

Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP #2023-11-30-A - SECTOR-SPECIFIC BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS COACH

(A.C.C.E.S.) ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY COUNSELLING AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (“ACCES”)

RFP Issued Date: November 30, 2023

RFP Closing Date: December 22, 2023 (17:00 EST)

RFP Objective

ACCES is requesting proposals from prospective proponents to qualify as a potential vendor for the provision of Sector-Specific Business Communications Coaching.

The goal of this RFP is to identify a potential vendor that meets the requirements of the service, which include quality of service and commercial conditions, such as price and payment terms.

The successful proponent will be invited to enter a Services Agreement from January 22nd, 2024 to March 31st, 2025.

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SECTION 1 - ACCES OVERVIEW

ACCES is a leader in connecting employers with qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. Over 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 Sector-Specific Business Communications Coaching as described below. The successful proponent will be invited to enter a Services Agreement from January 22nd, 2024 to March 31st, 2025. At ACCES's discretion, the Services Agreement may be extended.

2.1. Project Overview

Connecting to Careers in Advanced Manufacturing is an upskilling program that will permit mid-skill workers to enter the advanced manufacturing sector or advance within it. The program responds to the advanced manufacturing sector's urgent need for skilled technicians and will position program participants at the forefront of a high-demand, dynamic industry. This industry-informed program will include technical training, future proofing, mentoring, coaching, personal branding, and employment placement to ensure that program participants complete training and effectively transition into demand driven occupations.

2.2. Scope of Work

The Scope of Work consists of providing one-to-one pre- and post-employment support through sector-specific business communications coaching to program participants of the Connecting to Careers in Advance Manufacturing Program.

The vendor will provide the following services:

- Coach program participants to improve their business communication and interpersonal skills within the context of their specific sector.
- Ensure that program participants increase their knowledge and overall use of sector-specific practices and technical jargon/terminology in order to ensure and maintain employment and/or advance their careers.
- Deliver one-to-one sector-specific business communications and interpersonal skills coaching either face-to-face or via e-mail, online platforms and/or telephone, specific to: preparing for employer-facing opportunities; nuances of occupational terminology; technical reporting writing; conducting effective negotiations; networking and building sector-specific relationships; and/or, developing presentation and interview strategies in the context of the Canadian market.

Delivery Modalities:

- Coaching sessions will be conducted one-to-one, either face-to-face or through virtual platforms (e.g., video calls, online collaboration tools).
- The coaching may also include email correspondence and telephone consultations to accommodate diverse participant preferences.

Individualized Development Plans:

- Each participant will work with their coach to create a personalized development plan, outlining specific goals and milestones related to technical skill enhancement and professional growth.

2.3. Skills and Qualifications

- A bachelor's or master's degree in a relevant field such as business, communication, organizational development, industrial engineering, or a related discipline.
- Demonstrated success in implementing effective communication strategies.
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to tailor communication strategies to different audiences, including both technical and non-technical stakeholders.
- Experience in coaching individuals and teams to improve communication skills.
- Knowledge of adult learning principles and the ability to deliver effective coaching services.
- Effective interpersonal skills to foster effective rapport with participants.
- Flexibility to adjust coaching strategies based on feedback and changing circumstances.
- Knowledge of advanced manufacturing processes and practices and an understanding of the specific challenges and opportunities within the industry is considered an asset.
- Experience in a manufacturing environment, preferably in a leadership or coaching role is considered an asset.

2.4. Demonstration of Experience

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

- Provide examples of your work with organizations whose customers represent the full spectrum of a community with Toronto's diverse demographic.
- Experience with the non-profit, public sector, higher education, and/or employment organizations is an asset.

SECTION 3 – SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

3.1. Key Dates

Description	Date and Time
RFP Issue Date	November 30, 2023
Proponents' Questions Deadline	December 8, 2023
Last Day for Addenda/Responses to Proponents' Questions	December 13, 2023
Proposals Submission Deadline	December 22, 2023 (17:00 EST)
Proposals Review Period	December 27, 2023 to January 9, 2024
ACCES Selection Committee to Meet with Top Proponents	January 10 to January 16, 2024
Contract Award	January 19, 2024

3.2. Instructions to Submit a Proposal

1. Proposals must be submitted by 17:00 EST via email to procurement@acesemployment.ca. Proposals submitted after the submission deadline will be rejected.
2. The subject line of the e-mail should contain the proponent's name followed by **RFP #2023-11-30-A - SECTOR-SPECIFIC BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS COACH**
3. Proposals must include all completed forms listed below to be evaluated. Failure to provide all of these documents will result in disqualification.
 - Appendix A – RFP Cover Page
 - Appendix B – Conflict of Interest Statement
 - Appendix C – References
 - Appendix D – GST/HST Registration - Confirmation of Exemption (*if Applicable*)
 - Appendix E – Bid Form

Important Note: The maximum size of an email that ACCES can receive is 10 MB. The proposal may be separated into sections and sent in multiple emails if necessary.

3.3. Amendment or Withdrawal of Proposal

- Changes to the submitted proposal can be made no later than the submission deadline and to be marked ***"FINAL PROPOSAL"*** in the email subject line.
- At any time throughout the RFP process, a proponent may withdraw a submitted proposal by sending a notice of withdrawal to procurement@acesemployment.ca

3.4. Subcontractors (if applicable)

- The proponent must list any subcontractors they will use for delivering the services requested in this RFP. Subcontractors will not be hired without ACCES’s prior written approval.

3.5. Proposal Receipt

- ACCES will send an email confirmation upon receipt of a proposal.

SECTION 4 – EVALUATION AND SELECTION

4.1. Evaluation Process

ACCES will evaluate the proposals based on the following criteria.

Criteria	Weight
<p>Company Profile (or Individual’s Profile):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include the company’s legal name and location (state/province of incorporation); HST number; number of years in business; primary contact details; number of employees/current staffing; financial stability or total revenue previous fiscal year; core competencies, services and products. • where additional companies will be subcontracted, a company profile and company experience must be completed for each firm. 	5%
<p>Company (or Individual’s) Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide examples of the proponent’s capability to perform thorough assessments for identifying learners' skills, interests, and career goals. • Demonstrate the proponent’s current knowledge of industry trends, the job market, and requirements in the target field. • Provide proof of effective communication, conveying complex concepts, offering constructive feedback, and inspiring confidence in learners. • Present evidence of a positive industry reputation, including client testimonials, reviews, and industry awards or recognitions. • Highlight the number of years actively engaged in coaching. • Clearly denote any sub-contractors and provide a description of their work history with the proponent, along with their experience and qualifications. 	25%
<p>Approach and Implementation Methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer a comprehensive insight into the proponent’s coaching strategies, addressing individual learners’ unique needs and challenges as they embark on launching their careers in the specified field. • Proponents are required to articulate and furnish specifics on how they intend to address the deliverables outlined in <i>SECTION 2</i>, providing a comprehensive description of these deliverables. 	25%

Pricing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete Bid Form (<i>APPENDIX E</i>), and attach it to the proposal in .xlsx format. 	45%
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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 reevaluate the proposal based on any such information.
- Top scoring proponents will be invited to interview with ACCES’s Selection Committee.
- The evaluation process will consider a proposal that offers the best value and solution to ACCES, which may not necessarily be the lowest-priced proposal.
- The proponent that receives the highest score will be invited to enter into 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 a contract instead.
- In the event of a tie score, ACCES’s Selection Committee will consider all available tangible and intangible information, including but not limited to the information contained in the proposals, to arrive at the tiebreaking decision.
- ACCES will award the contract in writing.

SECTION 5 – TERMS AND CONDITIONS

5.1. Inquiries

- Proponents should e-mail all questions to: procurement@acesemployment.ca by the “Proponents’ Questions Deadline” (Section 3.1.). ACCES will not respond to questions after this deadline.
- Inquiries deemed appropriate will be answered via addenda by the “Last Day for Addenda/Responses to Proponents’ Questions” (Section 3.1.). The addenda will be available online via the same bidding platform(s).

5.2. Blackout Period

- From the issuance of this RFP until the selected proponent executes an agreement, 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, proponents should not approach any ACCES personnel or contractor concerning this bidding, 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. Sample Services Agreement

- A sample Services Agreement (*APPENDIX F – Sample Services Agreement*) has been provided to outline ACCES’s standard terms and conditions, and it is not intended to be signed.

5.5. Insurance

- Even though ACCES does not identify any specific insurance requirements in this 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 – Sample Services Agreement*.

5.6. Incidental Expenses, External Factors and Proposal Outcome:

- ACCES receives funding from various sources; 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 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 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:

- Proposals should mark any confidential information. 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 proposals 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 as per section 5.1, “Inquiries.”

5.10. Notification and Debriefing

- Once the contract has been awarded, the other proponents will be notified of the outcome of the RFP process via e-mail.
- Proponents may request a debriefing after receipt of notification of the outcome of the RFP process. All requests must be sent to procurement@acesemployment.ca and must be made within sixty (60) days of such notification.

5.11. Bid Dispute

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