

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Participatory and Community-Based Researcher Specialist in Indigenous and Trauma Informed Research**

**Date issued: Wednesday May 15, 2024**

**Proposal Deadline: EXTENDED till June 18, 2024 at 4:30 pm CST**

## TABLE OF CONTENT

1.	INTRODUCTION .....	3
1.1	Purpose of RFP.....	3
1.2	Background.....	3
1.3	Summary of Key RFP Information.....	4
1.4	Definitions.....	4
2.	RFP TERMS AND CONDITIONS.....	5
2.1	Questions and Requests for Clarification .....	5
2.2	Addenda.....	5
2.3	No Lobbying .....	6
2.4	Acceptance of Terms .....	6
2.5	Revisions to a Proposal or Withdrawal of a Proposal .....	6
2.6	Clarification of Firm’s Proposals .....	6
2.7	Acceptance of Proposals.....	7
2.8	Expenses .....	7
2.9	Ownership of Proposals.....	7
2.10	Conflict of Interest .....	7
2.11	Rights of Purchaser .....	8
2.12	Limitation of Damages.....	8
3.	PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS.....	8
3.1	Submission of Proposals .....	8
3.2	Proposal Package.....	9
3.3	Proposal Narrative .....	9
4.	EVALUATION.....	10
4.1	Selection of Preferred Firm .....	11
5.	APPENDIX 1.....	12
5.1	BACKGROUND.....	12
5.1.1	About YWCA Canada .....	12
5.1.2	About the Research .....	13
5.2	SCOPE OF SERVICES .....	13
5.2.1	General .....	13
5.2.2	Services .....	13
5.2.3	Objectives .....	15
5.2.4	Value of Contract.....	15
5.2.5	Pricing Instructions .....	15
5.2.6	Timeframe.....	16
5.2.7	Contact.....	16
	Contract Contact .....	16
	YWCA Canada Contact for inquiries.....	16

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of RFP

On behalf of the Truth and Reconciliation Action Committee we invite Indigenous research Firms/Consultants to submit proposals to develop a Participatory and Community-Based Research project for YWCA Canada to be shared publicly.

## 1.2 Background

YWCA Canada acknowledges that its national office and its member associations are situated upon traditional and current Indigenous territories. These lands are covered by treaties to peaceably share and care for the resources around the territories. Today, these lands are home to many Indigenous Peoples from across Turtle Island (North America), and we recognize the historical oppression and inequalities that they continue to face. YWCA Canada is conscious of its role in truth and reconciliation efforts and is committed to rebuilding and renewing respectful relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Incorporated in 1893, YWCA Canada is a charitable, voluntary organization, which serves as the national coordinating body for the YWCA movement in Canada. YWCA Canada is the country's oldest and largest women's multi-service association. With 29 Member Associations operating in more than 400 districts and communities across the country, our programs - which address personal safety, economic security, and well-being - reach out to women and girls in nine provinces and two territories. YWCA Canada is the single largest national provider of shelter to women, children, and teen girls fleeing domestic violence. We are the largest provider of literacy, life skills, employment, and counseling programs in the country and the second largest provider of childcare services.

YWCA Canada is a leading voice for women, girls, Two-Spirit, and gender diverse people in the country. For over 150 years, we've been at the forefront of a movement: to fight gender-based violence, build affordable housing and advocate for affordable childcare and workplace equity. We work to advance gender equity by responding to urgent needs in communities, through national advocacy and grassroots initiatives. Local YWCAs invest over \$258 million annually to support over 330,000 individuals across the nation. Today, we engage young leaders, diverse communities, and corporate partners to achieve our vision of a safe and equitable Canada for all. YWCA

Canada is part of a global movement, World YWCA, working towards gender equity in more than 120 countries and 20,000 local communities.

### **YWCA CANADA'S VISION**

Empowered women and girls in a safe and equitable society

### **YWCA CANADA'S MISSION**

Advance gender equity for all women through informed advocacy and strong Member Associations

Read More:

For more information about YWCA Canada visit [www.ywcacanada.ca](http://www.ywcacanada.ca) or find us on Twitter @YWCA\_Canada or Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ywcacanada](http://www.facebook.com/ywcacanada).

## **1.3 Summary of Key RFP Information**

**Contact Person (all questions, amendments and Proposals must be submitted via email to the Contact Person):**

Attn: Jessica Gordon, Director of Indigenous Relations  
[Jgordon@ywcacanada.ca](mailto:jgordon@ywcacanada.ca)

**Proposal Submission Deadline:**

**June 18, 2024** at 4:30 pm CST

**Target Date for Notice of Award:**

Mid-July, 2024

**Target Date to Commence Services:**

To be determined with successful Consultant/Firm

## **1.4 Definitions**

For the purposes of this document, the following definitions will apply:

**“Addendum”** or **“Addenda”** means a written amendment to the RFP;

**“Agreement”** means an agreement or retainer letter between the Preferred Firm/Individual and the Purchaser for the performance of the Services;

**“Contact Person”** means the persons identified as such in Section 1.3 Summary of Key RFP

Information;

“**Firm/Consultant**” or “**Firms/Consultants**” refers to the entity that submits a proposal in response to this RFP; “**Preferred Firm**” means the Firm/ Consultants selected by the Purchaser to enter into the Agreement; “**Proposal**” means a Firm’s proposal submitted in response to this RFP;

“**Participatory Community-Based Research**” is a research methodology that provides a framework to equitably involve community members, researchers and other role-holders in the research process, recognizing and maximizing the importance of their diverse contributions (Wallerstein & Duran, 2006). It emphasizes shared leadership between researchers and community members throughout the research process, including planning, implementation, interpretation, and dissemination of findings.

“**Proposal Submission Deadline**” is the date identified as such in Section 1.3 Summary of key RFP Information;

“**Purchaser**” refers to YWCA Canada, who is the purchasing authority pursuant to this RFP; “**RFP**” means this RFP for Participatory and Community-Based Indigenous Research Services, issued by YWCA Canada; and

“**Services**” means the services described in the scope of services set out in Appendix 1.

## 2. RFP TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### 2.1 Questions and Requests for Clarification

Firms/Individuals should direct any requests for clarifications or questions relating to this RFP by email to the Contact Person. If the Purchaser determines that, as a result of a question, a change to the RFP is required, the Purchaser will issue an Addendum and post such Addendum on the website ([www.ywcacanada.ca](http://www.ywcacanada.ca)).

### 2.2 Addenda

The Purchaser may, in its sole discretion, amend this RFP at any time

by issuing written Addenda through the Contact Person directly to Firms/Individuals or by posting on the website ([www.ywcacanada.ca](http://www.ywcacanada.ca)). By submitting a Proposal, the Firm/Individual is deemed to have received, accepted, and understood the entire RFP including any and all Addenda.

## 2.3 No Lobbying

All communication regarding the RFP must occur via the Contact Person. Firms/Individuals shall not communicate with or attempt to communicate with YWCA Canada staff members, volunteers, or board members regarding the RFP process.

## 2.4 Acceptance of Terms

By submitting a Proposal, a Firm/Individual is deemed to have read, completely understood, and accepted all terms and conditions of the RFP in full.

## 2.5 Revisions to a Proposal or Withdrawal of a Proposal

A Firm/Individual may revise its Proposal provided that any such revision is in writing and is delivered to the Contact Person before the Proposal Submission Deadline. A Firm/Individual may withdraw its Proposal at any time before the Proposal Submission Deadline by submitting a written notice to the Contact Person that clearly and unequivocally states the Firm's intention to withdraw its Proposal.

If, prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline, a Firm/Individual fails to notify the Purchaser of an error and their Proposal is selected, the Firm/Individual shall not be entitled to any compensation or time by reasons of the error or its later correction.

## 2.6 Clarification of Firm's Proposals

The Purchaser shall have the right but not the obligation at any time after the Proposal Submission Deadline to seek clarification from any Firm/Individual in respect of the firm's proposal, without contacting any other Firm.

## 2.7 Acceptance of Proposals

This RFP is not an agreement to purchase services. The Purchaser is not obligated to select a Firm/Individual or to award or enter into an Agreement with any Firm, including the Preferred Firm/Individual or the Firm/Individual with the lowest price. The Purchaser may, in its sole discretion, accept or reject any Proposal for any reason. No contractual or other legal obligations arise on the part of the Purchaser by this RFP until such time as a final, written Agreement if any, is subsequently entered into with a Firm.

No part of this RFP will become part of any final Agreement between the Purchaser and the Firm/Individual unless specifically incorporated into a final written agreement. Any or all contents of the Proposal may become part of the final agreement.

The Purchaser reserves the right to re-issue this RFP or any other request for proposals for the same or similar Services at any time.

## 2.8 Expenses

Firms/Individuals are solely responsible for their own costs and expenses in preparing Proposals and participating in this RFP. The Purchaser will not be liable to pay any costs incurred by any Firm/Individual in preparing or submitting its Proposal for any reason.

## 2.9 Ownership of Proposals

All documents including Proposals submitted to the Purchaser will become the property of the Purchaser. As the service Purchaser, YWCA Canada adheres to the First Nations principles of ownership, control, access, and possession – more commonly known as OCAP® – to ensure that Indigenous communities and participants consulted will also have control over data collection processes, and control of how this information can be used.

## 2.10 Conflict of Interest

Firms/Individuals shall declare any and all conflicts of interest between the Firm/Individual and the Purchaser or any situation that may be reasonably perceived as a conflict of interest that exists now or may exist

in the future. The Purchaser will review a Firm's conflict of interest disclosure and at its sole discretion decide whether a conflict of interest exists and determine the appropriate course of action. The Purchaser may disqualify any Proposals that in the Purchaser's opinion demonstrate a conflict of interest, whether or not declared in the Proposal.

## 2.11 Rights of Purchaser

In addition to all other rights set out in this RFP, the Purchaser may, in its sole discretion:

- (a) cancel this RFP or disqualify a Proposal at any time;
- (b) waive any requirement of the RFP;
- (c) consider any prior experience with a Firm;
- (d) conduct or not conduct reference checks, including checking references which are not identified in a Proposal;
- (e) negotiate any aspect of a Proposal or a form of Agreement with a Firm; and
- (f) evaluate a Proposal in comparison to another Proposal.

## 2.12 Limitation of Damages

Each Firm, by submitting a Proposal, irrevocably agrees to not bring any claims, whether for costs, expenses, losses, or damages or for any other matter whatsoever against the Purchaser or its directors, officers, advisors, employees, consultants or representatives for any reason, cause, or matter in relation to or arising from this RFP process.

# 3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

## 3.1 Submission of Proposals

**Proposals must be submitted to the Contact Person before the Proposal Submission Deadline.**



## 3.2 Proposal Package

The Proposal should:

- (a) be submitted electronically to the Contact Person;
- (b) be concise, with a target of not exceeding 10 pages in length;
- (c) be accompanied by a cover letter certifying the accuracy of all information contained in the Proposal and acknowledging the terms and conditions set out in Appendix 1; and
- (d) address all requirements called for in this RFP, including a clear and concise narrative that addresses the topics set out in Section 3.3.

## 3.3 Proposal Narrative

Firms/Individuals should submit a Proposal narrative that addresses the following, organized as below:

- (a) a brief overview of the Firm/Individual, including legal name, address, and website (if applicable). Identify the representative authorized to negotiate on behalf of the Firm/Individual and include full contact information;
- (b) a brief history of the Firm/Individual including years in business, description of its ownership and management structure and its lines of business and its core values, as applicable;
- (c) information demonstrating that the Firm/Individual is independent, conscious of personal biases and has expertise with the Canadian not-for-profit sector, as applicable;
- (d) a representative client list, identifying past or current relationships with national level organizations, other women-serving and/or other not-for-profit charitable organizations in Canada;
- (e) identification of project lead and key team member, including roles, responsibilities and qualifications with brief biographies or CVs;

- (f) description of Firm/Individual's relevant qualifications and experience in developing and conducting Participatory Community-Based Research and/or Indigenous-led research of a similar nature as that contemplated in the Services;
- (g) minimum of three references from organizations that can speak directly to the Firm's expertise with respect to the provision of Participatory and Community-Based Indigenous Research and/or Indigenous-led research services of a similar nature. References should be able to speak to experience with proposed project personnel. Include name, title, and full contact information of referees;
- (h) proposed approach including a work plan to deliver the Services. Specify any assumptions;
- (i) fee quotation in relation to proposed work plan, clearly identifying a cost breakdown as appropriate, including travel and any out-of-pocket expenses. Specify applicable hourly rates, and any assumptions, and how the Firm/Individual will manage costs in excess of the budget;
- (j) any additional information or materials which the Firm/Individual wishes to include to demonstrate capability to deliver the Services; and
- (k) a proposed form of Agreement (or retainer letter), if any, that the Firm/Individual would propose to enter into if selected as the Preferred Firm, any specific contract terms which the Firm/Individual would seek to include in the final Agreement.

## 4. EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated by a committee formed by the Purchaser or Purchaser's advisors. When carrying out the evaluation, the evaluation committee may, in confidence, obtain and rely upon any information or input from any other person. As part of the evaluation process, the Purchaser may request clarifications or rectifications from any Firm/Individual after the Proposal Submission Deadline and for that purpose may enter into separate and confidential discussions with

individuals Firms.

The Purchaser intends to select the Proposal that in the Purchaser’s sole discretion, demonstrates the best value of the Purchaser, based on qualifications, personnel, project understanding, vision, proposed approach to achieving the Services and goal, and price.

Essential assets and attributes of the successful firm:

- Demonstrated experience in Participatory and Community-Based Indigenous Research, project management and group facilitation
- Demonstrated experience applying feminist, intersectional, and decolonizing approaches to convening and collaboration
- Experience working on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI), anti-racism and Reconciliation initiatives

The Purchaser will base the evaluation on the following criteria (there are minimum points required to advance in the competition):

<b>Evaluation Criterion</b>	<b>Weight</b>
1. Alignment with the objectives and scope of the research.	15%
2. Demonstrated connection to Indigenous communities and expertise in Indigenous research methodologies, community engagement, trauma informed approaches, anti-oppressive practices, OCAP principles, as well as a demonstrated ability and capacity to understand diversity of Indigenous protocols.	50%
3. Capacity to conduct the research within the specified timeline and budget.	30%
4. Relevance of recommendations to support YWCA Canada and its federation’s work and commitment to reconciliation.	5%
<b>GRAND TOTAL: 100 points</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 4.1 Selection of Preferred Firm

The Preferred Firm will be selected using the evaluation criteria in the previous section, and review from the TRAC. If the Purchaser selects a

Preferred Firm/Individual, then Purchaser may enter into discussions with the Preferred Firm/Individual to clarify any outstanding issues and attempt to finalize the terms of the Agreement.

If at any time the Purchaser reasonably forms the opinion that a mutually acceptable Agreement is not likely to be reached with a Preferred Firm/Individual within a reasonable time, then the Purchaser may at its sole discretion deliver to the Preferred Firm/Individual written notice to terminate discussion, in which event the Purchaser may enter into discussions with another Firm/Individual or terminate this RFP and proceed with the Services in some other manner or not at all.

END -----

## 5. APPENDIX 1

### 5.1 BACKGROUND

#### 5.1.1 About YWCA Canada

YWCA Canada is governed by a national Board of Directors elected by Canadian Member Associations. YWCA Canada is a member of the World YWCA, a global movement that spans 125 countries and links 25 million women and girls worldwide.

YWCA Canada functions as a federation, with 30 autonomous YWCA Member Associations located throughout the country, each governed by local Boards of Directors. YWCA Canada's offices are located in Toronto, with a staff of about 20 persons. The national office is led by the CEO of YWCA Canada. The CEO reports to YWCA Canada's Board of Directors.

YWCA Canada's national office is funded in large part through the membership fees of member associations and also receives funding through government project grants, corporate partnerships, and individual donors. It has an annual operating budget of approximately \$5M.

YWCA Canada works to build:

- A strong voice for women in Canada;

- An effective women's multi-service network; and
- Efficient linkages within the YWCA both nationally and internationally.

## **YWCA Canada Strategic Framework**

### **Vision**

Empowered women and girls in a safe and equitable society

### **Mission**

Advance gender equity for all women through informed advocacy and strong Member Associations

### **Overarching Objective:**

Building a country that works for all women and girls.

## 5.1.2 About the Research

In 2022, YWCA Canada commissioned an initial archival report to uncover records of its participation in residential schools and 'Indian' hospitals. The work continues as the organization is looking to follow up with a Participatory and Community-Based Indigenous Research project which was approved by its membership in 2023.

The Participatory and Community-Based Indigenous Research guides the work of the YWCA at the local and national levels, contributing to understanding the systemic issues within the organization and inform necessary actions for reconciliation and justice.

## 5.2 SCOPE OF SERVICES

### 5.2.1 General

By retaining an independent and expert Participatory and Community-Based Indigenous Research services Firm/Individual to develop a document sharing the lived experience of Indigenous communities that were harmed by YWCA Canada's participation in residential schools and 'Indian' hospitals, as part of truth-telling. The final research report will also identify a number of recommendations of actions towards reconciliation and reparation for YWCA Canada. The research may also identify issues that require further research, dialogue and exploration.

### 5.2.2 Services

The successful Firm/Individual will be required to provide the following services:

- a) provide a detailed work plan for review and approval by the Purchaser;
- (b) liaise with the Truth and Reconciliation Action Committee (TRAC) (which will oversee the implementation of the Participatory and Community-Based Indigenous Research) to gain an understanding of the YWCA Canada federation, the role of the research, and to seek approval of proposed methodologies for information gathering and processes and communication strategies;
- (c) convene the TRAC for guidance for a minimum of four times;
- (d) Identify and conduct key Indigenous communities to gathering oral history and possible records and documentation; conduct consultations with key YWCA Canada's national and member associations' Indigenous staff, board members and key leaders within the organization, and external consultations with Indigenous role/rights-holders/partners via virtual platforms and in-person, as appropriate;
- (e) Based on the above items of work, develop, and present a report with recommendations for review and feedback from the TRAC;
- (f) provide decision-making support;
- (g) report to designated representatives of the TRAC from time to time as required;
- (h) provide progress reports including financial updates as agreed upon or as required;
- (i) provide a final report and deliver all records upon conclusion of the Services; and
- (j) any other related tasks as may be recommended, requested, or approved by the Purchaser.
- (k) YWCA Canada will translate the final documents to French; Although not mandatory, Consultants are encouraged to look to

partner with francophone facilitators to conduct engagement with francophone Member Associations and research participants.

### 5.2.3 Objectives

The Purchaser seeks a successful Firm/Individual that will:

- (a) work collaboratively with the TRAC;
- (b) provide opportunities for YWCA Member Associations to meaningfully contribute to the process;
- (c) undertake thorough due diligence throughout the process;
- (d) complete the Services according to an approved work plan, on time and on budget.

### 5.2.4 Value of Contract

This is an open and competitive process. The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

YWCA Canada will negotiate contract terms upon selection.

### 5.2.5 Pricing Instructions

The successful vendor will receive 25% payment at the signing of the contract, followed by proportional payment at the completion of each phase. Your quote must identify various phases of work and include travel and accommodation for in-person consultations and presentations. The final research report and related is expected to be completed by the end of July 2025, with the presentation of draft research report findings at the Annual Members' Meeting in June 2025.

All pricing must be in Canadian dollars. Prices quoted should include HST.

## 5.2.6 Timeframe

Call for proposals disseminated	May 15, 2024
Emailed questions accepted <a href="mailto:Jgordon@ywcacanada.ca">Jgordon@ywcacanada.ca</a>	May 31, 2024
Response to questions emailed	June 6, 2024
Deadline for Proposals	June 18, 2024, 5pm EDT
Advisory Committee meets to shortlist proponents	End of June 2024
Virtual interviews with short listed proponents	End of June 2024
Successful proponent confirmed and notified	Early July 2024
All applicants notified	Early July 2024
Completion of Work	By End of July 2025

## 5.2.7 Contact

### Contract Contact

The consultant(s) will report to YWCA Canada's National Director of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Jessica Gordon at [Jgordon@ywcacanada.ca](mailto:Jgordon@ywcacanada.ca) on project deliverables and will convene the Truth and Reconciliation Action Committee regularly for ongoing progress and direction.

### YWCA Canada Contact for inquiries

Attention Jessica Gordon, Director of Indigenous Relations at [Jgordon@ywcacanada.ca](mailto:Jgordon@ywcacanada.ca) with the subject line "Participatory and Community-Based Indigenous Research RFP Questions".