

ECRL Strategic Planning & Stakeholder Engagement

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CONSULTING

ISSUED BY: Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL)

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: May 31, 2024

EMAIL PROPOSALS TO: lemery@ecrl.ca – Laura Emery, Chief Executive Officer,
Eastern Counties Regional Library. Please include ECRL Strategic Planning
Proposal in the Subject Field of the message.

Rev. April 3, 2024

Introduction and Scope of Work

“Our mission is to stimulate a love of reading and a life-long interest in learning.”

Eastern Counties Regional Library (ECRL) is one of nine regional public library systems in Nova Scotia. Since 1969, ECRL has provided public library service to the geographic areas of Inverness, Richmond, and Guysborough Counties, amounting to the most extensive geography of any library system in Nova Scotia. ECRL serves approximately 33,000 people with nine library branches, including Atlantic Canada's first Open Library, a self-serve library kiosk, and a Regional Office in Mulgrave, NS.

ECRL is funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage (approximately 74%), by partner municipalities (approximately 23%), and by its fundraising activities (approximately 3%). ECRL has a Board of Directors that governs in accordance with the Nova Scotia Libraries Act, which regulates regional library service in the province. ECRL is requesting the work, and ECRL will oversee the contract with the successful consultant.

The objective of this RFP is to obtain the services of a consultant to work with the ECRL Board of Directors to develop a three-year strategic plan for the organization.

The data compiled by the consultant will serve as an essential foundation for delivering relevant and meaningful library services to rural Nova Scotians. Data collection sources will be varied, and the successful consultant will require a thorough knowledge of various population and census data sources and expertise in community engagement and working with diverse groups.

The work to be provided by the successful consultant shall include but not be limited to:

- Municipal partners' engagement
- Staff engagement
- Both user engagement & non-user community engagement
- Hiring and coordination with specialized Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility consultants
- Analysis of findings
- Facilitating a strategic planning process for the ECRL Board
- A draft strategic plan
- Presentation of findings and draft plan to the Board for feedback
- Completion of a final strategic plan

The successful consultant will be responsible for the planning, coordinating, and logistics to achieve the desired outcomes.

Background: Strategic Planning & Community Engagement at ECRL

ECRL has not had a strategic planning process in over 15 years. There has yet to be a stakeholder or public engagement process for the organization. ECRL recently underwent a provincial review process that indicated the need for the organization to do this work.

The ECRL board requires a strategic plan to clearly define the organization's goals and how it achieves its mission. The Board makes financial decisions that impact the available services at ECRL and requires guidance to increase transparency and accountability to funders and the public. Lacking internal capacity, ECRL will need to hire consultants to facilitate the process and manage public engagement across its three-county service area. The implementation plan will be complex, allowing consultants to engage stakeholders and summarize findings to support strategic planning. Scheduling phases of the work could occur over six months due to the Municipal election in October 2024.

Consultant(s) will be required to detail this work to account for their availability, travel conditions, and means of best connecting with the public.

Proposal Details

Contract Information & Date

This contract will extend over a 6–8-month period due to the Municipal election and the corresponding change in Board membership. The required work would occur over a much shorter time frame, 3-4 months approximately. The engagement processes, the EDIA consultation, and the strategic planning with the Board would be discreet phases of the work.

Consultant Background and Credentials

- Understanding of the importance of public library systems.
- Experience with research.
- Experience with census data and population data sourcing and presentation.
- Able to work independently and are comfortable with multiple touch-point check-in sessions with ECRL as work progresses.

- Expertise with Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility

Project terms and conditions

All material provided will be the property of ECRL, and ECRL will approve any sharing of the report and supporting material.

Submission Address and Deadline

Proposals must be received at the Submission Email Address as set out on the title page of this RFP by no later than the submission deadline. Proposals received after the submission deadline may not be accepted and may be returned to the consultant.

ECRL may extend the submission deadline by issuing an addendum at any time before the submission deadline.

It is solely the consultant's responsibility to ensure that their proposal and all attachments are received at the submission address before the submission deadline.

Submission Methods

Proposals will be submitted by email as a PDF document. Attachments must not exceed a total of 15 Megabytes (MB).

Inquiries

All inquiries related to the RFP must be directed, in writing, before the submission deadline to Laura Emery, Chief Executive Office, Eastern Counties Regional Library: lemery@ecrl.ca

Inquiries should be received no later than forty-eight (48) hours before the submission deadline. If an inquiry is received later than that inquiry deadline date, consultants may receive a response, but ECRL is not obligated to respond.

Further information about ECRL can be found at www.ecrl.ca and through our social media channels: X: www.x.com/ecrlibrary
Facebook: www.facebook.com/ECRLibrary

Submission Content

All proposals should include an outline of anticipated methods to complete the work, a timeline, and the monetary amount required to complete the work. The use of subcontractors to manage the project is unacceptable.

Amendment or Withdrawal of Proposal

Consultants may amend proposals submitted in response to the RFP prior to the submission deadline by submitting an amendment identifying the change or by submitting a new proposal that clearly indicates that it is to replace the proposal previously submitted by the consultant.

All amendments to or requests to withdraw a submitted proposal must be in writing and submitted to lemery@ecrl.ca

Proposal Ownership

Proposals, once submitted, become the property of ECRL. All proposals will be kept in confidence subject to such disclosure as may be required for internal approvals or processes.

No Obligation to Accept a Bid/Award Contract

The submission of a bid, the receipt of a bid, the opening of a bid, the evaluation of a bid, and the determination of the top-ranked bidder or any one of these is not acceptance in any way whatsoever of the bid. A bid is not, in any way, a unilateral contract. A bid is an offer by the bidder to ECRL to perform the work as set out in this RFP. ECRL, in its entire discretion, may accept or reject all or part of a bid. ECRL is not obligated to accept any bid or select the bid offering the lowest price for the work.

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, ECRL will have no obligation to accept a proposal where:

- the prices exceed the available funds for the work.
- the prices are materially in excess of the prices received for similar work in the past.
- the prices are materially in excess of ECRL's cost to perform the work or a significant portion thereof, with its own forces.
- only one proposal is received.
- If the interests of Nova Scotians would be best served by not accepting any

proposal.

ECRL is on standing offer with the Nova Scotia government.

Right to Reissue RFP

ECRL reserves the right to reissue the RFP where, in the group's opinion, none of the proposals submitted in response to the RFP warrant acceptance or where it would not be in the best interests of the group to accept any of the proposals.

Cost of Bid

Consultants are responsible for all costs incurred in preparing and submitting proposals.