

Request for proposals:

Development of a Business Model and  
Strategic Growth Plan for the Forward  
Engineering Collective

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Date Issued: July 28, 2025

Proposal Submission Deadline: August 13, 2025

Questions concerning this RFP should be directed to:

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Manager, Belonging and Engagement  
Engineers Canada  
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## 1 Statement of purpose

The **Forward Engineering Collective (THE COLLECTIVE)** invites proposals from experienced consultants or firms to develop a **sustainable business model and strategic growth plan** that enables THE COLLECTIVE to deepen its impact, scale its reach, and secure long-term financial sustainability.

This work must align with THE COLLECTIVE's commitment to equity, justice, reconciliation, and inclusion in engineering education and practice across Canada.

The purpose of this RFP is to secure a consultant or firm to:

- Develop a **scalable business model** that reflects THE COLLECTIVE's values, activities, and partnerships.
- Design a **three- to five-year business plan** that identifies operational, financial, and governance strategies.
- Propose viable funding approaches that align with THE COLLECTIVE's collaborative, equity-driven ethos.

## 2 Background information

### 2.1 About THE COLLECTIVE

The Forward Engineering Collective is a national initiative co-founded in 2024 by six partner organizations: Engineers of Tomorrow, Let's Talk Science, Boys and Girls Club South East, Spin Master, Ontario Network for Women in Engineering, and Engineers Canada. It seeks to center historically excluded voices in engineering by addressing stereotypes, barriers to accessibility, and responding to community needs. THE COLLECTIVE connects organizations working in K-12 outreach and engineering advocacy to share knowledge, build capacity, and create systemic change.

Its **core mission** is to ensure that all children and youth across Canada have equitable, meaningful access to engineering education and inspiration.

#### THE COLLECTIVE's Four Collective Actions

1. **Inspire Connection:** Creating relatable and positive narratives about engineering.
2. **Drive Inclusion:** Remove structural and systemic barriers in engineering access.
3. **Showcase Engineering:** Tell real stories and highlight diverse engineer role models.
4. **Improve Impact:** Build collective resources, stronger support systems and develop evaluation criteria that helps translate impact and innovation across programs and organizations.

THE COLLECTIVE is hosted by **Engineers Canada**, and currently operates as a networked community of practice. With strong momentum and growing interest, THE COLLECTIVE now seeks a formal plan to sustain and expand its work.

### 3 Scope of work

The successful Bidder will be responsible for:

**a. Review and engagement**

- Conduct an environmental scan of similar equity-driven STEM collectives or networks in Canada.
- Engage core Collective members, including Engineers Canada, and partners to gather insights.

**b. Business Model development**

- Define an organizational model suited for a collaborative, values-based, national initiative.
- Recommend options for legal/operational structure (e.g., hosted model, independent nonprofit, social enterprise).
- Map strategic roles for partners, members, and governance bodies.

**c. Strategic Business Plan**

- Develop a three- to five-year plan that includes but is not limited to:
  - Mission- and values-aligned goals
  - Revenue generation (grants, philanthropy, sponsorships, earned income)
  - Operational and staffing model
  - Resource development (tools, workshops, training)
  - Equity-focused growth strategy, including French/English reach and underserved regions
  - Risk assessment and mitigation
  - Metrics for tracking impact and success

#### 3.1 Deliverables

The successful Bidder will deliver the following:

- Draft and final business plan (Word and PDF formats)
- Executive summary and presentation slide deck
- One-hour virtual presentation to THE COLLECTIVE

## 4 Budget

Proposals should include the entire Project cost capped at a maximum of \$15,000 CAD, plus taxes. This includes all fees, subcontractor costs, software/platform costs (if relevant), and expenses.

## 5 RFP submission and evaluation process

### 5.1 Project schedule

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

No.	Description	Key Dates
1	RFP issued	July 28, 2025
2	Deadline for questions	August 8, 2025
3	Proposal submission deadline	August 13, 2025
4	Notification of successful proponent	August 21, 2025
5	Project start	August 28, 2025
6	Final deliverables due	November 20, 2025

### 5.2 Inquiries

Questions concerning this RFP may be directed by email to Kim Bouffard, Manager, Belonging and Engagement, at [kim.bouffard@engineerscanada.ca](mailto:kim.bouffard@engineerscanada.ca).

### 5.3 Proposal Evaluation

#### 5.3.1 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 5.3.4 (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.

### **5.3.2 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 5.3.5 (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.

### **5.3.3 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 5.3.5 (Proposal Evaluation), by which each proposal will be evaluated. Each criterion is rated on a scale of 0 to 10 (see section 5.3.4 (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.

### 5.3.4 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.

### 5.3.5 Proposal evaluation

The proposals will be evaluated as follows:

No.	Scoring Criteria	Weight	Points	Total Points
1	Mandatory requirements (section 5.3.2)		Elimination	
2	Relevant experience and expertise	25		
3	Quality and creativity of proposed approach	30		
4	Cultural and equity sensitivity	15		
5	Clarity and feasibility of workplan	15		
6	Cost-effectiveness and value	15		
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>		

To confirm the above criteria, Bidders must submit a proposal (maximum 8 pages) that includes:

- **Overview of your firm or individual experience**, particularly with equity-focused initiatives or collective impact models
- **Approach and methodology**, including how you will embed equity and community engagement
- **Work plan and timeline**
- **Detailed budget breakdown**

- **Bios or CVs of key personnel**
- **Two references** (preferably from similar projects)
- **Optional:** Sample(s) of relevant past work

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

### 5.3.6 Submission instructions

Please submit your proposal electronically as a single file in PDF format to:

**Kim Bouffard, Manager, Belonging and Engagement**

Engineers Canada

[kim.bouffard@engineerscanada.ca](mailto:kim.bouffard@engineerscanada.ca)

Subject line: *RFP Submission – Forward Engineering Collective Business Plan*

### 5.3.7 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.

## 5.4 RFP terms and conditions

### 5.4.1 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.

#### **5.4.2 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.

### **5.5 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.

### **5.6 Cost of preparing proposals**

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

### **5.7 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 defects 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 defects 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.

### **5.8 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.

### **5.9 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.

### **5.10 Notification of success**

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

### **5.11 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.

### **5.12 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.

### **5.13 Proposal Documents**

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