



Request for proposals: Updating guideline on maternal and parental leave for engineers and geoscientists

Date issued: January 10, 2022

Interest disclosure deadline: January 24, 2022

Proposal submission deadline: February 4, 2022

Questions concerning this RFP should be directed to:

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613-232-2474 x 235
(the “Contact Person”)

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1 Statement of purpose

Engineers Canada is seeking proposals from individuals or entities (“**Bidders**”) to revise and update the current resource for employers and employees on managing parental leave, entitled “[Managing Transitions: Before, During and After Leave: A Planning Resource Guide for Employees and Employers](#)” (the “managing transitions resource guide”). This resource is further described below, in Section 3.2.

More specifically, Engineers Canada is seeking a Bidder to:

- a) Create one document that is designed to assist engineers and geoscientists across Canada who are taking or considering taking maternity or parental leave. This document should include the necessary steps an employee should be taking before, during, and after their leave, as well as any supporting documents and/or templates that would support an individual during this transition.
- b) Create another document that is designed to assist employers, human resource managers, and supervisors of both engineers and geoscientists who are taking or considering taking maternity or parental leave. This document should include the necessary steps an employer should be taking before, during, and after and employee’s leave, as well as any supporting documents and/or templates that would support an employer during this transition.

Hereinafter, any reference to the “**Project**” shall refer to the above mentioned updating of the current managing transitions resource guide. The Project requires that the documents referred to in both (a) and (b), above, be developed and only Bidders whose proposals reference both components will be considered. The project will be guided by Engineers Canada, with Geoscientists Canada and the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA) being consulted on the draft guidelines. The expected Project completion is October 1, 2022.

2 Background information

2.1 Engineers Canada background

Engineers Canada is the national organization that represents the 12 provincial and territorial engineering regulators that license the more than 300,000 members of the engineering profession in Canada. As the only national voice for the engineering profession, Engineers Canada upholds the honour, integrity, and interests of the engineering profession by supporting consistent high standards in the regulation of engineering, encouraging the growth of the profession in Canada, and inspiring public confidence. Together with the provincial and territorial regulators, we work to advance the profession in the public interest.

Our work is focused on ten (10) core purposes, as established by Engineers Canada’s members, the engineering regulators:

1. Accrediting undergraduate engineering programs.
2. Facilitating and fostering working relationships between and among the regulators.

3. Providing services and tools that enable the assessment of engineering qualifications, foster excellence in engineering practice and regulation, and facilitate mobility of practitioners within Canada.
4. Offering national programs.
5. Advocating to the federal government.
6. Actively monitoring, researching, and advising on changes and advances that impact the Canadian regulatory environment and the engineering profession.
7. Managing risks and opportunities associated with mobility of work and practitioners internationally.
8. Fostering recognition of the value and contribution of the profession to society and sparking interest in the next generation of professionals.
9. Promoting diversity and inclusivity in the profession that reflects Canadian society.
10. Protecting any word(s), mark, design, slogan, or logo, or any literary, or other work, as the case may be, pertaining to the engineering profession or to its objects.

More information can be found on Engineers Canada's website: <https://engineerscanada.ca/>.

2.2 Background on the current managing transitions resource guide

One of Engineers Canada's member associations, the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA), created a foundational planning resource guide upon which the current managing transitions resource guide is based. The "[Managing Transitions: Before, During and After Leave: A Planning Resource Guide for Employees and Employers](#)" is a national resource, developed to help assist engineers and geoscientists across Canada who are planning or considering taking maternity or parental leave. The document provides extensive checklists and templates for individuals to use before, during, and after their leave of absence, and outlines steps that individuals, supervisors and companies can take to help smoothly off-and on-ramp employees taking a leave of absence. The current document also provides a list of common workplace practices and approaches to help guide employers in assessing their current approach and philosophy to maternity and parental leave for their employees.

Increased diversity and inclusivity within the engineering and geoscience professions provides significant benefits to Canadians by not only delivering a solution to overcoming skills shortages, but by increasing Canada's innovation capacity, providing a greater return on human resource investment, and strengthening the profession's commitment to acting in the public interest.

One area that is crucial in retaining skilled and valued talent in both the engineering and geoscience professions is improving career transitions, especially when it comes to managing maternity or parental leave. Of the working women who do become mothers, 90 per cent will take maternity leave. However, 36 per cent of new mothers feel that taking maternity leave will negatively impact their opportunities for promotions, career development, and career progression.¹ When compared to their male counterparts, women often bare the negative consequences of a poorly managed transition as they are the ones traditionally taking leave when they have children. A poorly managed transition before, during, and after leave is often a

¹ Advancing Career Development in Canada (2021). "Making it work! How to effectively manage maternity leave career transitions: An employer's guide." Retrieved August 23, 2021 from: <https://ceric.ca/publications/making-it-work-how-to-effectively-manage-maternity-leave-career-transitions-an-employers-guide/>.

contributing factor to the attrition of women in several industries across Canada, including the engineering and geoscience professions. This hinders the profession's ability to maintain a diverse, inclusive, and innovative workforce that accurately reflects Canadian society.

Having a comprehensive transition management policy that is supportive, accessible, and informative to both employees and employers can play a dramatic role in developing, retaining, and engaging with the best talent across the engineering and geoscience professions; specifically, when it comes to attracting and retaining women. When presented in a gender-neutral method, a maternal and parental leave document is a valuable resource for gender-diverse and LGBTQ2S+ parents-to-be and assists employers in ensuring inclusivity and equal treatment.

2.3 Current challenges with the managing transitions resource guide

Several challenges have been identified with the current managing transitions resource guide which must be addressed to support both employees and employers before, during, and after maternity or parental leave, as follows:

Outdated information

The current document was last updated in 2016 and therefore does not adequately represent current federal, provincial, or territorial legislation surrounding employment insurance maternity and parental leave policies.

Tone change

The current document does not speak to the emotional needs of employees taking maternity or parental leave. The tone of the document is policy driven and does not speak to the potential emotional or mental health needs of employees while on leave.

Improved format

The current document is long and includes information for both employers and employees. Individuals may find the document more relatable and engaging if it is broken into two separate documents, each of which is targeted at a specific audience (i.e., one document for employers and one document for employees).

3 Project Scope

3.1 Scope of work

In completing the Project, the successful Bidder will be required to:

1. Prepare a summary report, outlining the Bidder's research of:
 - a. the current federal, provincial, or territorial legislation related to employment insurance, parental leave, and equitable employment standards across the Canadian provinces and territories; and,
 - b. any other similar or related industry or association-based guidelines.
2. Based on the summary report, create an updated guide for employees, which shall include the following:

- a. overview of maternity and parental rights in Canada, which must include current federal employment insurance maternity and parental benefits (i.e. EI parental benefits, EI maternity benefits, standard parental benefits, extended parental benefits, benefits in the event of death of child or miscarriage, termination or still birth);
- b. hyperlinks to respective provincial and territorial maternity and parental leave benefits/applications to support employees across the country seeking regional information;
- c. templates that would support an individual during their transition on and off leave.

The employee guide should be designed as a user-friendly tool that outlines the necessary steps that employees should take before, during, and after their leave, and which is written using a supportive and empathic tone.

3. Based on the summary report, create an updated guide for employers, which shall include the following:
 - a. overview of maternity and parental leave rights in Canada, as well as federal legal requirements that employers must follow when managing maternity or parental leave;
 - b. hyperlinks to respective provincial and territorial legal requirements for employers managing maternity and parental leave;
 - c. templates that would support supervisors, managers, human resource professionals, and any other individuals during that transition period (i.e. integration into internal policies, check list for managers, employee satisfaction survey questions, etc.).

The employer guide should assist employers to effectively support employees before, during, and after their periods of leave, including the transition back to work, and should include key recommendations for how to best support an employee throughout.

4. Assist in the coordination and facilitate a feedback session with Regulators, employers, and engineers and geoscientists on the use of the guideline. Feedback from the session will be incorporated into the final version of both the employer and employee guides.

Key considerations:

- The audience for the employee guide is individual engineers and geoscientists from across the country. Focus should be on both maternal and parental equally.
- The audience for the employer guide is corporate employers, human resource managers, and supervisors of engineers and geoscientists across the country.
- Gender neutral language should be used throughout the guides.
- The Bidder shall draft the guides in English. Engineers Canada will provide translation of the final, approved, English text into French, with the Bidder responsible for the layout of the French text into the final design format.

3.2 Deliverables

Working closely with Engineers Canada, the successful Bidder will competently produce each of the deliverables described in Section 3.1 (Scope of Work), resulting in successful completion of the Project.

For greater certainty, the Project comprises the below deliverables, all of which are subject to review and approval by Engineers Canada:

- A. An updated report on current federal, provincial, or territorial legislation related to employment insurance, parental leave, and equitable employment standards and a summary of related guidelines (text document in English)
- B. Design a guide for employees in a user-friendly format that presents relevant information and recommendations for the necessary steps that employees should take before, during, and after their leave as ‘A Guide for Employees,’ based on information furnished through Deliverable ‘A’, above, including downloadable templates (English and French)
- C. Design a guide for employers to effectively support employees before, during, and after their periods of leave, including the transition back to work as ‘A Guide for Employers,’ based on information furnished through Deliverable “A”, above, including downloadable templates (English and French)

All deliverables and documentation are subject to review and approval by Engineers Canada by the date outline in Section 3.4. Engineers Canada, in its sole discretion, may accept or reject a Deliverables or any components thereof, in part or as a whole in accordance with Engineers Canada’s review guidelines and procedures. Engineers Canada may provide an opportunity to revise and/or correct any Deliverables with specified timeline, not to exceed 10 business days. Parties agree and understand that time is of essence and at any point during the review process, Engineers Canada shall have the right to terminate this Agreement and the Bidder shall return any payments previous received under this Agreement.

Additionally, as stakeholders and important contributors to the existing managing transitions resource guide, Geoscientists Canada and the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA) will be consulted and provide their approval in respect of the first draft of the two guidelines.

3.3 Project Budget

Engineers Canada has a budget of up to \$15,000 for this Project. To be considered, proposals should cite a total Project cost within this range.

3.4 Project Timeline

All proposals should include a timeline reflecting how each of the items outlined in Section 3.1 (Scope of Work) will be completed by the proposed deadlines noted below:

No.	Deliverable Description	Deadline
1	Project begins	March 1 st , 2022
2	Draft Summary Report	April 5 th , 2022

3	Draft English Guideline for Employees	May 1 st , 2022
4	Draft English Guideline for Employers	June 1 st , 2022
5	Guideline feedback session with Regulators, employers, and engineers and geoscientists	June 27 th , 2022
6	Draft French Guideline for Employees and Draft French Guideline for Employers	July 29 th , 2022
7	Final Guidelines due (English and French)	Oct. 1, 2022

4 RFP submission and evaluation process

4.1 Submission schedule

The following is a list of key dates from Request for Proposal (RFP) issuance through to Project completion. The dates are subject to change by Engineers Canada, in its sole discretion.

No.	Description	Key Dates
1	Issue RFP	January 10, 2022
2	Interest Disclosure Deadline	16:00 EST on January 24, 2022
3	Proposal Submission Deadline	16:00 EST on February 4, 2022
4	Evaluation of proposals, including reference checks	February 18, 2022
5	Notice of Award issued (subject to negotiation of Service Agreement)	March 1, 2022
6	Project completed	October 1, 2022

4.2 Interest Disclosure

Bidders who are interested in submitting a proposal are asked to disclose their interest to the Contact Person noted below, by **January 24, 2022 at 4pm EST** (the “Interest Disclosure Deadline”).

4.3 Inquiries

Questions concerning this RFP may be directed by email to the Contact Person:

Cassandra Polyzou, Manager, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Email: cassandra.polyzou@engineerscanada.ca.

4.4 Proposal submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically, via email, no later than **February 4, 2022 at 4pm EST** (the “Proposal Submission Deadline”) to the Contact Person, Cassandra Polyzou, at cassandra.polyzou@engineerscanada.ca.

4.5 Proposal evaluation

4.5.1 Evaluation Process

Upon the closing of the Proposal Submission Deadline, Engineers Canada will evaluate proposals in accordance with the following process:

Stage 1: Initial Assessment

All proposals received by Engineers Canada will initially be assessed by the Manager, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (or their delegates) and any other individuals(s) that are deemed necessary.

The assessment of each proposal will be based on the contents of the Bidders’ written proposal and any statements provided in writing, if needed, in response to requests for clarification made by Engineers Canada. Staff will ensure compliance with the stated mandatory requirements and will score each proposal, in accordance with section 4.5.4 (Scoring Legend).

Stage 2: Interviews and Reference Checks

Following staff’s initial assessment of the proposals, the 1-2 highest scoring Bidders will be contacted to conduct interviews and further confirm their ability and fit to provide the required services and deliverables. The references of the top-scoring Bidders may also be contacted at this stage.

Once this assessment is complete, Engineers Canada will proceed to select and notify the successful Bidder, by issuing a Notice of Award.

4.5.2 Mandatory Requirements

Engineers Canada has several requirements that are deemed mandatory when submitting a response to this RFP. The following criteria have been identified as mandatory:

- Interest disclosure must be received prior to the Interest Disclosure Deadline;
- Proposals must be received prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline;
- Proposals must indicate that the Bidder is able to deliver the services and deliverables and complete the Project within the stated timelines;
- Proposals must include the information requested in section 4.5.5 (Proposal Evaluation) of this RFP; and
- Proposals must clearly state the total Project cost with the range cited in Section 3.3 (Budget), including all fees and expenses, in Canadian funds.

Proposals which fail, in the sole discretion of Engineers Canada, to meet any mandatory requirement will be eliminated from further consideration in the evaluation process. However, Engineers Canada reserves the right to waive any mandatory requirements if it deems fit and appropriate to meet the interests of and provide best value to Engineers Canada. This clause

should be interpreted solely for the benefit of Engineers Canada and not for the benefit of the Bidders.

4.5.3 Scoring

Proposals will be evaluated and scored by Engineers Canada, using predetermined criteria to determine which proposal potentially provides the best value. Scoring of proposal and evaluation comments are confidential and will not be disclosed.

In terms of relative importance, each criterion is given a pre-assigned weight, as outlined in section 4.5.5 (Proposal Evaluation), by which each proposal will be evaluated. Each criterion is rated on a scale of 0 to 10 (see section 4.5.4, Scoring Legend, below). Each criterion's rating is then multiplied by the assigned weight to yield a total for that element. Summation of the individual totals yields a total score, which represents the overall degree of satisfaction for the respective submission.

4.5.4 Scoring Legend

0 Points Deficient	1-3 Points Poor	4-6 Points Fair	7-8 Points Good	9-10 Points Excellent
The proposal fails to meet the requirements of the applicable scoring criteria in a suitable and documented manner.	The proposal fails to meet the requirements of the applicable scoring criteria in a suitable and documented manner.	The proposal barely meets the requirements of the applicable scoring criteria in a suitable and documented manner.	The proposal reasonably demonstrates that the requirements of the applicable scoring criteria are met in a documented and suitable manner.	The proposal fully demonstrates that the requirements of the applicable scoring criteria are met in a documented and suitable manner.
The proposal fails to demonstrate that the Project will be performed in an acceptable manner.	The proposal reveals significant weaknesses that could result in unacceptable shortcomings in performance of the Project.	The proposal reveals weaknesses that could result in tolerable or reasonably correctable shortcomings in performance of the Project.	The proposal reveals minor weaknesses that should not significantly impact performance of the Project.	There are no apparent weaknesses.

4.5.5 Proposal evaluation

The Bidder proposals will be evaluated as follows:

No.	Scoring Criteria	Weight	Points	Total Points
1	Mandatory requirements (section 5.5.2)		Elimination	
2	Qualifications and relevant experience (with examples)	50		
3	Approach and methodology	30		
4	Fees and expenses	15		
5	Quality of submission	5		
	Total	100		

To confirm the above criteria, Bidders must include with their proposal, at a minimum, the following supporting information:

Mandatory Requirements

- See section 4.5.2 (Mandatory Requirements)

Qualifications and relevant experience:

- Bidders are asked to detail their experience conducting research on similar guides/documents; producing resource guidelines or policies for professional associations, or private or public sector clients; researching, designing, advising and/or delivering Human Resource employment policies or employment practices; and, researching, designing, advising, and/or delivering employment equity policies or workplace training.
- Bidders are asked to provide examples of previous research and/or guides or documents on similar topics (i.e. maternity or parental leave, employment standards, equity, diversity, and inclusion policies, etc.) as well as additional documentation that indicates relevant experience.

Approach and methodology:

- Bidders are asked to describe how they will approach the design and development of two unique maternity and parental leave documents:
 - One for employees in the engineering and geoscience professions taking maternity or parental leave; and
 - One for employers in the engineering and geoscience professions managing an employee's maternity or parental leave.
- Bidders are asked to identify their understanding of the Project requirements and deliverables, including their specific understanding of employment equity legislation, EI benefits, parental and maternal leave in Canada and the specific resources they have available to them to reach deliverables and timelines.
- Bidder should outline any expected challenges for this Project, including the proposed mitigation strategies.

- Bidders are asked to provide a detailed work plan, with timelines, as well as a brief outline of their research approach.

Fees and expenses:

- Bidders should outline their proposed costs and fees.

In addition to the above, Bidders are requested to supply the name, email address, and phone number of two (2) recent clients (within the past 24 months) who have received services similar to those requested in this RFP and who may be contacted as references. Include a short description of the work performed, including how it was similar to this Project.

Engineers Canada will communicate with the winning Bidder throughout this Project in English. All proposals must therefore be submitted in English.

4.5.5 Confidentiality

Proposals and information submitted by Bidders will be treated as proprietary, held confidential, and used only for evaluating the ability of the Bidder to handle the Project. The details of any proposals will be shared only with the persons involved in the Project evaluation and any others, as may be deemed necessary from time to time (for example, to our legal advisors for the purpose of conducting contract negotiations with the successful Bidder).

5 RFP terms and conditions

5.1 Process conditions

This RFP is not an offer by Engineers Canada to any person, and no contract of any kind whatsoever (including, without limitation, no "Contract A") is formed between Engineers Canada and any Bidder upon the submission of a proposal in response to it. For greater certainty, nothing in this RFP, including without limitation, the use of mandatory language, language reserving rights to Engineers Canada, or other language that might, but for this clause, be indicative of contractual intention, is intended by Engineers Canada to indicate an intention to be contractually bound to any Bidder in any manner whatsoever. Engineers Canada retains the right, in its absolute discretion, to consider and analyze the proposals, negotiate with any Bidder at any time, select a preferred Bidder, or enter a service contract with a Bidder. Without limiting the foregoing, since this clause precludes Contract A, none of the usual Contract A terms apply, and Engineers Canada may:

- Reject or accept any proposal, whether or not complete, and whether or not it contains all the required information;
- Require clarification of any proposal;
- Request additional information on any proposal;
- Reject any or all proposals without any obligation, or any compensation or reimbursement to the Bidders;
- Refuse to enter into a service contract with any of the Bidders;
- Re-advertise for new submissions, or call for tenders for this work or for work of a similar nature.

Engineers Canada may, in its sole discretion, independently verify any information in any proposal. The proposals submitted by Bidders must be offers made in good faith, and Engineers Canada reserves the right to make a choice from the various proposals, or not choose any. Engineers Canada shall not be obligated in any manner until a written agreement relating to an approved proposal has been duly executed.

5.2 Competitive process

With the issuance of this RFP, Engineers Canada is making a business opportunity available to Bidders having the experience, competence, and managerial sophistication to enter a service contract to complete the work.

5.3 Proposal revisions

All proposal revisions must be received by Engineers Canada prior to the RFP submission/closing date and time stated in Section 4 (RFP submission & evaluation process), above.

5.4 Cost of preparing proposals

Bidders are solely responsible for all costs they incur in preparing and submitting proposals.

5.5 Clarification of proposal

Engineers Canada reserves the right, but does not have an obligation, to request clarification of a proposal or request further information from any or all Bidders. In addition, if, in the opinion of Engineers Canada, any proposal contains a minor defect or irregularity or fails in some way to comply with any requirement of the RFP in a way that, in the opinion of Engineers Canada can be remedied without providing an unfair advantage to one or more Bidders, the Engineers Canada contact person (identified in Section 4.3) or their delegate may request rectification from the Bidder(s).

Engineers Canada, upon receipt of appropriate clarification and/or rectification, may waive the minor defect or irregularity and accept the proposal. Failure by a Bidder to provide a written response that, in the opinion of Engineers Canada, properly clarifies or rectifies its proposal, within the time specified in the request for clarification or rectification, may result in disqualification of the proposal.

5.6 Acceptance of RFP conditions

Receipt of a proposal by Engineers Canada will be considered acceptance by the Bidder of the RFP terms and conditions, and will be incorporated in the Bidder's proposal.

5.7 Notification of success

A written Notice of Award shall be the only valid form of notification of success in response to this RFP.

5.8 Negotiation delay

If a written agreement cannot be concluded within fifteen (15) business days of notification to the designated Bidder, Engineers Canada may, in its sole discretion, terminate negotiations with that Bidder and either negotiate a service agreement with another Bidder of its choice or choose to terminate the RFP process and not enter into a contract with any of the Bidders.

5.9 Reservation of rights

Engineers Canada reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to:

- modify, amend, delay, cancel or suspend the selection process, or any or all stages of the selection process, including before or after provision of a Notice of Award, at any time for any reason;
- accept or reject any proposal based on the evaluation criteria in section 5, above, as determined in the sole discretion of Engineers Canada;
- not accept any proposal; and
- reject or disqualify all or any proposal without any obligation, compensation, or reimbursement to any Bidder.

5.10 Limitation of damage

Each Bidder, by submitting a proposal, agrees that:

- In the event any or all proposals are rejected or disqualified, or the Project or selection process is modified, delayed, suspended or cancelled for any reason, neither Engineers Canada, nor its employees, agents, officers, or directors will be liable under any circumstances for any claim, or to reimburse or compensate any person in any manner whatsoever, including but not limited to costs of preparation of the proposal, loss of anticipated profits, loss of opportunity, or for any other matter; and
- The Bidder waives any claim for loss of profits or loss of opportunity if : (i) the Bidder is rejected or disqualified or is not successful in the selection process; (ii) the selection process for the Project is delayed, suspended, cancelled or modified at any time; or (iii) cancellation occurs per the above.

5.11 Proposal Documents

All documents submitted by Bidders will become the property of Engineers Canada.