



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

A photograph of a microphone in the foreground, with a blurred crowd of people in the background. A blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the image, containing the text.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
MEDIA RELATIONS

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THE CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – MEDIA TRAINING

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE RFP

This request for proposal (RFP) invites individual consultants and consulting firms (the Vendor) with expertise in media relations to submit proposals to the Canada Council for the Arts (the Council) for two types of media relations training sessions: (1) spokesperson coaching and (2) general media relations awareness for employees of the Council that have public relations, outreach, and event management responsibilities. Throughout these sessions, the Vendor will contribute to raising the level of Council employees' awareness about media relations practices and protocols and equip the Council spokespeople to conduct interviews as coordinated by the Council's Communications and Engagement team.

1.2 ABOUT THE CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

The Canada Council for the Arts contributes to the vibrancy of a creative and diverse arts and literary scene and supports its presence across Canada and around the world. The Council is Canada's public arts funder, with a mandate to "foster and promote the study and enjoyment of, and the production of works in, the arts."

The Council's grants, services, initiatives, prizes, and payments support Canadian artists, authors, and arts groups and organizations. This support allows them to pursue artistic expression, create works of art, and promote and disseminate the arts and literature.

Through its arts funding, communications, research, and promotion activities, the Council fosters ever-growing engagement of Canadians and international audiences in the arts.

The Council's Public Lending Right (PLR) program makes annual payments to creators whose works are held in Canadian public libraries.

The Council's Art Bank operates art rental programs and helps further public engagement with contemporary arts through exhibition and outreach activities.

The Council is responsible for the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, which promotes the values and programs of UNESCO to contribute to a future of peace, reconciliation, equity, and sustainable development

For more information regarding the above-mentioned, please refer to Council's following websites:

- Canada Council for the Arts: <https://canadacouncil.ca/>
- Public Lending Right Program: <https://publiclendingright.ca/>
- Art Bank: <https://artbank.ca/>
- CCUNESCO: <https://en.ccunesco.ca/>

1.3 BACKGROUND

As a Crown corporation, a national public arts funder, and a champion of a creative and diverse arts and culture scene, the Council regularly interacts with media outlets across Canada. The Council is committed to openness and transparency, as well as to providing timely responses to appropriate and reasonable media questions and inquiries.

In February 2021, the Council launched a wide-scale [recruitment campaign](#), prioritizing diverse and equitable hiring at all levels of the organization. This was shortly followed, in April 2021, by the publication of the Council's 2021–26 strategic plan, [Art, now more than ever](#). Currently, the Council continues to onboard and integrate new employees and proactively support the recovery of the arts sector through a strategic plan informed by [input from the arts community](#). In the context of the current climate of change and renewal, which includes both internal and external efforts towards greater inclusivity, an organization-wide primer on media relations, as well as targeted efforts to expand and strengthen the capacity of its media spokespeople, is essential to better serve and reach a vulnerable arts sector.

1.4 ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

It is the intention of the Council to consider all proposals it receives, in order to select a suitable vendor with whom to contract, which does not preclude the Council from negotiating with one or more of the parties that respond to this RFP, as it finalizes the corresponding technical and commercial terms of an agreement. **The Council reserves the right to accept any proposal, or any part of a proposal that is deemed, at the sole discretion of the Council, to be the most advantageous to it.**

In evaluating responses to this RFP, the Council may consider any combination of criteria, as per the scoring breakdown included in Section 3.1. With respect to the use of the Council's discretion to accept or reject proposals, the Council is not obliged to provide reasons or explanations to any of the parties that chose to respond to this RFP.

The Council reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to seek further information from, or clarification of, any proposal submitted in response to this RFP, and is entitled to utilize any such information or clarifications received in deciding which proposal it may accept, if at all.

1.5 RFP DATES & DEADLINES

The following schedule will be followed for this RFP:

RFP posted to MERX	May 17, 2022
Deadline for questions regarding the RFP	May 24, 2022
Answers to questions posted on MERX	May 31, 2022
Deadline for submissions	June 17, 2022
Presentations or additional requests from short-listed Vendor(s) if required	June 27 to July 15, 2022
Contract negotiations	July 18 to 22, 2022

Start of contract	August 2022
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Period of Validity of the Proposal: Proposals submitted must remain open for acceptance by the Council for a period of not less than sixty (60) days from the specified closing date.

1.6 CONFIDENTIALITY AND COUNCIL'S OBLIGATION

All information, including the RFP, provided to the Vendors shall remain the exclusive property of the Council. As such, all data and information shall be kept strictly confidential and shall not be disclosed to any third party without the express written consent of the Council.

The issuance of this RFP and Council's receipt of any proposal shall not, in any manner, obligate Council to perform any act, incur any liabilities, or reimburse or compensate any Vendor for preparation costs or other losses incurred in the preparation of their response to this RFP. Council shall have the right to use, for any purpose, any information submitted in connection with the RFP unless it has been marked Confidential.

Confidentiality agreements or clauses are subject to the [Access to Information Act](#) s. 20(1)(b) and must meet the following four conditions to be treated confidentially.

The information must be:

1. financial, commercial, scientific or technical;
2. "confidential" – three indicators of confidentiality:
 - the information contained in the record is not available from other sources in the public domain or obtainable by observation or independent study by a member of the public acting on their own;
 - the circumstances in which the information originates and is communicated give rise to a reasonable expectation that it will not be disclosed; and
 - the information, whether provided by law or supplied voluntarily, is communicated to the government within a relationship that is either fiduciary or not contrary to the public interest and that will be fostered for the public benefit by confidential communication.
3. supplied to a government institution by a third party; and
4. treated consistently in a confidential manner by the third party.

1.7 TERMS & CONDITIONS

Successful Vendor(s) will be required to enter into a Contract with the Council which will embody the terms of this RFP and any subsequent negotiations or clarifications. The Council reserves the right to modify or amend this form of agreement prior to its finalization and execution with the party submitting the successful proposal.

1.8 QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RFP

Please submit any questions in writing, via email, to the contact below by **5:00 p.m. EDT on May 24, 2022**, and the Council will provide answers soon thereafter.

To ensure that all Vendors receive equivalent information, the Council will post applicable clarification questions and responses on MERX by **5:00 p.m. EDT on May 31, 2022**.

Enquiries concerning any aspect of this RFP can be directed to:

Contact Name: Amino Yusuf
Contact Title: Communications Coordinator
Email: media@canadacouncil.ca

1.9 INSTRUCTIONS

1.9.1 RECEIPT OF PROPOSAL

Proposals must be sent via email to media@canadacouncil.ca no later than **at 5:00 p.m. EDT on June 17, 2022**, for consideration. Vendors are requested to keep their RFP submission size to under 20 MB.

All proposals must be:

signed by a duly authorized officer;

include a statement that the Vendor has examined and understood the RFP and all addenda (as applicable), and

state that the Vendor has the technical and financial resources and personnel to provide the services as identified in this RFP, and within the [timeframes](#) specified in this proposal.

Consulting Vendors are responsible for ensuring that submissions are received by the Council prior to the proposal due date and time. Late submissions received after the closing date and time will be disqualified from competition and not evaluated.

1.9.2 FORMS OF PROPOSAL

To ensure that all proposals are uniformly evaluated, they must be submitted in the format prescribed in [Appendix A](#) of this RFP.

The proposal should completely address each element of the Council's requirements as outlined in [Section 2.2 \(Service Requirements\)](#). Changes or enhancements should be clearly identified and explained. The Vendor may suggest alternative means beyond the scope of the stated requirements.

All the terms and conditions set forth in the RFP are accepted and incorporated in the proposal unless the proposal specifically takes exception to them.

1.9.3 MODIFICATION OF PROPOSALS

Vendors may modify their proposals up to the specified closing date and time.

1.9.4 AMENDMENTS OR WITHDRAWAL OF THE RFP

Correction or clarification to the RFP will be issued in the form of a written addendum to the RFP and will be posted on MERX. No interpretation, correction, clarification or amendment to the RFP shall be binding on the Council unless it is by way of an addendum. Vendors must acknowledge receipt of all addenda in their proposal.

1.9.5 RETURN OF PROPOSALS

Unsuccessful proposals will not be returned to the Vendor.

2.0 COUNCIL'S REQUIREMENTS

2.1 OVERVIEW

The Council receives a steady stream of incoming media requests and inquiries based on the level of interest in the Council's grants, which has in the recent past expanded to include temporary pandemic-related aid and support to the arts and culture sector in collaboration with the federal government and other partners, as well as in response to announcements made by the Council about its substantive suite of prizes. The Council employees' degree of awareness of existing practices and protocols is directly linked to the effectiveness of the triage and handling of these requests. The purpose of these training sessions is to equip spokespersons with the competencies and confidence required to respond to interviews and to inform non-spokesperson employees of the Council's approach to media relations and associated protocols and best practices. Through these activities, employees should gain a better understanding of their role in the Council's media relations protocol and be reminded to refer to the Communications and Engagement team for advisory and coordination support upon receiving a request.

2.2 SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

The selected Vendor will be expected to:

- develop and conduct media relations and issues management training program for senior leadership and/or spokespersons to equip them with the skills and tools to respond to media requests and opportunities and confidently represent the Council, with the support of the Communications section, as they arise;
- develop and conduct media relations awareness sessions for non-spokesperson Council employees with PR, outreach, and event management responsibilities to raise their awareness of the Council's media relations practices and protocols;
- develop training materials;
- draw from and have a solid understanding of the Council's 2021–26 strategic plan, *Art, now more than ever*, when preparing deliverables;
- develop a plan for all sessions that clearly specifies objectives, milestones, and deliverables and refine said plan based on the Project Authority's feedback;
- collect evaluation and feedback on sessions;
- coordinate a post-mortem discussion and provide a summary report; and
- offer services (training services, training materials such as worksheets and evaluation forms, etc.) in both official languages.

2.3 GENERAL TIMEFRAME REQUIREMENTS

Exact timelines will be defined with the successful . However, the following general timeframes are being planned for as follows:

- **Early-mid August:** Onboarding and initial consultations
- **Mid-late August – October:** Preparation of training materials and meetings, as needed (TBC)
- **October – TBD:** Media training sessions for spokespeople and general media awareness sessions
- **TBD:** Post-mortem discussion and report

2.4 OTHER REQUIREMENTS

No other requirements.

3.0 EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSALS

3.1 SCORING

All proposals will be rated based on a "points earned" matrix that will involve an analysis of the complete proposal including, but not limited to, such areas as:

- Proposal is submitted according to instructions (Pass/Fail)
- Vendor's capability (70%)
 - [Section A: Executive Summary of the Proposal](#)
 - [Section B: Profile of the Vendor](#)
 - [Section C: Suitability of the Vendor](#)
 - [Section D: Service Requirements](#)
 - [Section E: Service Standards](#)
 - [Section F: References](#)
 - [Section G: Timeline Requirements](#)
- Vendor's pricing schedule (30%)
 - [Section H: Pricing Schedule, Experience & Value Added](#)
 - [Appendix B](#)

Vendors are required to demonstrate in their proposal that they are able to satisfy the above criteria. Council reserves the right in its sole discretion to request, in writing or orally, clarification of any additional information concerning proposals that are considered responsive.

3.2 SHORT-LIST

A short-list of Vendors will be selected based on Council's analysis. Vendors on the shortlist will be notified in writing. The Council reserves the right to request a one-hour presentation to the Council's Selection Committee.

The Council retains complete discretion in deciding which proposals meet the requirements set out in the RFP and what evidence it considers adequate to indicate compliance with those requirements.

3.3 AGREEMENTS WITH SUCCESSFUL VENDORS

The Council shall enter negotiations with the successful Vendor with a view to finalizing a Contract for services (the contract), on terms acceptable to the Council. The contract shall be for a period of **one base contract year with two, one-year option years** in favour of the Council. The Council reserves the right to cancel the contract at any time if the service does not meet Council's expectations and a 30-day advance notice will be sent.

If an agreement acceptable to the Council is not reached within sixty (60) days after selection of the successful Vendor, the Council may disqualify that Vendor and re-evaluate the remaining proposals without obligation or claim against the Council.

All proponents will be advised on the results of the RFP (including disclosure of the name of the winning proponent) once the proposals have been reviewed and the final negotiations with the winning proponent have been finalized and agreed. Notifications will be done via an email and/or telephone conversation with

all the proponents at the discretion of the Council. Within 15 days after notification of award, unsuccessful proponents may request a debriefing on their proposal to be scheduled at a later date.

4.0 WORK TERMS

4.1 TASKS

Specific tasks, activities, deliverables, timelines or milestones will be determined by the Project Authority during negotiation of the contract. The Project Authority will negotiate with the contractor the level of effort (number days), nature and/or scope of each task.

4.2 CLIENT SUPPORT

The Council's Project Authority will:

- Provide overall project management authority
- Provide the Vendor with background documents for review
- Assist the Vendor with obtaining Council document and data, when required
- Will be the source of final approval and acceptance of all deliverables
- Provide feedback to the Vendor on all deliverables

4.3 DELIVERABLES AND ASSOCIATED SCHEDULE

Deliverables can include project work plans, findings assessment reports, process documentation and other related deliverables.

4.4 OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Preliminary work, consultations and meetings can be carried out in either official language; however, the team must be able to provide services and deliverables in both English and French.

4.5 WORK LOCATION

The work shall primarily be carried out remotely and via phone, video conference, and/or email with in-person meetings, consultations, and training conducted at the Council offices, as needed.

4.6 TRAVEL

No travel outside the National Capital Region (Ottawa–Gatineau) will be required. Additionally, travel to or within the NCR will not be reimbursed.

APPENDIX A - PROPOSAL FORMAT

To ensure that all proposals are evaluated equally, the submissions must be divided into the following sections:

SECTION A AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSAL

SECTION B A PROFILE OF THE VENDOR

This section should include:

- company legal name and Canadian address;
- contact information for person responsible for RFP submission;
 - Name, Title, Phone, E-mail
 - Authorized Signature and Date
- website;
- professional memberships;
- number of years in business as a public relations firm in Canada;
- number of core customers;
- financial capacity;
- geographical area of operation;
- a brief description of your company, including the number of FTEs (employees versus contract personnel), average length of employment, an organizational chart and a brief resume of each senior manager.
 - Provide details that would be specific to this engagement

SECTION C SUITABILITY OF VENDOR

This section should describe in two pages why the Vendor is best suited to serve the Council's media relations needs.

Please describe what work the Vendor has done in terms of media relations consulting with (a) Crown corporation(s), or (b) similar type of agencies and/or organizations, and (c) with organizations working in the arts and culture sector. A demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the arts and culture sector will be an asset.

The Vendor must be able to demonstrate experience in providing media relations consulting for similar corporations and agencies and should demonstrate both Canadian and global reach.

SECTION D SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

This section should be broken into sub-sections that respond to each of the requirements identified in the [Council's Service Requirements](#) (2.2) of this RFP. The Vendor must provide project summaries describing at least two (2) engagements related to each project/service/requirement completed in the past three (3) years and must show experience and qualifications with similar corporations and agencies. The Vendor must demonstrate qualifications for each of the requirements and articulate what value they brought to their client through the delivery of that service. The Vendor must demonstrate experience in providing media relations training and/or coaching.

SECTION E SERVICE STANDARDS

This section should describe the Vendor's approach, methodology and accelerators for managing and delivering on project engagements of this nature (based on the examples identified in [Section D](#)).

This section should also address the following:

- the Vendor's ability to provide a highly personalized, responsive and practical service, and meet established project deadlines;
- the Vendor's proposal for problem resolution if the proposed work is deemed unsatisfactory; and
- the Vendor's ability to provide the Council with a high level of service in both official languages.

SECTION F REFERENCES

Please provide five references of comparable, existing corporate clients including the names of the senior contacts, phone number and email. Summarize the work that was done for their organization and the year(s) the service was provided. At a minimum, three of these references must come from Government of Canada departments, agencies or Crown Corporations. Private sector references may also be provided in addition, if desired.

SECTION G TIMELINE REQUIREMENTS

This section should describe the Vendor's ability to meet the deadlines indicated in [Section 2.3](#) and demonstrate availability and ability to deliver on the Council's service requirements in the timeframe requested.

SECTION H PRICING SCHEDULE, RESOURCES & VALUE ADDED

This section should state the total value of the contract, outline the rates for services the Vendor will provide to meet the requirements of the RFP, and demonstrate the Vendor's breadth of experience and the availability of its resources to start work on the proposed requirements immediately (see [Appendix B](#)).

APPENDIX B – PRICING SCHEDULE, RESOURCES & VALUE ADDED

As a requirement to complete the Proposal, a pricing schedule must be included.

B.1 PRICING SCHEDULE

To ensure that all proposals are evaluated equally, we request that the Vendor include rates for the services to be provided to meet the requirements of the RFP.

Fee Schedule

	\$/Hour	Daily Rate
SERVICE		
SERVICE		
SERVICE		

B.2 KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND CAPABILITY

It is important to the Council to have competent resources who have been dedicated by the Vendor to work with the Council. Describe the resources, including their knowledge, qualifications and experience to provide the services required by the Council. Please provide resumes for resources who can expertly provide each of the services identified by the Vendor above.

B.3 VALUE ADDED

We request that the Vendor indicate whether it would provide thresholds for pricing influenced by spending or if any additional incentives such as early payment terms or grouped project discounts could apply.

Lastly, we request that the Vendor describe any other value-added services that it could provide and explain where there would be any additional financial advantage if awarded work.