



Michael Smith  
**Health  
Research BC**  
BC SUPPORT UNIT



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Fraser  
Centre

# Request for Proposals

Environmental scan of Indigenous engagement  
guidelines for health research and program  
evaluation

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## Request for Proposals

### Environmental scan of Indigenous engagement guidelines for health research and program evaluation

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Closing time and date: Monday, July 31, 2023, by 9am PDT

Proposals must be received via email to  
Sara Lima Branco  
Project Specialist, BC SUPPORT Unit  
[sbranco@healthresearchbc.ca](mailto:sbranco@healthresearchbc.ca)  
by 9am PDT on Monday, July 31, 2023

Issue date: June 26, 2023

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## 1. Context

### 1.1. About BC SUPPORT Unit

The BC SUPPORT (Support for People & Patient-Oriented Research & Trials) Unit supports patient-oriented research throughout BC to answer research questions that matter to patients and improve health care.

We are one of the SUPPORT Units established across Canada as part of the Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research, a national initiative led by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. We partner with the provincial government, funding organizations, health authorities, universities, researchers, patients, health care providers and health system decision-makers to improve health care.

You can learn more at <https://healthresearchbc.ca/bc-support-unit>.

### 1.2. Project Description

The BC SUPPORT Unit invites proposals from Indigenous-led organizations or individuals, with demonstrated experience and knowledge, to undertake an environmental scan of Canadian guidelines and protocols on engagement of Indigenous community members for health research and program evaluation initiatives.

BC is home to 203 diverse and vibrant First Nation communities, 39 Métis Chartered Communities, and a growing Inuit population. It is vital that BC Indigenous community members are included when health researchers and health organizations undertake research and program evaluation initiatives that have the potential to improve the health of, and health services for, the BC public. However, guidelines for research and evaluation involving Indigenous peoples are needed to ensure that engagement is culturally-safe and representative of the distinct cultures found in BC.

Several guidelines have been developed in Canada. A comprehensive search and summary of available Canadian guidelines is needed, as well as an assessment of their fit for use in BC. The subsequent report will serve as a provincial resource to support further planning and development of Indigenous engagement resources in BC.

## 2. Scope of Work

### 2.1. Objectives and Deliverables

We seek an external Indigenous-led organization or individuals to undertake an environmental scan of current Canadian research literature and publicly available guidelines and protocols that can support Indigenous engagement for health research and program evaluation activities.

We have two objectives for this environmental scan:

- Review guidelines from across Canada on how to engage members of Indigenous communities, including those living in urban and away from home settings, for health research and health program evaluation initiatives. The search should encompass all relevant sources, including research literature, grey literature, websites, et cetera.

- Write a report that:
  - Summarizes relevant guidelines and protocols, highlighting key elements from each, with a focus on frequently or commonly occurring recommendations; and
  - Assesses relevant guidelines and protocols for appropriateness and applicability for use in BC, highlighting remaining gaps or needed adaptations for the BC context and for use in the health care services sector (e.g., used by clinicians and health system leaders in BC health authorities).

This request for proposals has three deliverables:

- List of available Canadian guidelines and protocols for Indigenous engagement for health research and health program evaluation.
- Report summarizing relevant guidelines and protocols and assessment for appropriateness and applicability in BC.
- Presentation of draft report to a virtual meeting of the steering committee and incorporation of committee feedback. The steering committee comprises representatives from the BC SUPPORT Unit, Fraser Health Authority, First Nations Health Authority, Métis Nation BC, and BC Network Environment for Indigenous Health Research.

## 2.2. Time frame

The project time frame is 2-months: August 28, 2023 - October 30, 2023. This time frame is firm.

## 2.3. Primary Contacts

Sara Lima Branco, Project Specialist, BC SUPPORT Unit, will be the primary contact person for administrative matters related to this contract ([sbranco@healthresearchbc.ca](mailto:sbranco@healthresearchbc.ca)). Magdalena Newman, Fraser Centre Lead, BC SUPPORT Unit will be the primary contact for substantive content matters, such as questions of context and intent ([magdalena.newman@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:magdalena.newman@fraserhealth.ca)).

Questions received during the period when the RFP is open will be compiled with answers and posted as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the BC SUPPORT Unit [website](#) so that they are accessible to all applicants.

## 3. Eligibility Criteria

Applicant teams must be Indigenous-led or have a high complement of Indigenous members. In addition, we are seeking applicants with expert knowledge and experience with:

- Culturally safe approaches, guidelines, and protocols for engaging Indigenous communities;
- Distinction-based approaches for engagement;
- Conducting research literature reviews;

- Completing environmental scans;
- Developing and delivering evidence-based, peer-reviewed and/or academic publications or documents;
- Access to an academic literature database preferred (BC SUPPORT Unit can assist if needed).

## 4. Contract Amount

The maximum contract amount for this project, inclusive of all applicable fees and taxes, is \$50,000.

## 5. Key RFP Dates

The key RFP dates are summarized as follows.

Action	Target Date
Release of RFP	June 26, 2023
RFP closing date	9am PDT July 31, 2023
Date receipt of RFP submissions will be acknowledged by	9am PDT August 1, 2023
Top selected proposals invited to a session with the selection committee to clarify application details (optional, at discretion of committee). This could include a 15-minute presentation with 30 minutes for questions to follow.	August 7 - 11, 2023
Successful applicant will be identified	August 21, 2023
Contract awarded	August 25, 2023
Project begins	August 28, 2023
Presentation of draft report to steering committee	October 2 - 6, 2023
Final report to be submitted	October 30, 2023

## 6. Proposal Content and Format

### 6.1. Executive Summary

Describe the Applicant’s understanding of the desired results (please do not copy and paste from previous sections of this RFP). Note any challenges and opportunities that may exist and state the Applicant’s value.

### 6.2. Experience and Qualifications

Identify the lead and the key team members, including any from specialized sub-consultants. For each, describe their role, capability, and availability for this project. Provide a profile for the lead and key team members, referring to eligibility criteria.

This section should include:

- Demonstrated experience with meaningful engagement of Indigenous community members, including First Nations and Métis communities.
- Indication of team members who self-identify as Indigenous.
- Demonstrated experience with completed projects of a comparable size and complexity.
- Demonstrated experience undertaking environmental scans, syntheses, and other knowledge products for a variety of end-users/recipients.
- References (up to 3) of previous clients who can be contacted are requested.

### **6.3. Declaration of Affiliation or Association**

Identify any previous, active, or anticipated relationships between the Applicants and BC SUPPORT Unit, Michael Smith Health Research BC, Fraser Health Authority, First Nations Health Authority, Métis Nation BC, and BC Network Environment for Indigenous Health Research.

### **6.4. Approach and Methodology**

Describe the approach and methodology that will be utilized to achieve the desired results. This should include:

- Outline a search plan of relevant sources, including search time frame.
- Identify proposed methods to capture and analyze information.
- Identify an evidence-based methodology to synthesize and assess information and provide meaningful insights.

### **6.5. Work Plan**

Based on your methodology, provide a work breakdown and target schedule, including a breakdown of major tasks, delivery dates (milestones), and expected level of effort (i.e., proportion of time) required by the individual team members in sufficient detail to: (1) allow a complete understanding of how and by whom the work will be carried out; and (2) to demonstrate sufficient availability of individual team members throughout the course of the work to ensure its successful completion.

### **6.6. Risk Mitigation**

Identify significant risks to the project's development and implementation, and the mitigation strategies to address them. Include, per risk, the probability of occurrence (H/M/L), severity of damage (H/M/L) and mitigation strategy.

### **6.7. Financial Plan**

Based upon your Work Plan, provide professional fees and expenses as well as a proposed payment schedule. A Financial Plan template has been provided as Appendix A.

The following expenses will be ineligible and should not be included:

- Rent of office premises and other related overheads (e.g., utilities).
- Capital expenses (e.g., office equipment, computer equipment and associated software).
- Travel and accommodation expenses.

BC SUPPORT Unit reserves the right to supply certain services or supports where direct supply of such services can be arranged by BC SUPPORT Unit at a lower cost than that proposed by the Applicants. Examples include the costs of printing, photocopying services, journal article access, etc.

## 6.8. Proposal Format

To be eligible for review, all applications must adhere to the instructions for presentation and content and must use the numbering system provided. Except for the appendices, applications must be presented as follows:

- All materials, except appendices, must be a minimum 12-point size, Calibri or Cambria (regular), single spaced, on one side of a letter-sized (21.25 x 27.5 cm / 8.5" x 11") page, with a one-inch margin on all sides of the page.
- All pages should be consecutively numbered.
- All print must be black, of letter quality and easy to read.
- A header with the RFP name on the top left-hand corner, and footer with the page number on the lower right-hand corner of each page.

### 6.8.1. Page Count

Full proposals for this RFP must not exceed **7 pages**, not including the cover letter, letters of reference or appendices. Additional pages beyond the maximum will be removed and shredded by BC SUPPORT Unit prior to review.

### 6.8.2. Appendices

References and charts, tables, diagrams, or other materials to support the full proposals may be attached as appendices. In total, appendices, including the Financial Plan, must not exceed **5 pages**, excluding the appendices table of contents.

## 7. RFP Process

The following are the conditions under which responses will be accepted from Applicants.

### 7.1. Submissions

Proposals should be submitted by email to [sbranco@healthresearchbc.ca](mailto:sbranco@healthresearchbc.ca) by 9am PST on July 31, 2023, with the subject line "Environmental scan RFP". Proposals received after this time and date will not be considered. All received RFP submissions will receive a confirmation email within one business day.



## 7.2. Inquiries

All inquiries regarding this RFP are to be directed to [sbranco@healthresearchbc.ca](mailto:sbranco@healthresearchbc.ca) by email no later than July 27, 2023. In addition to a direct email response to an inquiry, questions and answers will be posted in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) webpage on the BC SUPPORT Unit [website](#) for access by all applicants.

## 7.3. Selection Process

The review comprises a two-step process. The first step scores each submission against the proposal criteria outlined below. Should the selection committee require further information, the top two or three submissions may be selected for an additional review step, where applicants will have an opportunity to meet with the selection committee. This could include a 15-minute presentation, followed by 30 minutes for questions from the selection committee.

## 7.4. Selection Criteria

These criteria will be scored in relation to the available percentages as stipulated:

Criteria	Points
Experience and qualifications of the Applicants & Key Team Members	20%
Approach & Methodology	25%
Quality of the work plan	25%
Risk Mitigation	10%
Financial plan	20%

## 8. Terms and Conditions

### 8.1. Rejected Proposal

BC SUPPORT Unit may, in their absolute discretion, reject in whole or in part any and/or all proposals for any reason, or after considering factors considered relevant.

### 8.2. Liability for Errors

While BC SUPPORT Unit has used considerable effort to ensure an accurate presentation of information in this RFP, the information contained in this RFP is supplied solely as a guideline for Proponents. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate by BC SUPPORT Unit, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve Proponents from forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in this RFP.

### 8.3 Errors in Proposals

The Proponent has the responsibility, at all times, to request any instruction, decision, or direction which may be required to prepare its proposal, or to notify the designated BC SUPPORT Unit contact person in writing of any ambiguity, divergence, error, omission, oversight, or contradiction contained in its proposal as it is discovered.

BC SUPPORT Unit reserves the right to request clarification of the contents of any proposal. BC SUPPORT Unit may require Proponents to submit supplementary documentation clarifying any matters contained in their proposals and may seek the Proponent's acknowledgement of that interpretation. This is not an opportunity for the Proponent to submit new information modifying the proposal. Notwithstanding the foregoing, BC SUPPORT Unit is not obliged to seek clarification of any aspect of a proposal.

## **8.4 Limitation of Liability and Indemnity**

BC SUPPORT Unit will not be obligated or liable in any way whatsoever to a Proponent except where BC SUPPORT Unit has awarded and entered into a written contract with that Proponent for the performance of the work contemplated by this RFP, and in which case that contract shall govern all such obligations and liabilities.

It is a fundamental condition of this RFP and the receipt and consideration of proposals by BC SUPPORT Unit, that BC SUPPORT Unit, and its respective employees, consultants and agents, will not and shall not under any circumstances, including without limitation whether pursuant to contract, tort, statutory duty, law, equity, any actual or implied duty of fairness, or otherwise, be responsible or liable for any costs, expenses, claims, losses, damages or liabilities (collectively and individually all of the foregoing referred to as "Claims") incurred or suffered by any Proponent or the Proponent's subcontractors as a result of or related to any one or more of the RFP, the preparation, negotiation, acceptance or rejection of any conforming or non-conforming proposal, the rejection of any Proponent, or the cancellation, suspension or termination of the RFP process, and by submitting a proposal each Proponent shall be conclusively deemed to waive and release BC SUPPORT Unit and its employees, contractors, consultants and agents, from and against any and all such Claims.

Each Proponent shall indemnify and hold BC SUPPORT Unit and its employees, contractors, consultants and agents, harmless from and against any and all Claims brought against them arising out of any act or omission of the Proponent, the Proponent's sub-contractors, or by third parties arising out of or relating to the Proponent's receipt of this RFP, or the preparation, submission and negotiation of any proposal submitted by the Proponent, where such third parties were directly or indirectly engaged by or through the Proponent in connection with any of the foregoing, or where personal injury, bodily damage or property damage is caused by the negligent acts or omissions of the Proponent. Such indemnification shall survive completion of the goods or services provided under the contract and the termination of the contract.

## **8.5 Confidentiality of Information**

This document, or any portion thereof, may not be used for any purpose other than the submission of proposals. Information pertaining to BC SUPPORT Unit or related parties obtained by a Proponent as a result of participation in this process is confidential and must not be disclosed except for the purpose of responding to this RFP or as required by law.

## **8.6 Ownership of Proposals**

All documents, including proposals, submitted to BC SUPPORT Unit become the property of BC SUPPORT Unit. They will be received and held in confidence, subject to the provisions of BC Personal Information Protection Act.

## **8.7 Proponents' Expenses**

Proponents are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing a proposal. If BC SUPPORT Unit elects to reject all proposals, BC SUPPORT Unit will not be liable to any Proponent for any Claims, whether for costs or damages incurred by the Proponent in preparing the proposal, loss of anticipated profit in connection with any final agreement, or any other matter whatsoever.

## **8.8 Irrevocability of Proposal**

By submission of a clear and detailed written notice, a Proponent may amend or withdraw his/her proposal prior to the closing date and time. At closing, all proposals become irrevocable. Proposals must be open for acceptance for at least 90 days after the closing. In the event that BC SUPPORT Unit requires more than 90 days to evaluate proposals, additional time will be requested of all Proponents.

## **8.9 Conflict of Interest**

Proponents are responsible for disclosing to BC SUPPORT Unit any and all real or perceived conflicts of interest. Proposals will not be evaluated if the Proponent's current or past corporate or other interests are, in the opinion of BC SUPPORT Unit, deemed to be a conflict of interest in connection with this RFP or the activities or mandate of its facilities. BC SUPPORT Unit reserves the right to disqualify and reject a proposal in whole or in part where the Proponent or directors, officers, shareholders, or any other person associated with the Proponent has a Claim or has initiated a Claim or legal proceeding against BC SUPPORT Unit or against whom BC SUPPORT Unit has a Claim or has instituted a legal proceeding with respect to any previous contracts, tenders, or business transactions. Proponents shall not engage in any form of lobbying whatsoever to influence the outcome of this RFP. Further, Proponents shall not attempt to communicate or make any representation or solicitation to any director, officer, or employee of BC SUPPORT Unit except to the designated BC SUPPORT Unit contact person.

## **8.10 Verification**

BC SUPPORT Unit reserves the right to verify any statement or claim contained in any proposal or made subsequently in any interview or negotiation. That verification may be made by whatever means BC SUPPORT Unit deems appropriate and may include contacting the references provided by the Proponent. In submitting a proposal, the Proponent is deemed to consent to BC SUPPORT Unit verifying any information from third parties including the Proponent's bank references, and receiving additional information regarding the Proponent, its directors, officers, shareholders or owners and any other person associated with the Proponent as Health Research BC may require.

## **8.11 Request for Proposal Cancellation**

BC SUPPORT Unit is not bound to accept any proposal and reserves the right in its sole and absolute discretion to postpone or cancel this RFP at any time for any reason. Further and without limiting the foregoing, BC SUPPORT Unit will not be bound to accept the lowest or any bid and reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal in whole or in part, to discuss with any Proponent different or additional items and terms to those described in this RFP or received in any proposal, or to amend or modify any term of this RFP. BC SUPPORT Unit, in its sole discretion, may invalidate and cancel this RFP entirely and may issue a new RFP if considered in the best interests of BC SUPPORT Unit. No Proponent will acquire any legal or equitable rights or privileges relative to the services prior to full execution of a written agreement for the services required.

## 8.12 Contract Terms

By submitting a proposal to BC SUPPORT Unit, Proponents shall be conclusively deemed to have accepted and to have agreed to be bound by each and every term, condition, and provision of this RFP, and any services, specifications, warranties, guarantees or representations stated in the accepted proposal or made during the RFP and selection process.

## 8.13 Contract Awards

By submission of its proposal, the Proponent agrees to negotiate in good faith and execute a contract with BC SUPPORT Unit incorporating the terms and conditions of this RFP, the Proponent's proposal, and such other terms and conditions as BC SUPPORT Unit may reasonably require. BC SUPPORT Unit may negotiate modifications, additions or variations to such terms and conditions or to the goods or services set out in a proposal in order to satisfy its operational or administrative requirements. The RFP and the contract, if any, entered into subsequently shall take precedence over any and all documents submitted by the Proponent. BC SUPPORT Unit will not accept a Proponent's standard purchase agreement.

## 8.14 Sub-Contracting

All sub-contractors and/or partner(s) must be identified in the proposal. No sub-contracting or assignment of any contract or of any services to be provided is permitted without the prior written consent of BC SUPPORT Unit. Proponents are to identify all proposed sub-contractors including the company name, contact name, phone number, fax number, email address, type of service the subcontractor will be performing or providing, and the length of time the Proponent has been using the services of the sub-contractor. No additional sub-contractors will be added, nor will other changes be made to this list without the written consent of BC SUPPORT Unit.

## 8.15 Governing Law

Proponents must comply with all applicable laws. This RFP will be governed exclusively by, and construed and enforced in accordance with, the laws of the Province of British Columbia. The Proponent agrees to attorn to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the Province of British Columbia in the event of any dispute concerning this RFP or any matters arising out of this RFP.

## 8.16 Appendices

All appendices to this RFP are deemed to be incorporated herein and form part of the RFP.

## 8.17 Copyright

BC SUPPORT Unit shall have sole and full ownership of copyrights to, and all materials produced by the successful Proponent, including a waiver of moral rights, under the contract arising from this RFP.

Reproduction of any documents or other data for use by anyone is forbidden without express permission in writing by BC SUPPORT Unit.

## Appendix A: Financial Plan Template

Item	Rate	# Hours	Total
1. Professional fees			
a) Role / describe			
b) Role / describe			
<i>Subtotal 1</i>			
2. Sub-contractors			
a) Role / describe			
a) Role / describe			
<i>Subtotal 2</i>			
3. Disbursements at cost			
Subtotal 1 + 2 + 3			
GST			
PST			
<b>TOTAL PRICE*</b>			

\* Subject to applicable federal and provincial taxes as required.