

**(A.C.C.E.S.) ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY COUNSELLING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
("ACCES")**

**Request for Proposals (RFP)
For Independent Contractors Opportunity for:**

FUTURE SKILLS SPECIALIST

RFP# 2023-08-09

Issued Date: August 9th, 2023

Closing Date: August 30th, 2023 (5pm EST)

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SECTION 1 - COMPANY OVERVIEW

ACCES is a leader in connecting employers with qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. More than 40,000 job seekers are served annually at seven locations across the Greater Toronto Area. As a not-for-profit corporation, ACCES receives funding from all levels of government, corporate sponsors, various supporters, and the United Way Greater Toronto.

For more information about ACCES, please visit: www.accesemployment.ca.

SECTION 2 - DELIVERABLES AND EXPERIENCE

ACCES is requesting proposals from prospective proponents to qualify as a potential vendor for the provision of Future Skills workshops as described below. The successful proponent will be invited to enter into a Service Agreement for the period of September 15, 2023 to March 31, 2025. At ACCES's discretion, the Services Agreement may be extended.

2.1. Project Overview

ACCES's Career Pathways for Newcomer Women (CPNW) program is designed to support professional newcomer women in securing employment that utilizes their skills and experience. CPNW guides them in exploring a range of career paths that will support their short and long-term success in the labour market. Program participants will focus on building future skills, receive extensive employment coaching and regularly connect with employers and mentors. The program will equip them with the skills, confidence and professional network to thrive in fast-paced and changing work environments.

2.2. Scope of Work

The successful vendor will develop a framework, lesson plans and mini-modules featuring a range of Future Skills concepts and facilitate the mini-modules to ACCES' Career Pathways for Newcomer Women program participants. The main objectives of the lesson plans are to:

- Augment existing curriculum to ensure greater understanding of the content and how to apply it in a job search and in the Canadian workplace.
- Provide an overview of the changes in workforce due to innovation, technology, globalization, and demographic shifts.
- Impart an understanding of what the future of work looks like.
- Impart an understanding of the future skills gaps expressed by employers and various sectors.
- Address the barriers to employment encountered by Internationally Trained Professionals (ITPs).
- Identify and stress the skills and competencies ITPs need to acquire a competitive advantage in the workplace pertaining to 'future of work' demands and promoting growth mindset.
- Ensure the relevance of the base curriculum by identifying and stressing complimentary strategies that will position ITPs to thrive in the Canadian labour market.
- Prepare ITPs to successfully navigate the high levels of ambiguity found in the workplace.

- Create interactive learning that maximizes ITPs’ employment prospects through the acquisition of future skills, with emphasis on obtaining and retaining employment.

In addition, the successful vendor will provide one-to-one future skills coaching, subject to approval from the project manager, on an as-needed basis for CPNW participants. The successful vendor will:

- Coach program participants using the methodology as described in vendor’s future skills framework.
- Ensure that program participants acquire and improve on identified future skills within the context of their sector so as to adapt to workplace culture, secure and maintain employment and/or advance in their careers.
- Submit documentation to CPNW team, outlining one-to-one coaching sessions and depicting progress.

2.3. Required Qualifications

- Bachelor’s degree or higher in Education or a combination of equivalent education and experience
- Certification in Foursight Creative Thinking System for Innovation; Mindset and Toolset
- Minimum of five years’ experience in online training delivery and a proven ability to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment for learners of diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Solid understanding of training strategy and delivery, curriculum development, and instructional design
- Experience coaching Internationally Trained Professionals (ITPs)
- Outstanding presentation, written & verbal communication skills
- Experienced in the use of educational technology
- Experience with onboarding new employees will be considered an asset
- Familiarity with newcomer employment barriers, and particularly with barriers faced by newcomer women, will be considered an asset

2.4. Demonstration of Experience

Please provide three recent references (*APPENDIX C – References*) demonstrating experience in the areas listed below:

- Samples of work serving a diverse clientele.
- Experience working with a non-profit, public sector, higher education, and/or employment organization will be considered an asset.

SECTION 3 – SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

3.1. Key Dates

Description	Date and Time
RFP Issue Date	August 9, 2023
Proponents' Questions Deadline	August 16, 2023 (5pm EST)
Last Day for Addenda/Responses to Proponents' Questions	August 18, 2023
Proposals Submission Deadline	August 30, 2023 (5pm EST)
Proposals Review Period	August 31, 2023 to September 8, 2023
Contract Award	Week of September 11, 2023
Service Delivery Commencement Date	September 15, 2023

3.2. Proposals to be Submitted in Prescribed Manner

1. The subject line of the e-mail should contain the proponent's name followed by **RFP# 2023-08-09 – FUTURE SKILLS SPECIALIST**.
2. Proposals must include all sections and be clearly labelled using the headings listed in **Section 4.1. Evaluation Process** and signed by an appropriate official of the proponent's organization. Otherwise, the proposal will be deemed incomplete, therefore disqualified. This RFP sets forth the minimum requirements that all proposals must meet.

3.3. RFP Responses Deadline and Contact

- Proposals must be submitted by **August 30th, 2023 (5pm EST)** via e-mail to procurement@acesemployment.ca. Proposals submitted after the submission deadline will be rejected.
- **Important Note:** The maximum size of an email that ACCES can receive is 10 MB. It is the proponent's responsibility to ensure that large emails are sent sufficiently in advance to ACCES by the closing date and time.

3.4. Amendment of Proposals

- Changes to the submitted proposal can be made, if required, as per the delivery instructions outlined above, and to be clearly marked "**FINAL PROPOSAL**" in the email subject line and the proposal must be received no later than the submission deadline.

3.5. Withdrawal of Proposals

- At any time throughout the RFP process, a proponent may withdraw a submitted proposal. To withdraw a proposal, a notice of withdrawal must be sent to

procurement@accesemployment.ca and must be signed by an authorized representative of the proponent. ACCES is under no obligation to return withdrawn responses.

3.6. Subcontractors (if applicable)

- The proponent must list any subcontractors they will be using in connection to this RFP. Work proposed to be performed under this RFP or under the vendor’s proposal by the vendor or their employees shall not be subcontracted without ACCES’s prior written approval. Acceptance of a vendor’s proposal shall include any subcontractor(s) specified therein.

3.7. Proposal Receipt

- Upon receipt of a proposal, ACCES will send an electronic receipt to the Proponent.

SECTION 4 – EVALUATION AND SELECTION

ACCES will conduct the evaluation of proposals in the following two stages.

4.1. Evaluation Process

Stage I - Non-Rated Criteria: proposals must include all completed appendices listed below to be further evaluated.

No.	Description
1	Appendix A – RFP Cover Page
2	Appendix B - Conflict of Interest Statement
3	Appendix C - References
4	Appendix D - GST/HST Registration - Confirmation of Exemption (if applicable)
5	Appendix E – Bid Form

Stage II - Rated Criteria: this stage involves reviewing proposals based on the following evaluation criteria.

Component	Weight
Company Profile (or Individual’s Profile): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include company’s legal name and location (state/province of incorporation); HST number; number of years in business; primary contact details. 	10%

<p>Company (or Individual) Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe proponent’s knowledge, skills, and experience relevant to the deliverables, including any sub-contractors (if applicable). any sub-contractors must be clearly denoted and include a description of work history with the proponent, their experience, and qualifications. 	45%
<p>Lesson Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide a sample 1-hour lesson plan that is targeted at the client group of this program and would align with the Scope of Work (<i>Section 2.2</i>). 	35%
<p>Pricing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Bid Form (<i>APPENDIX E</i>) 	10%

4.2. Selection Process

- ACCES reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals.
- ACCES may request further information from the proponent or third parties to verify, clarify or supplement the information provided in the proposal. ACCES may revisit and reevaluate the proponent’s response or ranking based on any such information.
- ACCES will shortlist the top scoring proposals and their respective proponent organizations will be invited to deliver a presentation and/or interview with ACCES. The presentation/interviews will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for both parties. The presentation/interviews will be evaluated based on demonstrating an understanding and knowledge to deliver the required services, and demonstrating the abilities, skills, and experiences of the project team. Those shortlisted will be supplied with details on the presentation process (e.g., confirmation of presentation format, and any logistical requirements such as audio-visual, length of presentation).
- The evaluation process will consider a proposal that offers the best value and solution to ACCES. Therefore, the selected proposal may not necessarily be the lowest priced proposal.
- The proponent that receives the highest score will be invited to enter a contract with ACCES. If the highest scored proponent declines the invitation to further participate, ACCES reserves the right to invite the next highest scoring proponent to enter the contract instead.
- In the event of a tie score, ACCES’s evaluation team will consider all available information, both tangible and intangible, including but not limited to the information contained in the submissions, to arrive at the tiebreaking decision.
- Any award made by ACCES shall be made in writing.

SECTION 5 – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

5.1. Inquiries

- Proponents should e-mail all questions to: procurement@acesemployment.ca by **August 16th, 2023 (5pm EST)**. ACCES will not respond to questions after this deadline.

- ACCES will review and consolidate proponents' inquiries received by the deadline for submission and will provide answers via addenda for those inquiries deemed appropriate. The addenda to proponent inquiries will be made available online via the same bidding platform(s).

5.2. Blackout Period

- From the issuance of this RFP until a contract resulting from this RFP is executed by the selected proponent, any contact regarding this RFP (other than as permitted in this RFP) with personnel employed by or contracted by ACCES is prohibited. During this time period, no proponents shall approach any ACCES personnel or contractor concerning this RFP, the contracting process, or their proposal.

5.3. Acknowledgment of Non-Binding Procurement Process

- This RFP is not intended to create any contractual or other legal obligations or duties whatsoever owed to any proponent or potential proponent by ACCES. Without restricting the generality of the foregoing, no contractual relations shall exist between ACCES and any proponent until the execution of an Agreement/Contract with that proponent.

5.4. Services Agreement

- The successful proponent will be invited to enter into a Services Agreement with ACCES which will be issued on a yearly basis and according to ACCES' fiscal year (April – March).
- The Services Agreement (***APPENDIX F – Services Agreement***) has been provided as part of this RFP to allow for familiarity with certain specific conditions that are expected to be adhered to in connection with the provision of services should the proponent be awarded the contract.

5.5. Insurance

- Insurance: Even though ACCES does not identify any specific insurance requirements in this Request for Proposals (RFP), this shall not be construed as a waiver of the successful proponent's responsibility to carry insurance that would be considered appropriate for a prudent person or business to carry while engaged in the activities and providing the Services, including liability insurance. For additional information on the insurance requirements, refer to ***APPENDIX F – Services Agreement***.

5.6. Incidental Expenses, External Factors and Proposal Outcome:

- ACCES programs and services receive funding from various sources and therefore all contracted services are subject to budget availability.
- ACCES as a non-profit organization under the ***Broader Public Sector (BPS), Act 2010*** is unable to reimburse the proponent for any incidental expenses such as food, hospitality, mileage, parking, photocopying, printing, etc.
- ACCES shall not be liable for any expenses incurred by any proponent, including the expenses associated with the cost of preparing the proposal.

- ACCES reserves the right to withdraw this RFP or terminate the resulting contract within the terms of the contract without penalty.

5.7. Conflict of Interest:

- Proponents responding to this RFP may not have any personal or business interest that would present an actual, potential, or apparent conflict of interest with the performance of the contract to be awarded (*APPENDIX B – Conflict of Interest Statement*).

5.8. Publicity:

- Proponents should not use the award of a contract as part of any news release or commercial advertising without ACCES's prior written consent.

5.9. Disclosure of Confidential Information:

- Proponents should clearly mark any confidential information in their response. The confidentiality of such information will be maintained by ACCES, except as otherwise required by law or by order of a court or tribunal. Proponents are advised that their responses will, as necessary, be disclosed on a confidential basis, to ACCES's staff to advise or assist with the RFP process, including the evaluation of proposals. If a proponent has any questions about the collection and use of personal information pursuant to this RFP, questions are to be submitted to the Bid Administrator.

5.10. Bid Dispute

- Bid Dispute should be submitted in writing to procurement@acesemployment.ca within five (5) business days of receipt of proposal status notification.
- The Selection Committee will conduct a review of a bid dispute and take the appropriate remedial action, including, but not limited to, reinstating the proponent into the competition or cancelling the call.
- The RFP award may be delayed because of a bid dispute.

5.11. Notification and Debriefing

- Once the selected proponent has been notified, the other proponents will be notified of the outcome of the RFP process via the bidding platform(s) used.
- Proponents may request a debriefing after receipt of a notification of the outcome of the RFP process. All requests must be in writing to procurement@acesemployment.ca and must be made within sixty (60) days of such notification.

APPENDIX A - Request for Proposals (RFP) Cover Page

Please complete and submit as a cover page to the proposal.

Company (or Individual's) Legal Name:	
Number of Years in Business:	
Address:	
HST Number: <i>(if exempted, please complete APPENDIX D – GST/HST Registration - Confirmation of Exemption)</i>	
Website:	
Primary Contact Name:	
Title:	
Telephone:	
Email:	
Organization Background:	
Number of employees/current staff	
Core competencies, services and products	

The undersigned:

- 1) confirms that he/she has carefully examined the RFP documents and has clear and comprehensive knowledge of the deliverables required;
- 2) consents to ACCES and their representatives checking and verifying the information provided with their proposal, including checking references;
- 3) represents and warrants its ability to provide the deliverables of this RFP and comply with the contractual terms (**APPENDIX F – Services Agreement**);
- 4) has authority to bind the organization listed above.

Signature:	
Print Name:	
Position:	
Date:	

APPENDIX B - Conflict of Interest Statement

In addition to the other information and representations made by each proponent in the RFP, each proponent must declare whether it has an actual or potential Conflict of Interest. If, at the sole and absolute discretion of ACCES, the proponent is found to be in a Conflict of Interest, ACCES may, in addition to any other remedies available at law or in equity, disqualify the proposal submitted by the proponent.

The proponent, by submitting the proposal, warrants that to their best knowledge and belief, no actual or potential Conflict of Interest exists with respect to the submission of the proposal or performance of the contemplated Agreement. Where ACCES discovers a proponent’s failure to disclose all actual or potential Conflicts of Interest, ACCES may disqualify the proponent or terminate any Agreement awarded to that proponent pursuant to this RFP process.

Conflict of Interest	Response
<p>Is there an actual Conflict of Interest, relating to the preparation of their proposal, or if the proponent foresees an actual or potential Conflict of Interest in performing the contractual obligations contemplated in the RFP? (<i>e.g. Is your company receiving training subsidy from ACCES?</i>)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>[If yes, please enter details here.]</p>

The proponent agrees to provide any additional information, which may be requested by ACCES.

Signature:	
Print Name:	
Position:	
Date:	

I have authority to bind the organization listed above.

APPENDIX C - References

Proponents must provide a minimum of three (3) current references, outside of ACCES, for projects of similar size and scope from within the last 3 years. ACCES reserves the right to contact these references at any time throughout this process. Reference checks will be kept confidential.

Reference # 1:

Company Name:	
Contact Name:	
Company Address:	
Company Telephone Number:	
Contact Email Address:	
Date Work Undertaken:	From: (M/D/Y) To: (M/D/Y)
Project Name:	

Reference # 2:

Company Name:	
Contact Name:	
Company Address:	
Company Telephone Number:	
Contact Email Address:	
Date Work Undertaken:	From: (M/D/Y) To: (M/D/Y)
Project Name:	

Reference # 3:

Company Name:	
Contact Name:	
Company Address:	
Company Telephone Number:	
Contact Email Address:	
Date Work Undertaken:	From: (M/D/Y) To: (M/D/Y)
Project Name:	

APPENDIX D - GST/HST Registration - Confirmation of Exemption

I confirm to ACCES that I am exempted from having a GST/HST registration number due to one of the following conditions:

- I am a sole proprietor, my total revenues from taxable supplies (before expenses) from all my businesses are \$30,000 or less in the last four consecutive calendar quarters and in any single calendar quarter.
- I am in partnership / I am a corporation, the total revenues from taxable supplies (before expenses) of the partnership or corporation are \$30,000 or less in the last four consecutive calendar quarters and in any single calendar quarter.
- I am a public service body (charity, non-profit organization, municipality, university, public college, school authority, or hospital authority), the total revenues from taxable supplies from all of the activities of the organization are \$50,000 or less in the last four consecutive calendar quarters and in any single calendar quarter. A gross revenue threshold of \$250,000 also applies to charities and public institutions.
- Our organization is not based in Canada.
- Other (please describe below):

I confirm that the information I have provided is accurate.

Signature:	_____
Print Name:	_____
Position:	_____
Date:	_____

I have authority to bind the organization listed above.

APPENDIX E – Bid Form

Please complete Excel sheet “Appendix E – Bid Form”

APPENDIX F – Services Agreement

Please see attached PDF “Appendix F – Services Agreement”