

Request for proposals:

Guideline for engineering Regulators on managing challenging complaints

Date Issued: June 16, 2025

Interest Disclosure and Question Period Deadline: June 23, 2025

Proposal Submission Deadline: July 9, 2025

Questions concerning this RFP should be directed to:

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1 Statement of purpose

Engineers Canada is soliciting proposals from qualified firms or individual consultants ("**Bidders**") to develop guidance for Canada's engineering regulators on managing the misuse and exploitation of complaints processes, both by the public and by certain members within the engineering profession. The goal of this initiative (**the "Project"**) is to provide consistent national guidance on good practices for approaching such complaints without compromising the protection of the public or the integrity of the profession. Early stages of the Project will include a comparative analysis of regulatory frameworks across other professional sectors in Canada, focusing on complaint procedures, merit thresholds, and mechanisms for dismissing frivolous or unsubstantiated claims.

The Project is to be developed on a multi-year timeline that aligns with Engineers Canada's phased, consultation-based approach, and is planned to culminate in the finalized guideline by December 2026. Successful completion of the Project will entail three key deliverables, plus revisions, which will be developed with the support of Engineers Canada staff and in consultation with Project interest holders, including the Canadian engineering Regulators:

- The development and facilitation of a half-day workshop for Regulators and Canadian Engineering Qualifications Board members on misuse of complaints processes (September 2025)
- The creation and revision of a general direction document following the workshop, to be circulated for consultation among key Engineers Canada stakeholders; and
- The creation and revision of a guideline for Regulators on managing challenging and vexatious complaints.

2 Background information

2.1 Engineers Canada background

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. For over 80 years, we have worked on behalf of the provincial and territorial associations that regulate engineering practice and license the country's 300,000 members of the engineering profession.

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, logo, or any literary or other work, as the case may be, pertaining to the engineering profession or its objects.

2.2 Background on the Canadian Engineering Qualifications Board (CEQB) and Practice Committee

The Canadian Engineering Qualifications Board (CEQB) develops national guidelines, Engineers Canada papers, examination syllabi, and other products, as mandated by the Engineers Canada Board. CEQB deliverables serve the needs of Canada's engineering regulators, engineering licence holders, and applicants for licensure by enabling the assessment of engineering qualifications, fostering excellence in engineering practice and regulation, and facilitating mobility.

In December 2024, the Board of Engineers Canada tasked the CEQB with an analysis of whether sufficient guidance existed to assist regulators in handling challenging complaints in a harmonized and consistent way across the country. Subsequent to the analysis, it was determined in April 2025 that more robust guidance was required in this area, and the development of a regulator guideline was assigned to the Practice Committee of the CEQB. The Practice Committee's purpose in this undertaking is to provide expert advice throughout the guideline's development and to approve documents for subsequent CEQB approval and/or consultation at key stages.

2.3 Background for Developing guidance for engineering Regulators on managing challenging complaints

Over the past several years, Canada's engineering Regulators have become increasingly concerned with the growing number of frivolous, vexatious, or meritless complaints filed against engineers, including those serving in municipalities and in other regulatory roles. Such complaints are problematic in that they consume the limited time and resources of the Regulators and their investigative bodies, and place

competing demands on the time needed to address legitimate complaints made by the public and members of the profession.

Such complaints differ from legitimate concerns about unethical conduct or professional incompetence by engineers, which Regulators are obligated to pursue. Instead, they can be driven by a range of factors, including political motivations (e.g. dissatisfaction with a municipal development project); advocacy objectives (e.g. the desire to achieve climate-related objectives that exceed regulatory requirements); and frustration of individuals facing disciplinary action (e.g. complaints launched against investigators by individuals being investigated). Such complaints can often involve repeated submissions by the same individual or group that disregard or re-prosecute prior findings, which becomes a further burden on Regulator resources. They also sometimes leverage the high ethical standards of engineers to challenge decisions that go beyond the engineer's control (e.g. decisions made by municipal decision makers). The impacts of such complaints can

In recognition of the challenges posed by complaints of this nature, Engineers Canada and the CEQB are interested in developing guidance for regulators that 1) articulates and compares existing definitions of "legitimate" complaints and their limitations across the country, 2) proposes legally defensible actions that can be taken by regulators when addressing problematic, or illegitimate, complaints, and, 3) makes recommendations in terms of future advocacy needs and/or revisions to legislation pertaining to this area. Guidance offered in the Project may extend beyond these core considerations based on needs identified during the workshop and subsequent consultations; however, these core areas must be covered in the final guidance.

3 Scope of work

The successful Bidder (the "**Consultant**") will be required to develop and deliver several major pieces of work, with the guidance and support of the CEQB Secretariat and in consultation with key stakeholders, including the Practice Committee. These are to be delivered over a multi-year timeline with tentative dates below:

- 1. Prepare and facilitate a half-day national workshop for CEQB members and regulators, which will inform the content for a general direction document. (September 2025)**

It is policy of the Engineers Canada Board that the outputs of the CEQB involve a substantial input and consultation process with Canada's twelve (12) engineering regulators and, as needed, key engineering stakeholders (e.g. CEQB members). A national workshop in the early stages of CEQB projects ensures the smooth development of CEQB documents as they proceed through later stages.

In the case of this specific guideline, preparation for this workshop will require the establishment of foundational knowledge (e.g. through an environmental scan, case studies, or alternate means) to ensure that participants can start their conversations on common ground. The workshop approach and content will also be validated under the advisement of the Practice Committee.

The **intended outcome** of this requirement is to gather key information required for the successful development of the general direction document (and, by extension, the final deliverable).

The **deliverable** is the workshop.

2. Write a draft general direction document based on the workshop outcomes, outlining the guideline's topics and direction. (October/November 2025)

Information gathered from the national workshop, as well as supporting work done with the Practice Committee, will be used to develop a **draft** general direction document, which will subsequently be sent to engineering regulators and the Engineers Canada Board for consultation and review. This consultation process is run by the CEQB Secretariat, who summarizes stakeholder feedback and communicates it to the committee and the consultant to aid in the next steps of project development. The draft general direction requires sequential approvals by the Practice Committee and CEQB in order to be sent for regulator consultation; therefore, some (usually minimal) revisions are possible at this stage.

The **intended outcome** of the draft general direction is to provide a document that the CEQB Secretariat will use to confirm the project's overall direction with key stakeholders.

The **deliverable** is the draft general direction.

3. Finalize the general direction document using collated feedback from the consultation process. (March 2026)

As mentioned, following the development of the draft general direction, the CEQB Secretariat circulates the document to engineering regulators and the Engineers Canada Board for consultation. The Practice Committee, in collaboration with the Consultant, responds to feedback. This collated feedback is then used by the Consultant to finalize the general direction document. The Practice Committee's responses are also shared with regulators and those who provided feedback.

NOTE: Depending on the consultation window and required turnaround times, project timelines may be pushed back 2-3 months at this point.

The **intended outcome** of the finalized general direction document is to establish consensus about what the guideline will contain.

The **deliverable** is the final general direction.

4. Develop the draft guideline (6-8 pages), based on the final general direction document. (April 2026)

Once CEQB approves the finalized general direction, the Consultant commences work on the guideline under the advisement of the Practice Committee. The draft guideline requires sequential approvals by the Practice Committee and CEQB in order to be sent for regulator consultation, so the need for some (usually minimal) revision is a possibility at this stage.

The **intended outcome** of the draft guideline is to provide a consultation-ready version of the document to the CEQB Secretariat.

The **deliverable** is the draft Guideline for engineering Regulators on managing challenging complaints.

5. Incorporate feedback from the draft guideline consultation, and finalize the guideline for CEQB and subsequent Engineers Canada Board approval. (~November 2026)

Following the development of the draft guideline, the CEQB Secretariat circulates the document to engineering regulators for consultation. The Practice Committee, in collaboration with the Consultant, responds to feedback. This collated feedback is then used by the Consultant to finalize the guideline, and committee responses are shared with regulators and those who provided feedback. Further revision and consultation may be completed by the CEQB Secretariat. The final guideline is presented by the Practice Committee chair to the CEQB for approval, to then be sent to the Engineers Canada Board.

The **intended outcome** of the final guideline is to present the document to the Engineers Canada Board for final approval and subsequent publication on the public website.

The **deliverable** is the final guideline for engineering Regulators on managing challenging complaints.

4 Budget

Proposals should include the entire Project cost capped at a maximum of \$60,000 plus taxes.

5 RFP submission & evaluation process

5.1 Submission schedule

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

No.	Description	Key Dates
1	Issue RFP	June 16, 2025

2	Interest disclosure and Bidder meeting request deadline	June 23, 2025
3	Bidder meetings (see section 5.2)	July 2, 2025
4	Proposal Submission Deadline	16:00 EST on July 9, 2025
5	Evaluation of proposals, including reference checks	July 10 to 18, 2025
6	Notice of Award issued (subject to negotiation of Service Agreement)	July 21, 2025

5.2 Bidder meetings

There will be an opportunity for prospective Bidders to meet individually with Engineers Canada staff for a question-and-answer session on July 2, 2025. While these meetings are not mandatory, they provide an opportunity for Bidders and Engineers Canada staff to meet prior to proposal evaluation. If you wish to participate, please contact the person identified in section 5.3 (Inquiries) to schedule a meeting. Bidders are requested to limit meeting participants to two (2) people per Bidder entity.

Questions must be submitted twenty-four (24) hours prior to a Bidder meeting. Questions raised at the Bidders meeting will be collated and distributed to all Bidders who have expressed interest in submitting a proposal.

5.3 Inquiries

Questions concerning this RFP or the Bidders meeting may be directed by email to Carole Anne Hoffman, Specialist, Qualifications, at caroleanne.hoffman@engineerscanada.ca.

5.4 Proposal Evaluation

5.4.1 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 staff team 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 5.4.4 (Scoring Legend).

Stage 2: Interviews and Reference Checks

Following staff's initial assessment of the proposals, the 1-2 highest scoring Bidders may 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.

5.4.2 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:

- Proposals must be received prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline;
- Proposals must indicate that the Bidder is able to deliver the services and complete the Project within the stated timelines;
- Proposals must include the information requested in section 5.4.5 (Proposal Evaluation) of this RFP; and
- Proposals must clearly state the total Project cost, 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 the 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.

5.4.3 Scoring

Proposals will be evaluated and scored by Engineers Canada, using predetermined criteria to determine which proposal potentially provides the best value. Scoring of proposals 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 5.4.5 (Proposal Evaluation), by which each proposal will be evaluated. Each criterion is rated on a scale of 0 to 10 (see section 5.4.4 (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.

5.4.4 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.

5.4.5 Proposal evaluation

The proposals will be evaluated as follows:

No.	Scoring Criteria	Weight	Points	Total Points
1	Mandatory requirements (section 5.4.2)		Elimination	
2	Qualifications and relevant experience	40		
3	Approach and methodology	40		
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:

Qualifications and relevant experience:

- Detail your experience developing research projects, papers, guidelines, and/or standards in support of regulation of professions in Canada;
- Detail your experience working within Canada's complex regulatory environment (e.g. multiple jurisdictions, differing provincial and territorial legislation);
- Describe any relevant experience pertaining to any of the following: disciplinary and/or investigative processes, vexatious complaints, variations in complaint procedures, thresholds for

determining merit, inter-jurisdictional analysis within Canada, and mechanisms for dismissing frivolous claims or related research areas.

Approach and methodology:

- Describe how you will approach the Project;
- Describe your understanding of the Project requirements and deliverables;
- Describe the process you would follow to develop the workshop, as identified as the first deliverable in section 3 (Scope of work).
- Briefly identify any expected challenges for this Project and the proposed mitigation strategies;
- Provide a high-level work plan, with timelines.

Fees and expenses:

- Outline your proposed costs and fee schedule.

In addition to the above, Bidders must 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.

5.4.6 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 process.

5.5 RFP terms and conditions

5.5.1 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.

5.5.2 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 into a service contract to complete the work.

5.6 Proposal revisions

All proposal revisions must be received by Engineers Canada prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline stated in Section 5 (RFP Submission & Evaluation Process), above.

5.7 Cost of preparing proposals

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

5.8 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 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 Bidder. 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.

5.9 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.

5.10 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.

5.11 Notification of success

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

5.12 Reservation of rights

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

- modify, 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.

5.13 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, 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 suspended, cancelled or modified at any time; or (iii) cancellation occurs per the above.

5.14 Proposal Documents

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