

Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP # 2025-02-19-C – Pre-Arrival Business Communications Coach

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

RFP Issued Date: February 19, 2025

RFP Closing Date: March 28, 2025 5:00pm ET

RFP Objective

ACCES is requesting proposals from prospective proponents to qualify as a potential vendor for the provision of Canadian Business Communications webinars to pre-arrival immigrants taking part in the Canadian Employment Connections program.

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(s) will be invited to enter into a Services Agreement for 12 months upon execution of the agreement.

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SECTION 1 - ACCES OVERVIEW

ACCES is a leader in connecting employers with qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. Over 56,000 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 Canadian Business Communication webinars as described below. The successful proponent(s) will be invited to enter into a Services Agreement for 12 months upon execution of the agreement. At ACCES's discretion, the Services Agreement may be extended.

2.1. Project Overview

The Canadian Employment Connections program supports the employment goals of immigrants who have been approved to immigrate to Canada, but who have not yet landed, with a focus on helping them accelerate their entry into the Canadian labour market through securing employment either before they land or soon after landing. Canadian Business Communication webinars are an important element of the program.

2.2. Scope of Work

Proponents may bid on either Scope A, Scope B, or both Scopes A and B. Please clearly indicate which scopes you are bidding on and include the correct Bid Form(s) (*APPENDIX E1 and/or APPENDIX E2*).

- A. Deliver 72 Canadian Business Communication Workshops for the Canadian Employment Connections Program.
 - a. Content necessary for workshops will be provided by ACCES Employment
 - b. ACCES will work with the successful proponent to regularly update this content to ensure that program and course curricula are current, relevant and reflective of best practices within the relevant professional/program disciplines
 - i. Prior to each webinar, incorporate clients' feedback/questions (as transmitted by ACCES program staff) from e-learning modules into webinar content
 - ii. After each webinar, confer with the ACCES leadership team on the effectiveness of the webinar, clients' participation, and planned follow-ups
 - c. Ensure that program participants obtain an improved understanding of professional business communications skills needed to find and secure employment in Canada
 - d. Each Canadian Business Communications Workshop delivery will require two hours of vendor's services

- B. On an as-needed basis, deliver one-to-one sector-specific business communications coaching 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.

2.3. Skills and Qualifications

- Post-secondary education relevant to Communications
- Minimum of ten years of experience supporting the growth of professional communicative competency of newcomers to Canada
- Demonstrated coaching experience
- Strong online facilitation skills
- Exceptional written and verbal communication skills
- Strong, demonstrable understanding of employment barriers faced by newcomers
- Previous experience working with pre-arrival immigrants will be 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	February 19, 2025
Proponents’ Questions Deadline	March 10, 2025
Last Day for Addenda/Responses to Proponents’ Questions	March 14, 2025
Proposals Submission Deadline	March 28, 2025 5:00 pm ET
Proposals Review Period	March 31 - April 2, 2025
ACCES Selection Committee to Meet with Top Proponents	April 3 - 7, 2025
Contract Award	Week of April 14, 2025

3.2. Instructions to Submit a Proposal

1. Proposals must be submitted by 5:00 pm ET 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 # 2025-02-19-C – Pre-Arrival 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 E1 – Bid Form in .xlsx format (*and/or*) Appendix E2 – Bid Form in .xlsx

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
Company Profile (or Individual’s Profile): <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. 	20%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> where additional companies will be subcontracted, a company profile and company experience must be completed for each firm. 	
Company Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe the proponent’s experience in delivering the services 	20%
Key Project Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> include a description of their knowledge, skills and experience relevant to the deliverables, including any sub-contractors engaged. any sub-contractors must be denoted and include a description of work history with the proponent, their experience and qualifications. 	15%
Approach and Implementation Methodology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> articulate the planned and recommended process for initiating and conducting the project and completing activities prior to March 31, 2026. proponents should describe and/or provide details of how the deliverables (<i>Section 2</i>) will be addressed and describe the deliverables. 	15%
Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe the proponent’s training plan, training methodology, training guidelines/documents (electronic version)/webinars, willingness to deliver additional training, if necessary 	10%
Pricing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete Bid Form (<i>APPENDIX E</i>) and attach it to the proposal in .xlsx format. 	20%

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@accesemployment.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.