Web Services
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
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THE CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS  
WEB SERVICES  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS  

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS  

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE RFP  

This request for proposals (RFP) invites individual consultants and consulting firms (the Firm) with expertise in web services to submit their proposals to the Canada Council for the Arts (the Council).  

The purpose of this RFP is to create a Standing Offer supplier list, which will add to the existing list of prequalified suppliers the Canada Council can call upon. A Standing Offer Agreement is an arrangement to provide goods and services at prearranged prices with set terms and conditions, for specific periods of time on an “as requested” basis. A Standing Offer is not a Contract, and an Order against a Standing Offer is a “Call-up”. Each Call-up is a separate contract between the Council and the prequalified supplier.  

Submissions demonstrating quality services in some or all of the service categories outlined in Section 2.2, Service Requirements, are eligible for inclusion on the web services standing offer list.  

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.  

The promotional microsite for the Governor General’s Awards in Visual and Media Arts, a prize awarded by the Canada Council, recognizes distinguished Canadian artists with artistic achievement in visual (including architecture) and/or media arts.  

The promotional microsite for the Governor General’s Literary Awards, a prize awarded by the Canada Council, recognizes Canadian finalists and winners in seven categories of literature, in both official languages and readers of all ages.
The promotional microsite for the Musical Instrument Bank, showcases talented, Canadian classical musician winners with an instrument of choice from the Canada Council’s Musical Instrument Bank.

The promotional microsite for the Saidye Bronfman Award, a prize awarded by the Canada Council, recognizes the careers of exceptional artists who have helped shape the field of fine craft.

The Council is governed by an 11-member Board. Members of the Board and the Director/CEO are appointed by the Governor in Council. The Council works closely with federal, provincial, territorial and municipal arts and cultural agencies and departments.

A federal Crown corporation created through an Act of Parliament in 1957, the Council reports to Parliament through the Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages. It receives funding from Parliament and its annual budget is supplemented by endowment income, donations and bequests.

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

- Canada Council for the Arts: https://canadacouncil.ca/ | https://conseildesarts.ca
- Public Lending Right Program: https://publiclendingright.ca/ | https://droitdepretpublic.ca/
- Art Bank: https://artbank.ca | https://banquedart.ca
- GGArts: https://artsgg.ca | https://ggavma.ca
- GGBooks: https://ggbooks.ca | https://livresgg.ca
- Saidye Bronfman Award: https://saidyebronfmanaward.ca | https://prixsaidyebronfman.ca

1.3 BACKGROUND

The Canada Council for the Arts is Canada’s national public arts funder. The Council promotes artistic excellence in Canada and nurtures public appreciation for the arts across the country and abroad through the canadacouncil.ca website and subsidiary sites. The Canada Council occasionally contacts web professionals to support the Digital & Brand team.

The intent of this request is to establish a list of approved vendors (Standing Offer) who can be assigned to deliver web services on an as-needed basis. Public corporations and small businesses offering one or more of the requested services may apply for inclusion on this list.

In February 2021, the Council launched a widescale recruitment campaign, prioritizing diverse and equitable hiring at all levels of the organization. In the context of the current climate of change and renewal, which includes both internal and external efforts towards greater inclusivity, the Council encourages applications from public corporations and small businesses that promote employment equity.

The Canada Council strives for equity in access to its programs and services, including the provision of accessible information and communications products and activities. As a Crown corporation, meeting or exceeding WCAG AA accessibility standards, as outlined in the Accessible Canada Act, is an essential service to our applicants and public audiences.

1.4 ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

It is the intention of the Council to consider the proposals submitted and to not be precluded from negotiating with one, or more than one, of the parties responding to this RFP to finalize technical and commercial terms. The Council reserves the right to accept any proposal, or any part of a proposal submitted that is deemed, in the sole discretion of the Council, to be the most advantageous to it.
The proposal having the lowest cost shall not necessarily be accepted and the Council may take into account all criteria in evaluating responses to this RFP. The Council is not obliged to provide explanations to responding parties. Feedback will be provided at the Council’s discretion.

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

### 1.5 RFP DATES & DEADLINES

The following schedule will be followed for this RFP:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP posted to MERX</td>
<td>September 20, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for questions regarding the RFP</td>
<td>September 27, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for Q&amp;A to be posted</td>
<td>October 4, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for submissions</td>
<td>October 14, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations or additional requests from short-listed Firm(s) if required</td>
<td>No more than 2 weeks from submission deadline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract negotiations</td>
<td>October 24, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start of contract</td>
<td>November 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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 Firms 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 Firm 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 information;
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 his or her 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 firm(s) will enter into a Standing Offer Agreement 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 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Please submit any questions in writing, via email, to the contact below and the Council will respond accordingly. To ensure that all firms receive equivalent information, the Council will post applicable clarification questions and responses on MERX.

Deadline for submitting questions: Friday, September 27 at 5:00 pm EST (Ottawa local time).

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

Contact Name: Sol Inés Peca

Contact Title: Administrator, Digital and Brand

Email: rfp-dp@canadacouncil.ca

1.9 INSTRUCTIONS

1.9.1 INTENTION TO REPLY TO RFP

Please reply via email (address in section 1.8) that you have reviewed this RFP and of your intention to submit a proposal by Friday, October 7, 2022. Return email address must be clearly indicated in your letter of intention.

1.9.2 RECEIPT OF PROPOSAL

The completed RFP submission shall be received by email by the proposal due date: October 14 prior to 5:00 pm EST (Ottawa local time).

We request that firms:
- keep their RFP submission size to under 20 MB; and
- indicate the RFP title in the email subject line.

All proposals must be:

1) signed by a duly authorized officer;
2) include a statement confirming that the firm has examined and understood the RFP and all addenda (as applicable); and
3) state that the Firm has the technical and financial resources and personnel to provide the services as identified in this RFP, and within the timeframes specified in Section 2.3 of this proposal.

Consulting firms 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.
1.9.3 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). The firm may suggest enhancements or alternative means beyond the scope of the stated requirements. Changes should be clearly identified and explained. 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.

1.9.4 MODIFICATION OF PROPOSALS

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

1.9.5 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 and canadacouncil.ca. No interpretation, correction, clarification or amendment to the RFP shall be binding on the Council unless it is by way of an addendum. Firms must acknowledge receipt of all addenda in their proposals.

1.9.6 RETURN OF PROPOSALS

Unsuccessful proposals will not be returned to the Firm.
2.0 COUNCIL’S REQUIREMENTS

2.1 OVERVIEW

The intent of this request is to establish a list of approved vendors (Standing Offer) who can be assigned to deliver web services on an as-needed basis. Public corporations and small businesses offering one or more of the requested services in Section 2.2 may apply for inclusion on this list.

Subscriptions and services used by the Canada Council for the Arts:

- Primarily websites are hosted on Sitecore Cloud. The current CMS in use is Sitecore CMS 10.0.1 with SCORE 3 accelerator and Coveo Cloud search. Campaign driven marketing websites may be built on other CMS platforms.
- Fully integrated with Microsoft 365 business suite.
- Envoke and Mailchimp email software
- Google analytics, Sitecore analytics, Raven tools, Add This and MS Clarity
- Adobe creative suite
- Social platforms include, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter

2.2 SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Bidders should have the ability to scale up development and design resources as needed on an expedited timeline, provide services on request, and must have the ability to provide web services that meet WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility standards.

Candidates that demonstrate the ability to provide some or all the following services will be considered. The service categories are:

A. User Experience Design
   - UX research and design thinking
   - Wireframing for desktop, mobile and tablet
   - Information Architecture

B. Front-end and Backend Development
   - Experience with SASS and Bootstrap an asset
   - Familiar with JavaScript and jQuery, RequireJS
   - Responsive website design
   - Backend development experience with Sitecore CMS 10.0.1 or higher with ASP.NET MVC (Sitecore and ASP.NET MVC best practices)
   - Experience using xDB features and ability to provide:
     - Guidance and training
     - Configuration and Support
     - Reporting / Analytics
     - Personalization
   - Technical knowledge of SCORE 3 framework would be an asset
   - Integrating applications with 3rd Party systems
   - Implementing new components and features using Sitecore and ASP.NET MVC best practices
   - Implementing accessibility improvements
   - Azure DevOps experience

C. Cloud Services
   - Experience with Azure Cloud
D. Onsite Search Engine Implementation and Optimization
   o Technical knowledge in Coveo Cloud Search

E. Web Content Marketing Strategy
   o Search engine marketing
     ▪ Conversion optimization
     ▪ Keyword research
     ▪ Ads, paid links, and other link building activities
     ▪ Offsite business registrations
     ▪ Managing and tracking referral traffic
     ▪ Landing pages and microsites
   o Web content writing
     ▪ Familiarity with the Canada.ca Content Style Guide and Content Creation Guide
   o Email marketing
     ▪ Email content writing
     ▪ Envoke email marketing software expertise

F. Analytics and reporting
   ▪ Sitecore analytics
   ▪ Coveo search engine analytics
   ▪ Google analytics
   ▪ Mailchimp and Envoke analytics
   ▪ Raven tools and MS Clarity

G. Accessibility
   o Performing automated accessibility tests
   o Providing real time testing with the deaf and disability community
   o Reporting on accessibility and providing direction to content and development teams

H. Web maintenance and support

2.3 GENERAL TIMEFRAME REQUIREMENTS

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

- The resulting Standing Offer will be in effect from the date of issuance and will include two (2) option periods of twelve (12) months.

2.4 OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Accessibility Expectations
Experience with accessibility and WCAG 2.1 AA is a mandatory requirement.

Quality Assurance Expectations
Successful candidates called up to work with the Council will be in close contact with the Project Authority at all stages of a project. All project deliverables must be approved by the Project Authority.

The Firm is responsible for the quality of the deliverables. To ensure deliverables meet project requirements and are free of errors, the Firm will verify that they have been executed according to the Project Authority’s instructions and that any requested source files are included as part of the delivery.

Access to focus groups in the deaf and disability community for user acceptance testing would be an asset.
Project Management Expectations
When successful candidates are called up, they are expected to:

1. meet with the project authority and plan the project;
2. complete assigned work according to pre-defined schedules and provide status updates weekly;
3. advise the project authority in writing when a deadline date and time for project completion cannot be met and receive written approval from the Project Authority before extending a deadline or adjusting project scope;
4. advise the Project Authority in writing when additional costs may be incurred as a result of scope changes, provide an estimate, and receive written approval from the Project Authority before commencing the additional work.
3.0 EVALUATION OF THE PROPOSALS

3.1 SCORING

All proposals will be rated on the basis of 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)
- Firm’s capability (70%)
  - Section A: Executive Summary of the Proposal
  - Section B: Profile of the Firm
  - Section C: Suitability of the Firm
  - Section D: Service Requirements
  - Section E: Service Standards
  - Section F: References
  - Section G: Timeline Requirements
- Firm’s pricing schedule (30%)
  - Section H: Pricing Schedule, Resources & Value Added
  - Appendix B

Firms 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 Firms will be selected on the basis of Council's analysis. Firms on the short-list will be notified in writing and 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 will be considered adequate to indicate compliance with those requirements.

3.3 AGREEMENTS WITH SUCCESSFUL FIRMS

The Council shall enter into negotiations with the successful Firm(s) with a view to finalizing a Standing Offer Agreement for services (the contract), on terms acceptable to the Council. The contract shall be for a period of one base contract year with four, one-year option years for renewal, 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 Firm, the Council may disqualify that Firm and re-evaluate the remaining proposals without obligation or claim against the Council.

All candidates will be advised on the results of the RFP, including disclosure of the name of the winning candidates once the proposals have been reviewed and the final negotiations with the winning candidates have been finalized and agreed. Notifications will be done via an email and/or telephone conversation with all the candidates at the discretion of the Council. Within 15 days after notification of award, unsuccessful candidates may request a debriefing on their proposal.
4.0 WORK TERMS

4.1 TASKS

Upon awarding a standing offer contract, let it be understood that specific tasks, activities, deliverables, project timelines or milestones will be determined by the Project Authority during negotiation of a Statement of Work. The Project Authority will negotiate with the candidate the level of effort (number days), nature and/or scope of each task.

Services might include small-scale short-term notice support for the systems in place (ex. this might be a phone call or email), mid-scale development support for projects being managed by the internal web team and large-scale projects that will require intensive support, development or implementation of code, assets and functionalities coordinated by the supplier from inception to launch.

4.2 CLIENT SUPPORT

The Council’s Project Authority will:

- provide overall project management authority;
- provide the firm with background documents for review;
- assist the firm with obtaining council documents and data, when required;
- will be the source of final approval and acceptance of all deliverables; and
- provide feedback to the firm on all deliverables;
- provide accommodation for specific disability-related supports.

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

Work, including tasks and deliverables, will be primarily completed in English; however the team must be capable of providing services in both official languages. Especially for conducting meetings.

4.5 WORK LOCATION

The firm is expected to work remotely from its own offices and communicate with the Council by phone, email, Teams videoconference and other means of communication. The firm is not expected to work in person in Council offices.

4.6 TRAVEL

No travel outside the NCR will be required. Travel within the NCR will not be reimbursed.
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**

State the purpose of your submission, indicate which services from section 2.2 your Firm can provide and highlight your primary services and the benefits of selecting your Firm for the standing offer list. This section should be two to three paragraphs.

**SECTION B  A PROFILE OF THE FIRM**

This section should include:

- the company’s legal name or sole proprietorship and a Canadian address; contact information for person responsible for the RFP submission;
  - Name, Title, Phone, E-mail
  - Authorized Signature and Date
- Website URL
- professional memberships;
- number of years in business as a Web Service 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 YOUR FIRM**

This section should describe in one page why you feel that the Firm is best suited to serve the Council’s Web Services requirements.

Please describe what work the Firm has done in terms of Web services with (a) Crown corporation(s), (b) similar type of agencies and/or organizations, or (c) with organizations working in the arts and culture sector. Demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the arts and culture sector would be an asset.

The Firm must be able to demonstrate experience in providing Web services for similar corporations and agencies and should demonstrate both Canadian and Global reach. The firm should demonstrate its ability to work in both English and French and include a brief description of their approach to diversity and inclusion in the workplace and their commitment to reflecting diversity within their team, including gender diversity, representation of Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized people, people who are Deaf or have disabilities and people from official language minority communities.
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 firm will clearly indicate the service categories for which they are submitting proposals and provide examples of at least two (2) recently completed engagements for each of those service categories. Project examples must have been completed in the past five (5) years.

As stated in Section 2.2, the service categories are:

A. User Experience Design
B. Front-end and Backend Development
C. Cloud Services
D. Onsite Search Engine Implementation and Optimization
E. Web Content Marketing Strategy
F. Analytics and reporting
G. Accessibility
H. Web maintenance and support

Project summaries must include:
1. a project description;
2. the date of project (month and year);
3. a description of the scope of work and objectives;
4. different roles included in the work;
5. special features or custom work;
6. methodology (include approach and timeline of major milestones);
7. the final contract value (if available); and
8. Web links to finished products or portfolios.

The candidate must demonstrate:
• qualifications and the value they brought to their client through the delivery of a service;
• experience in providing web services;
• the ability to provide project management and quality assurance; and
• proficiency in Canada's accessibility standards for communications and communications technology.

SECTION E  SERVICE STANDARDS

This section should describe the Firm’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:

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

SECTION F  REFERENCES

Please provide a minimum of three (3) references of comparable, existing corporate clients, including the names, phone numbers and email addresses of the senior contacts. Summarize the work that was done for the organizations and the year(s) the service was provided. Where possible, please include a reference from a government department or Crown corporation.
SECTION G  TIMELINE REQUIREMENTS

This section should describe the firm’s ability to manage timelines and demonstrate its availability and capacity to deliver on the Council’s service requirements in the case that a standing offer is awarded. Detail how you manage time, assign work and collaborate with a client to get work done on target.

SECTION H  PRICING SCHEDULE, RESOURCES & VALUE ADDED

This section should state the total value of the contract (annual) and outline the rates for each resource (see Appendix B for the roles). Resumes must be provided for each of the roles to demonstrate the Firm’s breadth of experience and availability of these resources (i.e. contract, permanent employee, term etc.).

Indicate whether your Firm would provide thresholds for pricing influenced by spending or if any additional incentives such as early payment terms or grouped project discounts could apply.

Describe any other value added services that your Firm could provide. Explain where there would be any additional financial advantage if your Firm was awarded work.
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, please provide a rate for each of the roles identified below.

**Fee Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>$/Hour</th>
<th>$/Day Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Architect</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sitecore Developer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Database Developer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Front End Developer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web/UX Designer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graphic Artist</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Content writer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Web Marketing Specialist</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Accessibility specialist</td>
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<td>Email marketing specialist</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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**Note:** If additional roles would be required to provide the services requested by the Council, list the role, rate and provide a description of the expected need for that type of resource.

B.2 KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND CAPABILITY

It is important to the Council to have competent resources who have been dedicated by their Firm 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 each of the roles identified above.

B.3 VALUE ADDED

Indicate whether your Firm would provide thresholds for pricing influenced by spending or if any additional incentives such as early payment terms or grouped project discounts could apply.

Describe any other value added services that your Firm could provide. Explain where there would be any additional financial advantage if your Firm was awarded work.