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Request for Proposals: Facilitator, Interviewer and Report Writer - First Nations Mental Health and Substance Use Service Mapping Project

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

You are invited to submit a proposal to provide facilitation, interviewing and reporting services in support of the Chiefs of Ontario's First Nations Mental Health and Substance Use Service Mapping and Gap Analysis Project

Please add this page to the front of your proposal

Legal Name:	
Address:	
Telephone Number:	
Facsimile Number:	
Email Address:	

SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO:

**Health Department, Attn: Zachariah General, Director of Health
Chiefs of Ontario**
Chiefs of Ontario
468 Queen St. E - Suite 400
Toronto, ON M5A 1T7
Email: Zachariah.General@coo.org

CC - Charnele Sondezi, Sr. Health Coordinator
Email: Charnele.Sondezi@coo.org

A proposal must be submitted as a PDF file to the Chiefs of Ontario. The proposal must be received by Chiefs of Ontario no later than the deadline date. A proposal submitted in any other manner or late may be disqualified

Submission Deadline: September 25, 2026 5:00 PM EST

The proposal shall be irrevocably open for acceptance and binding on the Consultant for fourteen (14) days after the Submission Deadline

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Chiefs of Ontario (COO) Health Team are undertaking a First Nations Mental Health and Substance Use Service Mapping and Gap Analysis Project to better understand the continuum of mental health, substance use and wellness services/programs that are available to First Nations across Ontario.

As part of this project, COO will host three in-person engagement sessions with First Nations, front line workers, service providers and people with lived and living experience to further inform the mapping process. The engagement sessions will identify strengths and challenges of existing programs, service gaps, barriers to access and opportunities to strengthen advocacy for more First Nations led mental health and substance use services.

In addition to these engagement sessions, COO also intends to identify key individuals for interviews for perspectives and experiences related to mental health and substance-use within a First Nations in Ontario context. This interviews will be conducted virtually (via Zoom/MS Teams) or by telephone.

The consultant will work collaboratively with the Chiefs of Ontario project team to support the planning, facilitation, interviews, documentation and reporting of this initiative.

The interested candidate's proposal must include the following:

- Demonstrated experience facilitating engagement with First Nations communities and organizations
- Demonstrated knowledge of First Nations mental health, substance use, wellness and culturally safe approaches to care
- A detailed workplan aligned with the project objectives, deliverables and project timeline
- Examples of similar work completed

OBJECTIVES AND KEY DELIVERABLES

1. Engagement Planning

- A. Review existing project materials and become familiar with the project objectives and service mapping methodology
- B. Participate in planning meetings with COO project team
- C. Assist in development engagement agendas, facilitation guidelines and discussion questions

2. Facilitation of Engagement Sessions

- A. Co-facilitate three in-person engagement sessions with support from COO staff. Meeting to occur over Fall 2026 and Early Winter 2027.
- B. Foster culturally safe, trauma-informed, and respectful discussions
- C. Effectively engage First Nations leadership, community members, mental health and substance use workers and individuals with lived and living experience

3. Conduct Interviews with Key Individuals

- A. Conduct and record interviews with key individuals as identified by the COO staff. Interviews to be conducted by virtual meeting platforms such as ZOOM, MS Teams etc. or by Telephone.
- B. Capture key themes, experiences, challenges and recommendations in relation to mental health and substance-use reforms and other relevant areas
- C. Incorporate feedback from these interviews, alongside the feedback from engagement sessions into a comprehensive final report

4. Documentation and Reporting

- A. Capture key discussion themes, priorities, challenges, community validated programs/services and recommendations
- B. Prepare engagement summaries following each session with key themes and big discussion items
- C. Develop a comprehensive final report summarizing findings across all engagement sessions, interviews and other information gathering work.

5. Ongoing Project Support

- A. Provide recommendations to strengthen participant engagement and facilitation approaches
- B. Support the project team in ensuring engagement findings align with the broader project goals and objectives

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants should demonstrate:

- Experience with facilitating engagement sessions with First Nations communities, organizations and leadership
- Knowledge of First Nations mental health and substance use realities, harm reduction, and culturally safe approaches to care
- Understanding of trauma informed, culturally safe facilitation practices
- Qualitative research, facilitation, communication and report writing skills
- Experience with synthesizing engagement findings into reports and recommendations

Preference will be given to First Nations consultations or consulting teams with demonstrated experience support First Nations-led health initiatives.

WORKING RELATIONSHIP

- This contract will be supervised by the Chiefs of Ontario Director of Health, Zachariah General

PROFESSIONAL FEES

Applicants are to complete the Fee Schedule as fully as possible by replicating the table below in their proposal. Do not include HST in fees quote, but do specify where HST is applicable. The fees quoted should be the applicant's best and only price. Estimated cost is the estimated hours multiplied by the hourly rate. **All travel expenses must be included in the Proposal Fee Schedule.**

Work Components	Estimated Hours	Hourly Rates	Est. Cost (Hours X Rates)	Est. Time Completion
Project Planning				
Engagement Prep				
Facilitation of Sessions				
Summary and Reporting				
Travel				
Total Cost				

Additional points for applicants to consider:

- The consultant must commit to a firm price for the entire contract. No increases during the course of the contract will be allowed. All subcontractors' fees must be included in the quoted fees
- Expenses should be estimated and explained with the Professional Fees schedule

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

All submissions will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Quality of the proposal
- Capacity of the applicant to undertake the project
- Appropriateness of the project budget and timelines

COO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO:

- Reject any or all proposals received
- Enter into negotiations with one or more applicants on any aspect of the proposal
- Accept any proposal in whole or in part
- Cancel, modify or reissue this document at any time
- Verify any and all information provided in the proposal

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

All submissions must include the following:

- Cover Letter
- Detailed work plan with all deliverables accounted for
- Completed fee schedule of estimated budget in alignment with deliverables
- CV's and References

RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS

Packages are to be clearly marked: "RFP: Facilitator, Interviewer and Report Writer - First Nations Mental Health and Substance Use Service Mapping Project" by September 25th 2026 at 5:00PM EST

Submit electronically to the Health Sector at Zachariah.General@coo.org and CC: Charnele.Sondezi@coo.org. Submissions received after the stated deadline will not be accepted.

Selection of consultant will be awarded the week of September 28th, 2026.