# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Consultant services to assist with developing the Framework with which to assess the transparency and effectiveness of the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) accreditation system.

July 18, 2019

**Amended: August 6, 2019**

## 1. Organizational Background

In Canada, professional engineering is regulated under provincial and territorial law by the engineering regulators. Engineers Canada is the national organization of the provincial and territorial associations that regulate the practice of engineering in Canada and license the country's 290,000 members of the engineering profession.

Engineers Canada accredits Canadian undergraduate programs in engineering through its Accreditation Board. Students who successfully receive a degree from an accredited engineering program meet the academic requirements needed to become licensed with Canada's engineering regulators.

Accredited engineering programs bring multiple benefits for both students and regulators:

- Regular accreditation of programs fosters the continual improvement of education
- Accreditation ensures that programs are meeting the high standards necessary for licensure
- Degrees from accredited programs are accepted by engineering regulators nationwide and are also recognized by our international partners.

## 2. Purpose of the RFP

Engineers Canada's 2019-2021 strategic plan identifies accountability in accreditation as a strategic priority (Strategic priority 2). The rationale for this priority is that the Accreditation Board understands the need to offer greater evidence-based transparency to the Engineers Canada Board, engineering provincial and territorial regulators, and deans of engineering higher education institutions in Canada. The Accreditation Board must also demonstrate that the accreditation criteria and procedures system is robust, while acknowledging and addressing weaknesses in a data-driven, fact-based manner. There has been a perspective that the work of the Accreditation Board is a complicated, unknowable "black box" process in which surprises happen and autonomous decisions are a regular occurrence.

As a result, the Accountability in Accreditation Committee has been established to address this strategic priority through:

- a documented, annual performance measurement process;
- better communication;
- documented continual improvement processes; and
- greater transparency.

To that end, Engineers Canada is seeking proposals from entities and/or individuals ("**Bidders**") that demonstrates how they can support Engineers Canada with its efforts to demonstrate

greater accountability in accreditation. **More particularly, we require the assistance of a Consultant to help establish a framework with which to assess the transparency and effectiveness of the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) accreditation system (the "Project")**.

## 3. Scope of Work

### 3.1. Scope Summary

The winning Bidder will be required to deliver the following items, within stated timeframes.

| Scope Item | Timeframe | Deliverables |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Design a repeatable evaluation strategy for Engineers Canada's engineering education accreditation system ("the system"). This work is to be completed in partnership with the Accountability in Accreditation Committee, which is a committee of the Accreditation Board. Both the Accreditation Board and its Accountability in Accreditation Committee is composed of volunteers, which brings benefits and challenges inherent with working with a volunteer workforce | By December 1, 2019 | a. A program logic model for the evaluation of Engineers Canada's Accreditation "system" to reach a shared understanding of the program by stakeholders (regulators, volunteers, higher education institutions, students)<br>b. A detailed evaluation schedule and plan that includes defined evaluation priorities, key activities and associated timelines for a first annual measurement in 2020 and ongoing annual measurement. These all must take into account stakeholder priorities.<br>c. Repeatable program evaluation process that includes: annual schedule, evaluation questions, identification and/or development of appropriate sources of information, data collection tools, analysis and evaluation techniques. |
| 2. Design and execute a knowledge transfer strategy to train staff and volunteers to carry out the evaluation | By end of Q1, 2020 | a. Knowledge transfer strategy design that includes face-to-face training sessions and documentation that can be used for future measurement cycles<br>b. Knowledge transfer schedule that includes key activities and milestones.<br>c. Measures that demonstrate Engineers Canada staff and volunteers have the requisite knowledge to execute the evaluation strategy and manage the ongoing maintenance of the evaluation process.<br>d. Measures that demonstrate Engineers Canada staff and volunteers have the requisite knowledge to carry out future re-measurement activities.<br>e. Support the delivery of the initial training for the evaluation process |

3.2 Intended outcomes of the Project are:

(1) The criteria established by the Accreditation Board are evidence-based, reflect the requirements of the regulators, and support excellence in engineering education.

(2) Engineering regulators are provided with annual, data-driven reporting that demonstrates that the accreditation system measures transparency and effectiveness, enabling clarity of conversations around potential improvements and changes.

(3) Higher education institutions:

- Understand and recognize that the Accreditation Board is taking them through a structured, rigorous, and fair process;
- feel supported in their efforts to incorporate educational innovation into their programs in a timely manner; and
- Report greater knowledge and predictability of accreditation visits and decisions, and satisfaction with the Accreditation Board's collaborative approach to change.

3.3. Project Roles and Responsibilities

| Deliverable | Consultant | Engineers Canada | Accountability in Accreditation Committee | Stakeholders (HEIs and provincial and territorial regulators) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A program logic model for Engineers Canada's Accreditation "system" | Build out the evaluation strategy and evolve the preliminary logic model into a final product | Develop and design the preliminary draft | Contribute content to the logic model | Validate |
| A detailed evaluation schedule and plan that includes defined evaluation priorities, key activities and associated timelines for a first annual measurement in 2020 and ongoing annual measurement | Provide content | Provide input and work the schedule | Oversight and contribute content | Validate |
| Repeatable program evaluation process that includes: annual schedule, evaluation questions, identification of appropriate sources of information, data collection tools, analysis and evaluation techniques. | Advice on good practices to plan, develop and document the process | Provide the requirements from a business standpoint. Provide subject matter knowledge | Oversight and contribute content | Validate |
| Knowledge transfer strategy design | Provide current good practices | Implement plan | Oversight | Not applicable |
| Knowledge transfer schedule | Develop schedule | Receiver of knowledge | Oversight | Not applicable |
| Measures that demonstrate Engineers Canada staff and volunteers have the requisite knowledge to execute the evaluation strategy | Provide current good practices | Select measures | Validate and provide content. Oversight and approval | Not applicable |
| Measures that demonstrate Engineers Canada staff and volunteers have the requisite knowledge to carry out future re-measurement activities | Recommend framework for ongoing management of the evaluation process | Select tactics for framework | Validate and provide content. Oversight and approval | Not applicable |

**Additional Services**

Bidders may, at their discretion, suggest other optional value-added services or scope items that they believe will contribute to the support and development of the Project.

# 4. The Request for Proposal

## 4.1 Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a review team comprised of Engineers Canada staff (the "**Review Team**"), which may include the Executive Vice-President, Regulatory Affairs, the Manager, Accreditation, the Accreditation Program Specialist and any other individual that the Review Team considers necessary, at its sole discretion.

The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

| No. | Criteria | Weighting |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | The ability to provide the requested services and deliverables as described in section 3.1 of this RFP | 60% |
| 2 | Proposed fees and compensation | 30% |
| 3 | Quality and conciseness of proposal | 10% |

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

- Overview of planned approach to provide the requested services:
  - Summary of the planned approach, describing how the work will be completed, including defining stakeholder engagement philosophy and corresponding tactics
  - Summary of expected challenges for this Project and proposed mitigation strategies
- Qualification of Bidder/personnel assigned to Project:
  - Relevant education/experience including a summary of recent and relevant projects
  - Description of team roles and responsibilities for the Project, if applicable
  - Resumes of all individuals who would be involved in the Project
- Proposed fees and compensation:
  - A draft budget indicating estimated fees and expenses related to the development and implementation of all identified deliverables

## 4.2 Evaluation of Proposals / Bidders

**Evaluations will be conducted by the Engineers Canada Evaluation Decision Team in three phases:**

**Phase 1 – Review of Proposals – Upon the closing of the RFP submission period, all proposals received will be reviewed by the Review Team. 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. Phase 1 involves an evaluation of the proposals against the criteria defined in s. 4.1 of the RFP. Phase 1 will be weighted as 40% of the total score.**

**Phase 2 – Interviews – The 3 Bidders receiving the highest scores in Phase 1 will be invited to participate in an interview with the Review Team, which will be held via Skype. The interview will further assess the Bidder's skills, knowledge, and overall approach to the project. Phase 2 involves an evaluation of fit, communication style and approach, knowledge of the evaluation and accreditation field, and the ability to impart knowledge. The Bidder that receives the highest combined score of Phase 1 and Phase 2 will proceed to Phase 3. Phase 2 will be weighted as 60% of the total score.**

**Phase 3 –Bidder Selection – Engineers Canada will select and notify the Bidder who achieves the highest combined score from Phase 1 and 2. The Bidder will be asked to provide two references.**

**NOTE – Engineers Canada will not be disclosing the evaluation scorecards or revealing Proposal / Bidder scores.**

**The decision of the team will be final and binding on all process participants. Engineers Canada reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted.**

## 4.3 RFP Dates and Deadlines

The following is a list of key events from RFP issuance through to the anticipated date the Project will commence:

| No. | Description | Key Dates |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Issuance of RFP | July 18, 2019 |
| 2 | Deadline for proposal submissions | August 14, 2019 |
| 3 | Assessment of Proposals (completed by) | August 23, 2019 |
| 4 | Selection of successful Bidder (subject to negotiation of contract) | August 30, 2019 |
| 5 | Service Agreement fully executed | March 31, 2020 |
| 6 | Estimated Project commencement date | September 10, 2019 |

### 4.4 How to Submit a Proposal

To be considered, proposals must be submitted electronically no later than August 14, 2019 at 11:59pm EST (the "**Proposal Submission Deadline**") to:

Lynn Villeneuve, Manager, Accreditation
Lynn.Villeneuve@EngineersCanada.ca
Engineers Canada
300-55 Metcalfe Street
Ottawa, ON, K1P 6L5

Any proposal submissions received after the Proposal Submission Deadline will not be considered and will be returned to sender unopened.

### 4.5 Inquiries

Questions concerning this RFP may be directed to Lynn Villeneuve at

Lynn.Villeneuve@EngineersCanada.ca

## 5. Confidentiality

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 members of the Review Team.

This RFP is, similarly, intended solely for the purposes of the Bidder and should not be further distributed to any party not involved in the preparation of the Bidder's proposal. The Review Team reserves the right to disqualify a Bidder from the selection process if any breach of confidence is determined by the Review Team or if information is used for purposes other than the submission of a proposal.

## 6. RFP Terms and Conditions

### 6.1 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 into a service agreement with a Bidder. Without limiting the foregoing, since this clause precludes Contract A, none of the usual Contract A terms applies, 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 agreement with any of the Bidders;
- Conduct negotiations with one or more Bidders;
- Cancel and reissue the RFP;
- Extend any of the stated dates and deadlines and/or amend the procurement process;
- Re-advertise for new submissions, or call for tenders for this work or for work of a similar nature.

Further, 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.**

## 6.2 Competitive Process

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

## 6.3 Proposal Revisions

All proposal revisions must be received by Engineers Canada prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline.

## 6.4 Cost of Preparing Proposals

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

## 6.5 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 (as set out in section 4.5) 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.

## 6.6 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.

## 6.7 Notification of Success

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

## 6.8 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 4.1, 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.

The full execution of a written service agreement will constitute a contract for the services, and no Bidder will acquire any legal or equitable rights or privileges relative to the services until a written Notice of Award has been delivered and a written agreement has been duly executed.

## 6.9 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 section 6.8, above.

## 6.10 Proposal Documents

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