

Request for Proposal: OCIL Policy Forums

Background

The Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages (the Commission) was established under the *Indigenous Languages Act* to support and promote the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance, and strengthening of Indigenous languages in Canada. As part of its mandate, the Commission is also responsible for raising awareness about Indigenous language rights and supporting broader public understanding.

The Commission works across jurisdictions and with a wide range of national and international partners, including Indigenous communities, organizations, governments, and institutions. Its role includes convening, supporting dialogue, and strengthening conditions for Indigenous languages to thrive.

Since 2023, the Commission has been meeting with partners, experts, and language champions across Canada to better understand the barriers and opportunities involved in building fluency and proficiency, and to advocate for greater access to effective Indigenous language immersion teacher education. The primary aim of the Fluency and Immersion Teacher Education Initiative is to guide the development of Indigenous language immersion teacher education interventions that foster proficient speakers and ultimately, fluent speakers. This direction reflects what the Commission heard through a series of engagement sessions across the country and aligns with its mandate under the *Indigenous Languages Act*.

The Commission invites qualified proponents to lead, design, and implement the facilitation and engagement framework for a series of policy forums, which will advance the objectives the Fluency and Immersion Teacher Education Initiative and the Commission's mandate more broadly.

Objectives

As part of the continued work related to the Fluency and Immersion Teacher Education Initiative, the Commission is hosting a series of policy forums for international partners, language champions, and other stakeholders to highlight the breadth and scope of the international relationships and partnerships fostered by the Commission, including:

- Marking milestones on the advancement of the UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages;

- Continued development of close working relationships with each respective partner to advance the Commission's mandate and priorities such as the Fluency and Immersion Teacher Education Initiative; and
- Introducing exploratory discussions for the planning of future international conferences, network sharing, and knowledge exchange.

The objective of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to select a proponent to design, lead, and implement the facilitation and engagement framework for the policy forums. Working closely and collaboratively with the Commission, the successful proponent will be expected to:

1. Design the agenda and facilitation approach for the forums, informed by the vision and objectives of the Commission.
2. Lead the facilitation of the forums, including designing and implementing key activities, informed by the Commission.
3. Develop, finalize, and submit a summary report of the forums to inform future gatherings and next steps.

Scope of Work

The successful proponent will be expected to deliver the work in phased components, including:

Phase 1: Planning, Design, and Project Management

- Collaborate closely with the Commission to understand the intent and objectives of the global policy forums, including regular check-ins and planning updates.
- Develop a facilitation strategy to meaningfully engage forum participants based on their areas of focus and the event objectives.
- Plan and design detailed event agendas to support forum objectives, including identifying opportunities for strong partnerships, synergy, and collaboration.

Phase 2: Implementation and Summary Report

- Lead the facilitation of the event, informed by the vision of the Commission.
- Lead the note-taking process to support the development of the summary reports.
- Develop, refine, and finalize forum summary reports to capture the outcomes of the events, inform future gatherings, support next phase of the Fluency and Immersion Teacher Education Initiative.

Deliverables

Anticipated deliverables include:

- Detailed event agendas
- Facilitation and engagement framework to support the objectives of the forums
- Finalized event summary reports

Project Expectations

The successful proponent should:

1. Reflect a strong understanding of the Commission's vision and mandate, as well as a fulsome understanding of the Fluency and Immersion Teacher Education Initiative.
2. Demonstrate a strong commitment to engaging stakeholders, partners, and rightsholders meaningfully and respectfully.
3. Lead this work based on the principles of trust, reciprocity, and cultural humility.
4. Consider timing and external context, including political and social developments.

Proponent Requirements

The bidder must possess:

- Demonstrated experience in community engagement, event logistics, and forum facilitation.
- Strong understanding of the Commission's mandate, the forum objectives, and the Fluency and Immersion Teacher Education Initiative.
- Experience working in complex, diverse, or sensitive environments.
- Ability to translate complex issues into accessible and compelling narratives, including reporting.
- Capacity to deliver high-quality work within timelines and budget.
- Cultural competency and experience working with Indigenous Peoples and communities, in respectful, relational, and inclusive ways.
- Strong references from similar projects.

Budget Specifications

A maximum budget of \$40,000 has been allocated for the successful completion of the scope of work outlined in the RFP.

Proposal Submission Instructions

All proposals shall be received by the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages no later than **May 29, 2026, at 5PM EST.**

All proposals must clearly identify the name of the proponent and will be accepted electronically in PDF format. The subject line must read:
“RFP - OCIL Policy Forums”.

Proposal submissions shall be sent by email to:
Lema Ijtemaye, Manager-Connection Hub
lema.ijtemaye@ocil-ila.ca

Proposal Submission Requirements

All proposals must include the following information:

1. Executive summary outlining the proponent’s understanding of the project and approach.
2. Relevant experience in community engagement, event logistics, and forum facilitation (with samples).
3. Qualifications and capabilities relevant to this RFP.
4. Project organization, including team members and roles.
5. Proposed approach and methodology.
6. Project timeline and key milestones.
7. Client references (minimum of three), including contact information.
8. Cost Breakdown (in CAD, inclusive of HST) aligning with the specified budget.

Evaluation Criteria

The Commission will select the Proponent(s) which, in the Commission’s sole discretion, best serves the overall needs of the Commission. The following is a summary of the general considerations that will be used to determine the Proponent(s) that will be selected:

Criteria	Weight
Relevant experience and expertise of Firm	20%
Understanding of context and objectives	25%
Proposed Work Plan and Methodology	20%



Cultural competency and alignment with Commission’s values	15%
Total price aligning with the specified budget	20%

Timeline

The following dates are set forth for informational and planning purposes and may be changed at the Commission’s sole discretion.

Description of Deliverables	Due Date
RFP Released/Advertised/Posted	May 15, 2026
Deadline for questions	May 27, 2026
Deadline for submission of proposals	May 29, 2026
Completion of proposal evaluations	June 3, 2026
Final Selection	June 5, 2026
Estimated Contract Start Date: Contract period will be June 12, 2026 – August 31, 2026, subject to final internal approvals.	June 12, 2026

The timetable is tentative only and may be changed by the Commission, in its sole discretion, at any time prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline.

Rights of the Commission

The Commission reserves the right to:

1. Reject any or all proposals received in response to this Request for proposals;
2. Enter into negotiations with one or more proponents;
3. Accept any proposal in whole or in part;
4. Cancel or re-issue the RFP at any time;
5. Verify information provided in proposals; and
6. Award follow-up work without further competition.

This RFP is issued solely for the purpose of soliciting proposals and does not constitute a call of tenders, except where expressly indicated. The Commission is not liable for any costs, expenses, or claims incurred by proponents in connection with preparation or submission of a proposal. Submission of a proposal bid signifies the proponent's understanding of these conditions.

Additional Provisions

Price: Contractors must provide a firm fixed price, including administrative fees, travel, material costs, translation, printing of draft concepts and HST.

Confidentiality: Responses to this RFP will be considered as confidential information by the Commission and will be used solely for the purposes of selecting the successful bidder.

Clarification/Questions: All proposals will be acknowledged. Requests for clarification and/or questions regarding this RFP should be directed in writing to:
Lema Ijtemaye at lema.ijtemaye@ocil-ila.ca.

Responses/Submission: Only those submissions that meet the deadline will be considered. Responses to this RFP must be received by the close of business at 5PM EST on May 29, 2026.

Submissions shall be sent by email to: lema.ijtemaye@ocil-ila.ca