

## Request for Proposals

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*Closing:* 10:00 A.M. on Friday, February 1, 2019

*Issued on:* Thursday, January 17, 2019

### **Skilled Immigrant Employment Readiness: Training Curriculum Content Design and Development**

#### **1 Introduction**

The Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC) facilitates the integration of skilled newcomers into BC's workforce by connecting employers with the talent they need. As a champion of BC employers, we foster solutions, build connections and are a catalyst for employer success. IEC-BC works directly with employers, industry and sectoral organizations to develop innovative solutions, tools and resources that assist employers integrate skilled immigrants into their workforces.

Through partnerships with businesses, government and community partners, we deliver employer-facing solutions that give businesses an edge in an increasingly competitive economy.

#### **1.1 Background**

According to the BC 2025 Labour Market Outlook, over 25% of job openings in the next 10 years will only be filled through in-migration. Yet skilled newcomers to Canada are often at a disadvantage when seeking employment that matches their skills and education. Very often, they lack local professional networks, or an understanding of the nuances of Canadian workplace culture and employer expectations.

Through sector dialogues, consultations, surveys, focus groups and individual meetings, IEC-BC has confirmed employers' interest in hiring skilled newcomers, yet concerns remain about inconsistencies in the job-readiness of immigrants, including those who have accessed labour-market settlement programming.

This project will focus on developing and implementing a standardized labour-market responsive employment-readiness program for skilled immigrants. The project will:

- bridge the gap between employers' expectations when hiring immigrants and the actual job-readiness of newcomers;
- improve immigrants' competency and employability skills to meet the human capital needs of BC employers, and;

- boost the capacity of SPOs that provide employment services to immigrants to support the economic integration of their clients.

IEC-BC has recently completed a needs assessment with employers, service provider organizations and key stakeholders across the Lower Mainland to analyze gaps between employer expectations and newcomer employment readiness. An initial curriculum outline was developed from this needs assessment. The curriculum outline includes: major themes identified by BC employers and stakeholders around where key supports for skilled newcomers are required; activities around which content should be developed, and recommendations for interpersonal skills that are necessary for real-life success in each activity.

### *1.2 Contract Scope*

IEC-BC is requesting proposals from contractors and consultants experienced in the design and creation of innovative and interactive e-learning and in-person curriculum content. The successful vendor(s) will design, develop and provide IEC-BC with an innovative program training curriculum that helps newcomers to overcome skills gaps in their employment readiness, thereby also directly benefiting BC employers. Curriculum content will integrate both computer-based and face-to-face learning. The program will be delivered by immigrant service providing organizations that will be trained in delivering the curriculum offerings to skilled newcomer clients.

### *1.3 Contract Deliverables*

Develop and deliver a complete ‘plug and play’ (self-contained) e-learning and in-person training curriculum program to support the employment readiness of skilled immigrants. This will include (and within the context of content development is not necessarily limited to):

1. Review of IEC-BC’s existing needs assessment findings, curriculum outline and other relevant documentation necessary for content development
2. Review and identification of relevant external pre-existing materials/content and, following discussion with IEC-BC on licensing/usage requirements and potential costs, incorporation of external content into the e-learning curriculum
3. Development of content that will logically and cleanly integrate both computer-based and in-person learning, including:
  - training modules that reflect real-life processes experienced by skilled immigrants in securing employment (For example: employment research, job application, etc.)
  - individual activities around which content will be created in each training module (For example: identifying a mentor, performing in face-to-face interview situations, etc.)
  - integration of targeted interpersonal skills necessary for success in each activity

4. Incorporation of a broad range of innovative learning and delivery options within the curriculum to support understanding, retention and reinforcement of content as appropriate, which could include but is not be limited to: interactive reading/text; short video content; audio clips, games and gamified delivery, assessments/quizzes, integration of relevant external sites/content links, mock interviews, role-play, etc.)
5. Integration of relevant learning reinforcement options (Assessments/quizzes) to determine participant levels of understanding and retention of concepts
6. Creation and integration of follow-up gap training with additional targeted content for participants that do not meet minimum performance benchmarks for each activity
7. Recommendations (including approximate pricing) for a delivery platform through which the completed content programming would be best delivered (i.e. specific Learning Management Systems, alternative platform delivery options)
8. A basic instruction outline for training immigrant service providing organizations to use in delivering and administering program curriculum
9. Recommendations for metrics to assess the learning and retention (before and after competencies) of program participants
10. Compliance with a IEC-BC’s communication plan, including weekly progress conference calls with the Project Lead, and other vendors as required, in addition to any necessary in-person meetings and emails

#### 1.4 Proposed Timeline

The following timelines are anticipated by IEC-BC

Activity	Proposed Completion Date
Proponents’ call	Tuesday, January 22, 2019 (12:00 P.M. to 1:00 P.M. PST)
Proposal closing	Friday, February 1, 2019 (10:00 A.M.) PST
Contract start	Thursday, February 7, 2019
Contract close	Sunday, March 31, 2019

All deliverables associated with this contract will need to be completed and delivered **on or before March 31, 2019**.

Given the limited time available for development and delivery of the training content, if deemed necessary, IEC-BC reserves the right to award contract(s) to more than one vendor.

This RFP is open to qualified vendors from across Canada, provided that the successful vendor(s) are available to deliver all required deliverables as per sections 1.3 and 1.4, above.

## 2. Proposal Submission

### 2.1 Proponent(s) Requirements

1. Develop an innovative and interactive curriculum content example based on the following sample activity's requirements (**4 pages maximum**):

A skilled immigrant has completed the program's training Module 1 (Program Overview and Benchmark Analysis) and Module 2 (Looking for a job) and is part-way through the completion of Module 3 (Applying for a job).

**Module 3:** Applying for a job

**Activity:** Face-to-face behavioural interview

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Understand the key interpersonal skills and behaviours a candidate is expected to demonstrate during a face-of-face behavioural interview with a potential employer
- Identify the key personality traits necessary to present a positive image when engaging with others
- Review and assess sample interviews with varied outcomes

**Interpersonal Skills to be assessed through the activity:** verbal and non-verbal communication; self-confidence; self-promotion; Canadian workplace culture; respect; work ethic.

**Include method(s) for assessing a participant's understanding of the key interpersonal skills, completion of the learning objectives, concept reinforcement and retention**

**Identify method(s) for the most effective delivery of content to meet the above requirements**

#### Additional Requirements

2. Demonstrated understanding of and experience with the design, development, and implementation of a program-based training program, including both in-person and e-learning content
3. Demonstrated experience creating innovative learning content, which should include (but is not limited to): audio, visual, text, gamified content, assessments, etc.
4. Knowledge of, demonstrated experience working with, and recommendations for a suitable e-learning platform delivery options (learning management systems, other systems etc.) is an asset
5. Vendors have the option to bid on the development and delivery of computer-based training content, in-person training content, or both. Proposals must clearly indicate which content type is being bid on and include clear recommendations for integration of the two content types into a unified program, where applicable.

6. Knowledge of labour market demand, immigrant integration and/or workforce development strategies is an asset
7. Demonstrated experience working with diverse stakeholders
8. Experience collaborating with multiple vendor(s) to complete a project(s) for a shared client
9. Ability to complete projects on time and on budget
10. Excellent interpersonal and communications skills

### *1.2 Proposal Format*

Evaluation of proposals is made easier when Proponents respond in a similar manner. The following format and sequence should be followed to provide consistency in Proponent response and ensure each proposal receives full consideration.

- Cover letter, showing Proponent's name and address, a contact person's name, address, telephone number, and email address to communicate with IEC-BC in relation to this RFP.
- A brief overview of the proposal.
- Table of contents, including page numbers.
- The body of the proposal, that addresses information required/requested below.
- Proposal content should use Calibri font, type size 11

All pages should be consecutively numbered and should follow the evaluation criteria.

### *2.3 Content of Proposals*

Proposals must demonstrate that the bidder can meet all "Proponent(s) Requirements" listed above. Proposals must also include:

1. Information about the qualifications of the personnel, including subcontractors (if any) who will be working on the project and descriptions of their experience with similar projects.
2. A work plan that includes specific activities, timelines, milestones and deliverables.
3. A budget that itemizes and justifies the cost of the services. The budget must specify professional fees and attribute them to activities and individuals, indicating hourly or daily rates (daily rates must indicate the number of hours in a proposed work day).
4. Two client references, including telephone numbers. By providing this information, the bidder gives IEC-BC permission to contact these references.

Proposals are **not to exceed 12 pages**, including the content development example, but exclusive of a cover page and table of contents. All proposals must be submitted electronically as a PDF document.

### *2.3 Evaluation and Selection Process*

Proposals will be assessed against the requirements stated in this RFP and evaluated based on the degree to which they demonstrate the following:

1. Understanding of the work required
2. Current, relevant knowledge, qualifications / experience of personnel
3. Capacity of the bidder to provide required services
4. Realistic and understandable work plan and timelines for achieving deliverables
5. Value for money

IEC-BC reserves the rights to:

- Not evaluate any or all proposals if the information is incomplete or if the proposal is received after the deadline
- Request bidders whose proposals meet essential criteria to provide additional information
- Negotiate one or more aspects of a proposal
- Accept a proposal in whole or in part

A proponents' conference call is scheduled for Tuesday, January 22, 2019 12:00 P.M. to 1:00 P.M. PST. Participation in the call is not mandatory but is open to all interested proponents.

If you plan to attend the proponents' conference call, please confirm your attendance with Chris Anderson at [chris.anderson@iecbc.ca](mailto:chris.anderson@iecbc.ca) by 12:00 P.M. PST on Monday, January 21, 2019. Conference call instructions will be forwarded to you following your RSVP. Proponents' call questions and answers will be posted to IEC-BC's website by January 25.

**Send proposals and direct all communication related to this RFP by email to: Chris Anderson at [chris.anderson@iecbc.ca](mailto:chris.anderson@iecbc.ca) by the proposal deadline of 10:00 A.M. on Friday, February 1, 2019.**