



The Chiefs of Ontario

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

ISSUED January 26, 2012

PROJECT TITLE: Economic and Community Capacity Building Sessions for Ontario First Nations Economic Development Officers (EDOs)

CLOSING DATE: Thursday, February 2, 2012

CLOSING TIME: 5:00 p.m. EST

BACKGROUND

The Chiefs of Ontario (COO) is a coordinating body for 133 First Nation communities located within the boundaries of the Province of Ontario. The main objective of the Chiefs of Ontario is to facilitate the discussion, planning, implementation and evaluation of all local, regional and national matters affecting the First Nations people.

Most First Nations in Ontario are trying to take advantage of opportunities provided by land claims settlements, resource development, sustainable energy projects, and increasing demands from global interests. New ideas continue to push through the new economy into the laps of First Nations, and communities are beginning to assimilate mainstream business practice with their own culture and values more often in order to create jobs, improve opportunities for youth, and increase community wealth.

Each day, First Nations across the country face the realities of modern business practices and pressures. Although they have always had a rich history of entrepreneurship and economic development, First Nations traditions are often at odds with modern non-indigenous concepts of business. Chiefs and Council are concerned about capacity and sustainability in their communities: they want their members trained to become successful leaders and business owners, and they want their communities to become wealthy and full of opportunities—but not at the expense of their culture and their commitment to environmental stewardship.

Much of the responsibility for balancing these opposing forces—modern ideas of economic development versus traditional values and community resistance—falls on the shoulders of the Economic Development Officer (EDO). The EDO conducts research, formulates policies, works

with businesses and the community, networks with other partners, and manages programs to stimulate industrial and commercial business investment, tourism in urban and rural areas, and commercial or industrial products and services.

Yet studies have shown that, in spite of their incredibly important function, today's EDOs are simply not provided the training, knowledge, and resources needed to manage the myriad issues and opportunities with which communities must contend. Coupled with this lack of training is the fact that EDOs experience a relatively high turnover rate, and this creates even more gaps in local expertise.

Understanding economic and community capacity is one of an EDO's most important responsibilities. By understanding how community and strategic planning can help capitalize on economic opportunities, EDOs provide a remarkable service to their community and region:

- Help leadership to better understand important community issues
- Identify challenges and opportunities quickly and proactively
- Identify partnership opportunities within the community and region to promote economic development and sustainability
- Encourage cooperation among organizations and community members
- Support community participation by involving members and organizations from a wide cross-section of the community
- Determine the community's strengths, weaknesses, and economic growth potential, and to what extent the community is ready to capitalize on this potential
- Measure economic progress more accurately in order to implement the most effective economic development strategies
- Build capacity to take advantage of land use planning and resource development opportunities
- Increase understanding of community assets
- Prepare more successful funding proposals

The goal of this project, therefore, is to provide EDOs with the necessary, practical knowledge to strengthen capacity for community economic development planning, and to continue to build stronger partnerships between First Nations, government and industry.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The goal of the project is to coordinate four (4) regional economic and community capacity building sessions for Ontario First Nations EDOs. Each session will provide facilitated practical training, tools, resources, and expertise for approximately 25 EDOs (total of 100) in order to help them support economic sustainability and long-term capacity in their communities.

These sessions will not simply provide presentation-based information, but will challenge EDOs using interactive knowledge sharing and rigorous learning exercises to ensure that EDOs have the experience they need to make an immediate and long-term impact in their communities.

In order to help coordinate these sessions, COO is requesting proposals from qualified candidates to organize, administer and implement these training sessions. The candidate will provide a full range of coordinating activities, including work plan and agenda development, venue and transportation logistics, marketing and promotion, facilitated training, and follow-up reporting.

All of the sessions must be completed by **March 31, 2012**. The project, including follow-up and final reporting, must be completed by **April 27, 2012**.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The locations of the four sessions have been selected to reflect the general regional divisions for EDOs, and to provide easy access to the sessions for as many communities as possible. Although COO believes that these locations are ideal for this project, the successful candidate should feel free to suggest alternative locations.

Our intent is to host the sessions in the following locations:

- **Fort William First Nation**
- **Sioux Lookout**
- **Nipissing First Nation**
- **Six Nations of the Grand River**

Sessions will take place over two days, with the last half of the second day allocated for an optional site visit. This part of the day is optional so that EDOs who need to travel early are free to do so.

The sessions will be divided into **three** distinct sections:

- 1) Core Training Component
- 2) Case Study
- 3) Regional Issues

Most of the core training will be offered on Day 1. This part of the training will mostly be consistent in all four sessions. Day 1 will also introduce participants to the case study assignment that will be presented on Day 2. The focus for Day 2 will be regional issues and creating a community profile.

Networking will form an important part of the sessions. Participants will be encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities to share common issues and successes. The group case study

has been designed to encourage discussions about regional challenges facing EDOs, and will help them build their understanding of the importance of engaging their peers to solve common problems. One of the biggest challenges facing First Nations is the lack of communication between local and regional partners. This session has been designed to break down some of the persistent barriers that prevent EDOs from sharing with one another.

Each of the four facilitated sessions must be coordinated with the issues of the region in mind. The successful candidate will be responsible for facilitating the training and working directly with regional EDOs before each session to ensure that regional issues are considered in the agenda. Relevant economic development topics based on regional challenges and opportunities should be explored to ensure that each session is unique to that region and to those participants.

During lunch on Day 1 participants will gather for a networking exercise in which they will use a pre-developed survey to “interview” other participants about regional challenges and issues. The successful candidate must work with participants to help them complete the surveys, and then use the feedback to inform the discussions on Day 2.

Although much of the project has already been detailed and planned, the successful candidate will be expected to add input and make any changes that are deemed appropriate.

DRAFT AGENDA

Though parts of the agenda for each session will differ based on regional issues, the focus for all the sessions must be economic and community capacity building. The five workshop themes explore this topic:

- 1) Comprehensive Community Planning**
- 2) Strategic Planning for Economic Development**
- 3) Land Use Planning**
- 4) Community Readiness**
- 5) Community Economic Profiles**

These topics were selected based on feedback from the Ontario First Nations Economic Forum (OFNEF) and other similar First Nation economic initiatives, as well as through COO’s discussions with EDOs, community leaders, businesses, and provincial and federal governments.

EDOs have consistently told us that these are the areas in which they need the most expertise to build healthy First Nations economies.

The following section outlines the proposed agenda for the two-day sessions. The successful candidate will be expected to coordinate and implement this agenda, including facilitating, training, and arranging speakers.

<u>DAY 1 – STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</u>	
8:00 – 8:15	Drum/Elder opening prayer
8:15 – 8:30	Welcome remarks/session overview
8:30 – 8:45	Networking ice breaker
8:45 – 9:00	Introduction to group case study assignment
9:00 – 10:00	Comprehensive community planning (Part 1)
10:00 – 10:15	Health break
10:15 – 12:00	Comprehensive community planning (Part 2)
12:00 – 1:15	Networking lunch (survey interviews)
1:15 – 2:30	Assessing community readiness
2:30 – 3:15	Land use planning for economic development
3:15 – 3:30	Health break
3:30 – 4:00	Introduction to regional issues and survey results
4:00 – 5:00	Group assignment
<u>DAY 2 – COMMUNITY ECONOMIC PROFILE AND REGIONAL ISSUES</u>	
8:00 – 8:15	Day 1 summary
8:15 – 10:15	Developing effective community economic profiles
10:15 – 10:30	Health break
10:30 – 12:30	Facilitated regional issues roundtable
12:30 – 1:30	Networking lunch/presentation of group assignments
1:30 – 2:00	Wrap up/prizes/Elder closing prayer
2:00 – 4:00	*Optional site visit

KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS

- A comprehensive understanding of requirements for economic development training sessions
- The ability to translate the above knowledge into successful coordination of four regional economic and community capacity building sessions for Ontario EDOs
- Ability to provide training, conduct detailed research, and organize logistics in a demanding timeline
- Expertise in project management, training, facilitation, report writing and related techniques
- Strong writing, interpersonal and oral communication skills
- Organizational skills and detail orientation with an ability to understand the big picture
- Strong problem-solving skills
- Ability to exercise discretion and judgment in sensitive matters
- In-depth understanding of First Nations issues, priorities, challenges and perspectives related to economic and community capacity building
- Federal and provincial structures and their relationships with First Nations in Ontario

Preference will be given to candidates who also demonstrate:

- Previous experience working with First Nation clients and organizations, preferably in a community, political or regional capacity
- Previous experience providing training to EDOs related to economic and social development
- Knowledge of geographic limitations and travel restrictions of First Nations in Ontario

STATEMENT OF WORK

The successful candidate will work with COO to prepare a comprehensive work plan to coordinate the four community capacity building sessions. COO's role will be to administer the funding, prepare and manage the work plan and session agendas, work with the successful candidate to ensure an appropriate approach to each session, and to coordinate all aspects of the project and follow up. The successful candidate will be responsible for working with the communities to coordinate venue, food, travel and marketing, and will provide facilitated training during the sessions.

The successful candidate must work with COO and other organizations to ensure that PTOs, Tribal Councils, EDOs, and relevant First Nation organizations are engaged in the agenda and planning process; and that all EDOs are aware of the training and are provided enough time to arrange their schedules. This helps ensure that the regional issues are addressed in a proactive, grassroots way.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the following project activities:

- Work with COO to finalize work plan, timeline, agenda and participants list
- Prepare and manage the work plan and session agendas
- Arrange for speakers and invitations
- Finalize locations and work with the community EDO to ensure successful implementation
- Arrange all food, venue, travel and training logistics for each of the four locations
- Conduct marketing, outreach, surveys in order to attract EDO participants
- Provide facilitated training during the sessions based on agenda
- Arrange relevant site visit in location (if appropriate)
- Arrange for relevant speakers and invited guests
- Arrange Elder and drums (if available)
- Prepare local information packages, including personalized agendas or other options, as applicable
- Plan icebreaker activity and surveys
- Arrange prizes for group assignment
- Arrange gift items for speakers and Elder
- Coordinate registration
- Coordinate travel claims
- Provide a final report, including a Community Support Services Project Activity Report (COO will provide more details on this requirement)

CONTRACT DURATION AND BUDGET EXPECTATIONS

- The estimated duration of this contract will be **February 6, 2012 - April 27, 2012**.
- The budget for consulting fees only to deliver this project **will not exceed \$20,000**, inclusive of HST and travel expenses for successful candidate.
- **NOTE:** Costs related to travel, venue, accommodation, and similar expenses related to session participants will be covered separately by COO and should not be included in the proposed budget.

RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

- Bidders must describe how they would fulfill all requirements listed in the statement of work and how they meet the knowledge requirements.
- Bidders must provide a work plan that sets out the timeline for the tasks necessary to meet the requirements.
- Bidders must provide a budget that details each of the following costs separately (not exceeding \$20,000):
 - Consulting fees including hourly and per diem rates
 - Travel costs
 - HST
- Bidders must provide details of previous work examples of a similar nature and scope.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- Demonstrated experience in working with First Nation communities and organizations
- Demonstrated experience planning and organizing training sessions
- Quality, detail and completeness of the proposal
- Knowledge and understanding of economic development issues, particularly as they relate to First Nations
- Ability of bidder to accommodate the strict timelines of the project
- Value of proposal based on budget and outcomes
- Degree to which proposal meets the knowledge requirements

PROPOSAL DEADLINE AND FORMAT

Proposals must be received no later than **5:00 p.m. EST on Thursday, February 3, 2012**. Those received after this time may not be considered.

Proposals must be **no longer than 10 pages** (excluding appendices).

Proposals must be submitted in **electronic format by email**:

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