RFP Inquiry' in the title of the email message. Responses will be shared with all RFP recipients.

We apologize, but we are unable to respond to inquiries made in any format other than email as a complete communications record must be kept demonstrating fair and transparent practice.

#### **CRITICAL TIMELINES**

This proposal was broadcasted on July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024.

The deadline for inquiries is August 9<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm EST.

Proposal submissions must be received by Tourism HR Canada no later than August 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 3:00 pm EST.

All bidders will be notified of outcomes by September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

The project is expected to start in September 2024 and must be completed by October 31, 2025.

## **KEY TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT**

Although not exhaustive, this list of key terms of engagement will become an integral part of the Agreement between the Tourism HR Canada and the successful bidder.

### Acceptance of the Proposal

Tourism HR Canada reserves the right not to accept any proposal. The RFP should not be construed as a contract to purchase services. Tourism HR Canada shall not be obligated in any manner until a written agreement relating to an approved proposal has been duly executed.

### Proposal Revisions

Proposal revisions must be received prior to the RFP submission/closing date and time.

### Financing of Proposals

The cost associated with preparing and submitting proposals will not be paid by Tourism HR Canada

### Acceptance of RFP Conditions

Receipt of proposal offer will be considered acceptance of the RFP terms and conditions by the bidder.

### Subcontracting

Subcontracting is allowed as a condition of the anticipated contract for service. When allowed, proposed subcontractors must be listed. Joint proposal submissions must indicate which bidder has overall responsibility for project management.

### Project Contact

Tourism HR Canada will assign a project contact at the time the contemplated contract is awarded. The successful bidder will also assign a project contact at that time.

### Negotiation Delay

If a written contract cannot be concluded within fifteen days of notification to the designated bidder, Tourism HR Canada may, in its sole discretion, terminate negotiations with that bidder and either negotiate a contract with another bidder of its choice or choose to terminate the RFP process and not enter into a contract with any of the bidders.

### Proposals as Part of Contract

Proposals may be negotiated with bidders and, if accepted, will form part of any contract awarded.

### Disclaimers/Limitations of Liability

Neither acceptance of a proposal nor execution of an agreement shall constitute approval of any activity or development contemplated in any proposal that requires any approval, permit or license pursuant to any federal, provincial, regional district or municipal statute, regulation or by-law. It is the responsibility of the contractor to obtain such agreement prior to commencement of the services under the proposed contract.

### Intellectual Property

The copyrights, trademarks and any other intangible or tangible rights relating to the Underlying Works belongs to Tourism HR Canada, and shall be delivered forthwith to Tourism HR Canada upon completion of the particular project, or as otherwise requested by Tourism HR Canada.

### Security and Privacy of Information

The successful bidder must agree to maintain security standards consistent with security policies of the Government of Canada. The successful bidder must also agree to comply with Tourism HR Canada's Privacy Policy regarding information received from participants involved in the consultation activities. These include strict control of access to data and maintaining confidentiality of information gained while carrying out their duties under the terms of any contract.

### Disclosure

All documents submitted by bidders shall become the property of Tourism HR Canada, and as such will be subject to the disclosure provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Information pertaining to Tourism HR Canada obtained by the bidder because of participation in this project is confidential and must not be disclosed. Samples of work provided as part of submission requirements remain property of the bidder.

TOURISM HR CANADA, ITS EMPLOYEES, AGENTS AND CONSULTANTS EXPRESSLY DISCLAIM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY FOR REPRESENTATIONS, WARRANTIES EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED OR CONTAINED IN, OR FOR OMISSIONS FROM THIS RFP PACKAGE OR ANY WRITTEN OR ORAL INFORMATION TRANSMITTED OR MADE AVAILABLE IN AT ANY TIME TO A BIDDER BY OR ON BEHALF OF TOURISM HR CANADA. NOTHING IN THIS RFP IS INTENDED TO RELIEVE BIDDERS FROM FORMING THEIR OWN OPINIONS AND CONCLUSIONS IN RESPECT TO THIS RFP.