

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### Understanding Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Water Management Practices Across Canada: Phase 2

#### Water Management Committee Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) is the primary minister-led federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) intergovernmental forum for action on environmental issues of national and international concern. The 14 member governments work as partners in developing consistent environmental standards and practices.

Public servants responsible for water-related issues and management are increasingly seeking opportunities to learn how to work in pragmatic and respectful ways with Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). It is important for employees of FPT governments to understand how to practically honour, acknowledge and collaborate with Indigenous Knowledge Holders and their IKS in culturally appropriate and respectful ways.

Water Management Committee's Indigenous Knowledges Project Team (hereafter "the CCME Project Team") is undertaking work to:

- provide examples of practical applications of how to work alongside Indigenous Knowledge Holders and facilitate IKS in water management
- develop educational tools to support knowledge mobilization
- strengthen the competencies of FPT public servants responsible for water-related issues and management and in working with Indigenous Knowledge Holders and engaging with IKS in water management
- deepen awareness, understanding and appreciation for how working with Indigenous Peoples and IKS can enhance the work of FPT public servants responsible for water-related issues and management.

## 2.0 STATEMENT OF WORK

The Contractor will design, deliver and evaluate a pilot series of webinars and accompanying knowledge mobilization tools to build the competencies of FPT public servants involved in:

- water management (e.g., monitoring, licensing and regulation)
- water research
- water policy development
- making recommendations to decision-makers on water issues in working with Indigenous Knowledge Holders and engaging with IKS in water management.

### 3.0 SCOPE OF WORK

The project will commence by July 14, 2026 and conclude by June 9, 2027.

The Contractor will require experience working directly with First Nations, Inuit and Métis distinctions and FPT governments preferably in relation to IKS and water policy and management. Indigenous representatives on the contract team and/or affiliations with Indigenous organizations will be considered during the evaluation of proposals.

The Contractor must be able to demonstrate a working knowledge of the application of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Ownership, Control Access, and Possession (OCAP) to the development and implementation of projects relating to Indigenous Peoples.

The audience for the webinars and associated knowledge mobilization tools are public servants responsible for water-related issues and management as described above.

Bidders are encouraged to explain what is achievable with the available budget. Webinars and associated knowledge mobilization tools can take many forms and bidders should clearly describe how their skills align with their proposed approach (e.g., graphic design, and/or video production).

Bilingualism (English and French) will be considered an asset but not a requirement. At least one webinar will be delivered in both English and French and all other webinars will be delivered in English. CCME will arrange for interpretation services. All knowledge mobilization tools will be produced in English. CCME will translate the knowledge mobilization tools for the webinar(s) delivered in English and French.

Draft deliverables will be prepared and submitted with content and quality as if they were final, including grammar, tone, logical process flow, proper citation, consistency and technical contents and provided to the CCME Project Team in an editable format.

#### 3.1 Tasks

Without limiting the scope of work, the Contractor shall carry out the main items of work as described herein.

##### Task 1: Project Initiation Meeting

The Contractor, Project Authority and Contract Authority will meet via videoconference within a week of the signing of the contract to discuss and agree upon the scope of the project, expectations for deliverables and periodic reports, format of deliverables and expected timelines.

Prior to the project initiation meeting, the Contract Authority will provide the Contractor with a copy of an internal report resulting from an earlier phase of work on this topic area.

## Task 2: Discovery and Co-design

To ensure the Contractor develops a strong understanding of the needs of the audience, the Contractor will co-develop the following with the CCME Project Team:

- learning objectives
- approach to recognizing the diversity of IKS across First Nations, Inuit and Métis distinctions within Canada
- approach to identifying, contacting and working with Indigenous Knowledge Holders
- format and story board of webinars and associated knowledge mobilization tools
- webinar schedule
- methodology (e.g., pre and post surveys with webinar attendees) to understand the impact of the webinars (see Task 4 for specifics).

By July 21, 2026, the Contractor will **suggest a process for working with the CCME Project Team** and an appropriate timeline for meeting regularly with the CCME Project Team through June and July 2026 to produce the above listed items.

Based on the co-development meetings, the Contractor will provide a **draft project plan and schedule**, to the Project Authority and Contract Authority by September 11, 2026. The Project Authority will provide the **CCME Project Team's comments on the draft project plan** by October 2, 2026.

By October 16, 2026 the Contractor will provide to the Project Authority and Contract Authority the **final project plan**.

## Task 3: Create and Deliver Webinars and Knowledge Mobilization Tools

The Contractor will create and deliver a minimum of three and a maximum of five webinars, one to two hours in length. The Contractor may determine the dates of the webinars to be delivered between October 16, 2026 and March 26, 2027.

The webinars are designed to enhance the competencies of FPT public servants responsible for water-related issues and management. They aim to strengthen participants' ability to collaborate with Indigenous Knowledge Holders and effectively engage with Indigenous Knowledge Systems in water management, while fostering a deeper awareness, understanding, and appreciation of working with Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge systems.

The aims of the Webinars include:

- provide examples of practical applications of how to work alongside Indigenous Knowledge Holders and facilitate IKS in water management
- support knowledge mobilization.

Potential topics for webinars may include Indigenous perspectives on water, Indigenous-led water initiatives, community-based water management and approaches to working across knowledge systems.

Webinars may include live presentations, pre-recorded elements and/or use of existing sources but will not rely entirely on existing materials. The webinars will include a short question and answer session for webinar attendees. The Contractor must ensure they have obtained the necessary permissions and consent from Indigenous Knowledge Holders and follow the necessary protocols.

The Contractor will ensure that all FPT governments can access the webinars (MS office and Adobe products). The Contractor will confirm the webinar hosting platform with the project team. CCME can facilitate the use of Microsoft Teams if needed. The CCME Project Team will be responsible for sharing the invitation and meeting link with FPT public servants responsible for water-related issues and management.

For each webinar, the Contractor will prepare associated knowledge mobilization tools (e.g., factsheets, links to additional resources, reflection questions, infographics, supporting visuals, case studies, land-based videos with Elders). Webinars and associated knowledge mobilization tools will be packaged in a way to be shared broadly within FPT governments while respecting ownership and ethical and meaningful ongoing consent from Indigenous Knowledge Holders.

For each webinar, the Contractor will provide a preliminary presentation to the CCME Project Team along with draft associated knowledge mobilization tools. The Contractor will address feedback and comments prior to delivering the final webinars and associated knowledge mobilization tools.

#### Task 4: Evaluation and Report

The Contractor will propose a methodology (e.g., pre and post surveys with webinar attendees) to understand the impact of the webinars, and the ongoing learning needs and interests of FPT public servants responsible for water-related issues and management.

The Contractor will conduct the evaluation and develop a brief report of the findings and options to address the learning and knowledge exchange needs and interests of FPT public servants responsible for water-related issues and management.

The Contractor will provide the Project Authority and Contract Authority with a draft report by April 23, 2027. The Project Authority will provide the CCME Project Team's comments on the draft report by May 14, 2027.

The Contractor will revise the report based on the CCME Project Team's comments and provide a final report by June 4, 2027.

#### Task 5: Project Close Meeting

The Contractor, Project Authority and Contract Authority will meet by June 9, 2027 to review the project to identify successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement.

### 3.2 Payment and Deliverables

Payments will be based upon the Contractor's completion of tasks and as evidenced by the production of the specified deliverables listed below. Payments will be made only after receipt of such deliverables and acceptance thereof by the Project Authority and the Contract Authority. Except as otherwise specifically provided for herein or in the professional services contract entered into with CCME, CCME will not be required to pay for partially completed tasks or for any additional work that may be required that the Contractor may not have budgeted for in its proposal. CCME shall not be committed to any other basis of payment by virtue of CCME having requested or received information regarding the Contractor's method of determining its bid for the completion of the Project, including, without limitation, any information regarding estimates of time spent and hourly rates of the Contractor's employees, contractors and agents involved in the Project.

Payment will be made by CCME via electronic funds transfer (TelPay is CCME's current provider) to the Contractor according to the following schedule, subject to the deliverables listed below having been received and accepted by the Project Authority and the Contract Authority, and invoices having been submitted by the Contractor, and approved by the Project Authority and the Contract Authority. The Contractor will provide all necessary information to enable electronic funds transfers before initiating work on the project. If the electronic payment information provided by the contractor is incorrect and results in a returned payment, the Contractor will be responsible for reimbursing CCME for the service fees charged by CCME's electronic funds transfer provider.

<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Payment Amount</b> (% of contract value, inclusive of all applicable taxes)	<b>Target Date</b>
Task 1: Project Initiation Meeting Task 2: Discovery and Co-design and project plan and schedule	25%	October 16, 2026
Task 3: Webinars and Knowledge Mobilization Tools Task 4: Evaluation and Report first draft	25%	April 23, 2027
Task 4: Final Report Task 5: Project Close Meeting	50%	June 9, 2027

The Contractor agrees to initiate work on the project by July 14, 2026.

The Contractor must provide all deliverables in electronic format to the Project Authority and Contract Authority no later than the dates specified above. Knowledge mobilization tools must be provided in a file format that is accessible to all FPT governments. All records, including but not limited to knowledge mobilization tools, documents, reports, briefing notes and correspondence, generated by the contractor during the course of this project must be prepared and provided in English using *Microsoft Word* for word processing, *Microsoft Excel* for data management, and *Microsoft PowerPoint* for presentations and other graphics.

The ownership and intellectual property rights of all Indigenous Knowledges belong to the Indigenous nation, community, or individual Knowledge Holder, as determined by their respective laws, customs, and protocols. CCME and the Contractor will respect and not assert ownership rights over Indigenous Knowledges and cultural intellectual property rights. A Contractor who collects Indigenous Knowledges and/or cultural intellectual property (e.g., recordings, transcripts, maps, or any other materials that contain or reproduce Indigenous Knowledges) must consult with and obtain consent from the relevant traditional custodians before using such Indigenous Knowledges and/or cultural intellectual property, regardless of any current or future legislative enactments or otherwise. The Contractor must advise the Project Authority of any information provided by a third party on a confidential basis for the purpose of the study and is to transmit the original documents containing any such information to the Contract Authority and Project Authority under separate cover.

All discussion papers, reports and correspondence produced by the Contractor are subject to review by people designated by the Project Authority. The Contractor must perform all work to the satisfaction of the Project Authority and the CCME Project Team.

Sufficient flexibility is required of the Contractor to respond to changing schedules and developments.

### **3.3 Budget**

The maximum budget for this project is \$30,000.00 Canadian, inclusive of all fees, expenses and applicable taxes; proposals in excess of the maximum budget will not be considered. Proposed professional fees must be inclusive of all office and administrative costs. Project-specific expenses such as travel costs, gestures of reciprocity for Elders and Indigenous Knowledge Holders where required, must be estimated and included in the total estimated cost of the project. These project-specific expenses may be billed on an “as incurred” (or monthly) basis and payment will be made after written confirmation from the Project Authority that the expenses were authorized and approved. The Contractor must supply reasonable and adequate documentation to support the expense claims. Travel-related expenses must follow *CCME Guidelines for Reimbursement of Expenses*.

Bidders from HST jurisdictions are advised that CCME’s office is located in Winnipeg, Manitoba and accordingly only GST should be applied.

## 4.0 PROPOSALS

**4.1** The proposal shall not exceed a maximum of 10 pages in length, excluding appendices. The proposal must:

- Provide an outline of the intended approach including basic tasks, schedule of activities, and budget.
- Describe the personnel of the contract team, areas of responsibility, time allotted and charge out rates.
- Document contingent procedures and personnel to be used if key team members become unavailable.
- Provide a brief description of any similar projects undertaken. Include the timeframe that the work was undertaken and key individuals involved in its completion.
- Include the names and contact information of three references.
- Include as an appendix *curricula vitae* and contact information of key team members.
- Include as an appendix:
  - the bidder's legal name and mailing address
  - the name and contact information of the bidder's authorized signing officer
  - the name and contact information for the bidder's administrator of the contract if different from the signing officer
  - the bidder's GST registration number or if exempt, proof of exempt status.

**4.2** Personal information requested above is required to enable CCME to evaluate the proposal. All individuals noted in the proposal should be advised of and approve the release of personal information for the purpose of the proposal and the bidder is responsible for obtaining such approval.

**4.3** The Contractor shall not, without written consent of CCME, subcontract any obligation of the Contractor.

## 5.0 CONDITIONS

**5.1** CCME reserves the right in its sole discretion to consider or reject any and all proposals. CCME reserves the further right to extend the deadline for proposals and to add, delete and/or change the terms of this Request for Proposals (RFP) and issue corrections and amendments to it. CCME has made every effort to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the information contained in this RFP. CCME shall not be liable for any errors or omissions or responsible for any bidder interpretations or conclusions regarding the information contained in this RFP. Contractors who submit proposals will not acquire any legal or equitable rights or privileges whatsoever until a contract is signed with CCME. CCME will not pay any compensation for the preparation of the proposal and all proposals become the property of CCME.

**5.2** The successful bidder is required to agree to a professional services contract with CCME. A sample CCME professional services contract is posted with this RFP. Bidders must identify in their proposals any changes requested to CCME's sample professional services contract and CCME reserves the right in its sole discretion to consider, accept, reject or amend such requested changes. CCME further reserves the right to revoke any offer to enter into a professional services

contract. As part of a commitment to environmentally-sound business practice, it is CCME's practice to prepare, sign and transmit contracts electronically.

### **5.3 Proposal Deadline**

The Contract Authority must receive proposals no later than 12:00 noon Central Daylight Time, June 23, 2026; proposals received after the deadline will not be considered. The time stamp on CCME's email server shall be deemed to be conclusive evidence of time of receipt.

### **5.4 Method of Submission**

Bidders must submit proposals by email to the Contract Authority in an unsecured electronic format, file size to be no larger than 8.0 MB, compatible with *Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat*.

### **5.5 Ineligible Bidders**

The following organizations and individuals, and organizations proposing such individuals as part of a contract team, are ineligible to bid on this project:

- 5.5.1 Federal, provincial and territorial governments and all their departments and ministries and Crown corporations, boards, commissions and agencies and any officials and employees of them.
- 5.5.2 Members of the House of Commons and provincial and territorial legislative assemblies.
- 5.5.3 Persons providing administrative and related services to the CCME group responsible for the project.
- 5.5.4 Members and participants of CCME committees and groups, and for a period of six months after such membership ends.

## **6.0 CONTACTS**

Prospective bidders should direct questions to the Contract Authority.

### **6.1 Contract Authority**

Zoë St. Aubin  
Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment  
123 Main Street, Suite 360  
Winnipeg, MB R3C 1A3  
Tel: (204) 792-7712  
Email: [ZStAbin@ccme.ca](mailto:ZStAbin@ccme.ca)

## 6.2 Project Authority

Natasha Beeds  
 Canada Water Agency  
 510-234 Donald Street  
 Winnipeg MB RC31M6  
 Email: [natasha.beeds@cwa-aec.gc.ca](mailto:natasha.beeds@cwa-aec.gc.ca)

## 7.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

All assessments and weighting of criteria is at the sole discretion of CCME. The CCME Project Team will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

### Technical and Management Proposal Evaluation Criteria

<b>TECHNICAL PROPOSAL</b>	<b>Score</b>
Demonstrated understanding of the project scope and objectives	10
Technical approach and methodology to meet project objectives	10
Work plan feasibility and organization	10
Recognition of possible problems, proposed solutions and additional innovative suggestions	10
<b>MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL</b>	
Experience and qualification of Program/Project Manager, including experience working directly with Indigenous Peoples in the setting of water policy and management and understanding of the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Ownership, Control Access, and Possession</i> .	15
Experience and qualifications of contract team members, and alternate team members in case of unforeseen availability:	10
(a) qualifications of team members	
(b) depth and breadth of the team’s experience working directly with Indigenous Peoples in the setting of water policy and management and understanding of the <i>United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Ownership, Control Access, and Possession</i> .	
(c) depth and breadth of individual team members experience in similar assignments	
Experience of organization in similar assignments	15

Experience working with a range of stakeholders, FPT governments and rights holders	15
Ability to communicate effectively and to provide leadership/ coordination/ management under multi-partnership team setting	10
Value for money	10
<b>COMPLETENESS OF PROPOSAL</b>	
All information described in section 4.1 has been provided	10
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE</b>	<b>125</b>

## 8.0 AWARD OF CONTRACT

The CCME Project Team will determine award of the contract by July 7, 2026. The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted.

Upon award, the work must proceed on a timely basis as outlined in the table of deliverables. The successful proponent must not commence work until a contract is in place.

Contractors can view the status of this project on the CCME website, [www.ccme.ca](http://www.ccme.ca), on the What's New page.