Office of the Commissioner of
INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES
Bureau du Commissaire aux
LANGUES AUTOCHTONES

Request for Proposal: Youth Innovation Gathering

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.

As part of the Commission's Youth Engagement Action Plan the Commission hosted its first Youth Innovation Gathering in Vancouver on March 13-14, 2026. The gathering brought together Indigenous youth from across Canada to explore how innovation can advance Indigenous language revitalization. Through keynote presentations, expert panels, interactive workshops, and hands-on exercises, youth developed practical skills to transform ideas into community-led language initiatives while building relationships with peers, mentors, and Indigenous innovators.

The Commission is now accepting proposals from qualified proponents to coordinate the next in-person Youth Innovation Gatherings in February 2027 to continue its efforts to support and amplify the revitalization priorities of Indigenous youth across the country.

Objective

The objective of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to select a proponent to plan and coordinate the implementation of a Youth Innovation Gathering in support of the Commission's mandate and the implementation of its Youth Engagement Action Plan. The gathering will provide Indigenous youth with opportunities to explore how innovation can advance Indigenous language revitalization, develop practical skills, and build relationships with peers, mentors, and Indigenous innovators. An internal committee will be established to review all proposals submitted before the deadline, and a recommendation will be submitted for final decision. The successful proponent will:

- Plan and coordinate the implementation of a Youth Innovation Gathering in February 2027, with corresponding summary reports to be completed by April 30, 2027;
- Secure accessible, youth-friendly, and culturally appropriate venues, accommodations, and catering for each gathering, including supports for audio-visual, interpretation, and translation services;
- Coordinate youth participant registration, travel, and on-site support, including appropriate supports for youth participants;
- Deliver engaging, skills-based programming, including keynote presentations, expert panels, interactive workshops, and hands-on exercises; and

- Ensure each gathering respects cultural protocols and meaningfully integrates Elders, Knowledge Keepers, language speakers, mentors, and Indigenous innovators.

Gathering Details

The Commission intends to host a Youth Innovation Gatherings in February 2027, with the location yet to be determined.

The gathering is expected to take place over two days and welcome up to 100 in-person participants, primarily Indigenous youth from across Canada, along with keynote speakers, expert panellists, mentors, Indigenous innovators, Elders and Knowledge Keepers, language speakers, and Commission staff. Proponents may propose a hybrid component where appropriate. All reporting, including summary reports, must be completed by April 30, 2027.

Scope of Work

The successful proponent will be expected to deliver the work through three phases.

Phase 1: Planning and Coordination (December 2026 to January 2027)
The successful proponent will:

- Confirm objectives, deliverables, timelines, and reporting requirements with the Commission;
- Develop a detailed event work plan, logistics plan, and youth-oriented engagement plan for the gathering, outlining an interactive and inclusive approach that encourages active participation;
- Develop draft agendas, including keynote presentations, expert panels, interactive workshops, and hands-on exercises, as well as registration processes and youth participant communications, in collaboration with the Commission;
- Coordinate with speakers, including keynote speakers, expert panellists, workshop facilitators, mentors, Indigenous innovators, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers, on their participation, including invitations, session briefings, scheduling, and presentation requirements, in collaboration with the Commission;
- Identify and secure venues, accommodation room blocks, and catering, including traditional and locally sourced foods where possible; and
- Following the Commission's lead, engage the Commission, communities, nations, and organizations to honour and follow cultural protocols, including opening and closing ceremonies as well as the participation of Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

<u>Deliverables</u>

- Event Work Plan and Logistics Plan

- Confirmed Venues, Accommodations, and Catering for each gathering
- Draft Agendas (including keynote, panel, and workshop programming) and Youth Participant Registration Plan
- Cultural Protocols and Engagement Plan

Phase 2: Delivery of the Three Youth Innovation Gathering (February 2027)
The successful proponent will coordinate the implementation of the Youth Innovation Gatherings, providing the following services:

- Plenary and breakout meeting spaces suitable for keynote presentations, panels, interactive workshops, and hands-on exercises, including dedicated space for ceremonies, smudging, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers;
- Audio-visual equipment and technical support, including hybrid capability where required;
- Simultaneous interpretation where requested;
- Youth participant registration, travel coordination, and on-site support;
- Meals and refreshments that accommodate dietary needs;
- Coordination of event volunteers, including appropriate checks if required;
- Coordination of Elder and Knowledge Keeper honoraria, ceremonies, and cultural protocols, in conjunction with the Commission;
- Accessibility measures for all participants; and
- Facilitation, workshop materials, run of show, and note-taking support for plenary, workshop, and breakout sessions.

Each gathering should:

- Create a safe, welcoming, and culturally grounded environment for Indigenous youth;
- Centre Indigenous youth, languages, and community priorities;
- Support youth to develop practical skills to transform ideas into community-led language initiatives;
- Facilitate knowledge sharing, mentorship, and intergenerational connection among youth, mentors, Indigenous innovators, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers;
- Respect and honour cultural protocols; and
- Run smoothly and on schedule, with clear communication to participants.

<u>Deliverables</u>

- Delivery of youth innovation gathering
- Session notes and summary report for the gathering

Phase 3: Reporting and Closeout (March to April 2027)
Following the gatherings, the successful proponent will:

- Summarize key themes, youth priorities, innovative ideas, and outcomes emerging from the gathering;

- Gather and analyze feedback from youth participants and other attendees (e.g. surveys); and
- Provide a final report outlining recommendations for future Youth Innovation Gatherings and the Commission's ongoing youth engagement.

Deliverables

- Summary Report for the gathering, including report design, translation, and printing
- Participant Feedback Summary
- Final Project Report , including report design, translation, and printing

Project Expectations

The successful proponent should:

1. Demonstrate a strong understanding of Indigenous language revitalization and Indigenous language rights in Canada;
2. Possess expertise in planning and delivering large, multi-day gatherings, including venue, accommodation, and logistics management;
3. Have experience designing and delivering youth-focused, skills-based programming, such as interactive workshops, mentorship, and innovation or entrepreneurship activities;
4. Have significant experience in working with Indigenous Peoples, communities, and partners centering cultural protocols and the roles of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, youth, and community members;
5. Have a strong understanding of the principles in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the *Indigenous Languages Act*, and community-specific protocols;
6. Conduct all work in a manner consistent with trust, reciprocity, relationship-building, and cultural humility; and
7. Ensure gatherings are accessible, safe, and welcoming for all participants, particularly Indigenous youth.

Proponent Requirements

The bidder must possess:

- Demonstrated experience planning and coordinating national or regional gatherings, conferences, or assemblies;
- Experience in securing venues, accommodations, and catering in different locations;
- Experience coordinating audio-visual, interpretation, and translation services;
- Demonstrated experience working with Indigenous communities, organizations, and partners across Canada;
- Demonstrated experience engaging Indigenous youth, including delivering youth-focused events, workshops, or skills development programming;

- Cultural competency and experience working with Indigenous Peoples and communities, in respectful, relational, and inclusive ways;
- Strong facilitation, reporting, and project management capabilities;
- Capacity to deliver high-quality work within established timelines, budget, and in accordance with financial reporting obligations; and
- Minimum three references from comparable events.

Budget Specifications

Proponents should clearly indicate the total budget, inclusive of HST, for the planning and implementation of the Youth Innovation Gathering. Please see below for the budget template aligning with the scope work.

Cost	Description	Amount $ (CAD)
Professional Fees	Staff, consultants, contractors, or professional fees	
Materials and Supplies	Materials, equipment, supplies or other resources required	
Travel and Accommodations	Transportation, mileage, accommodations etc.	
Subcontractors and/or external service providers	Fees for subcontractors or third party service providers	
Other costs	Other project specific expenses (please specify)	
Other costs	Other project specific expenses (please specify)	
Other costs	Other project specific expenses (please specify)	
Subtotal		
Taxes		
Total Proposed Cost		

Proposal Submission Instructions

All proposals shall be received by the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages no later than **December 7, 2026, at 5:00 PM ET**. Proposals received after the closing time and date will not be considered.

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 Youth Innovation Gathering 2027".

Proposal submissions shall be sent by email to:
rfp@ocil-ila.ca

OCIL procurement objectives support Indigenous participation and must provide preference to Indigenous proponents. Individuals shall indicate whether they identify as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis and, where applicable, which community or nation acknowledges their membership. Corporate entities shall provide the same information for the ownership of the entity and for those who will conduct the work under the proposal. Late submissions will not be accepted and will be notified as such without exception.

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 hosting gatherings, forums, conferences, or assemblies, particularly with Indigenous communities and youth (with examples);
3. Qualifications and capabilities relevant to this RFP;
4. Project organization, including team members and roles;
5. Proposed venues, accommodations, and logistics approach for each gathering, including meeting space capacity and accessibility features;
6. Proposed approach to engaging Indigenous youth and delivering innovation-focused programming (e.g., keynote presentations, expert panels, interactive workshops, and hands-on exercises);
7. Approach to honouring cultural protocols and the participation of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, language champions, mentors, and Indigenous innovators;
8. Project timeline and key milestones;
9. Client references (minimum of three), including contact information; and
10. Cost Breakdown per gathering in CAD, inclusive of HST.

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
Indigenous experience, cultural competency, and community and youth engagement	30%
Understanding of context and objectives	25%
Proposed work plan and logistics approach	30%
Budget plan, financial reporting framework, and rationale	15%

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	November 6, 2026
Deadline for submission of proposals	December 7, 2026
Selection of successful proponent	December 9, 2026
Estimated Contract Start Date: Subject to final internal approvals.	December 11, 2026
Youth Innovation Gatherings (Subject to final internal approvals)	February 2027
Final Report and Financial Reconciliation Submission	April 30, 2027

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, venue rental, accommodations, catering, audio-visual, interpretation, translation, travel, materials, 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: rfp@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 5:00 PM EST on December 7, 2026.

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