



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Adaptation and integration of technology to advance equality, and inclusion of client engagement.

About COSTI:

Established in 1952, COSTI Immigrant Services is a community-based diverse organization providing employment, educational, settlement, skills training and social services to new Canadians and individuals in need of assistance. COSTI is committed to creating a community where there is respect and equity for all. The integration of non-discriminatory and anti-racist principles and practices is fundamental to operationalizing principles of social justice and support of COSTI's Vision and Values.

With a staff of over 450 people, speaking more than 68 languages, COSTI strives to ensure that all individuals, regardless of language, cultural, or financial barriers, are given the opportunity to use their existing skills, learn new ones, and participate in all aspects of Canadian life.

Background:

The global pandemic necessitated modifying the delivery of services to a virtual model to ensure the safety of our users and staff. COSTI provides services to refugees, newcomers, immigrants, small and medium-sized employers, and others with specialized needs. Many clients already have cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic challenges. This shift of in-house programming to virtual services delivery through technological tools negatively impacted clients due to their lack of knowledge, ability, and accessibility to connect remotely. Where possible, our curriculum for in-person workshops was converted into webinars, and individual assessments and counselling sessions transitioned to virtual sessions. The pandemic affected COSTI's ability to provide services to none tech-savvy clients.

Challenges continue in the re-opening of in-person services under the pandemic. While some clients are ready to begin receiving services onsite, others are still hesitant with the ongoing resurgence of the new strain and prefer the virtual option. Meeting clients' diverse preferences simultaneously while keeping all participants safe requires greater flexibility in our service delivery model. Appropriate equipment and knowledge on the part of the employees are needed.

To reduce inequity, COSTI is looking at returning to work through a new lens that upholds sustainability in the long-term economic recovery and supports improving our clients' well-being and accessibility to essential services.

With financial support from the **Ontario Trillium Foundation Resilient Communities Fund**, COSTI will "build back better" and focus on long-term outcomes for growth and resilience. The proposed technology will benefit our services now and transcend into future provision.

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1. Project Scope:

COSTI will introduce a hybrid service delivery model for group services offering in-person and online delivery simultaneously. This method will assist in delivering similar messages and provide a synchronized progression through the program or in-class curriculum.

COSTI will adapt the delivery of programs and services by incorporating interactive video capabilities in delivering workshops, seminars, English classes, and employment workshops in real-time. The feature will have an interactive component/experience with clients and students. The concurrent virtual and in-person delivery will provide services to meet the community's needs, employers, and other stakeholders and provide the opportunity to be ready notwithstanding COVID-19 or in case of any other future challenges/issues.

Procure equipment or modify spaces to meet the needs of the organization to be able to deliver its programs and services safely and/or to adapt to new ways of working (e.g. equipment to meet changing technology, health and safety, and service delivery requirements)

2. Project Deliverables:

- a) A proposed framework with an implementation plan within one month of contracting. Clear Timelines and framework, which include:
 - i. Training plan for frontline staff
 - ii. Client/user feedback
 - iii. Key informant interviews with managers and staff of programs at the pilot sites
 - iv. Analysis of client outcomes, program effectiveness, and potential areas for improvement
 - v. Recommend options for the development of the service delivery framework
- b) Coordination of installation (as needed) and setup (flexible, stationary and mobile) of hardware for the Hybrid delivery in collaboration with COSTI's IT Department.
- c) Training plan – Technical knowledge (in the form of notes, manuals, and knowledge-based articles) and video tutorials
- d) A final report with recommendations for maintenance and systems upgrade over the next three years.

3. Requested funds should not exceed \$24,000 including HST

4. How to prepare and submit a proposal in reply to this tender

Submissions should be presented in a digital file (Word, PDF, etc.) format and must include the following elements as part of their proposal:

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- **COVER LETTER**
 - Briefly describe the proposed team structure, relevant experience, and qualifications.

- **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Provide the applicant's full name, organization (if relevant); contact information, including business address, phone number, email, and website (if applicable).

- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT/IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE**

Provide brief narrative examples of the applicant's experience with other organizations seeking this type of document/strategy. Include samples of previous reports or recommendations developed for similar projects.

- **SCOPE OF WORK**

Provide a concise proposal that outlines how the applicant intends to provide the services requested in this CFP. Describe the process for conducting the necessary assessment, ethical considerations, outputs, and a tentative timeline/work plan for implementation.

- **BUDGET**

Provide a proposed budget for the scope of work, including an estimated number of hours. As part of the proposed budget, list each individual who may perform services and their title, the proposed hourly rate, and the level of involvement anticipated for each component. Please identify the expected required hours to fulfill this CFP.

All costs and fees must be clearly described in each proposal. If the organization submitting a proposal must outsource or contract any work to meet the requirements contained herein, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Any submissions which call for outsourcing or contracting work must include a name and description of the organizations being contracted.

Additionally, all costs included in the proposals must be all-inclusive, including any outsourced or contracted work and applicable taxes.

- **REFERENCES and/or TESTIMONIALS**

Provide references and/or testimonials from two previous clients, preferably those who have utilized the applicant's services on matters related to project management implementation at their organization.

5. Competencies:

- Understanding of adult facilitation principles.

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- Familiarity with new trends in delivery of hybrid services.
- Knowledge of technical requirements for hybrid delivery events.

6. Timeframe:

- Duration of the project is seven months, starting in November 2022.
- This assignment must be completed by the end of May 2023.

7. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

COSTI will evaluate all proposals based on the following criteria, and to ensure consideration for this Call for Proposals, your proposal should be complete and include all the following criteria:

- Overall proposal suitability: the proposed plan must meet the scope and needs included herein and be presented in a clear and organized manner;
- Organizational and individual experience: applicants will be evaluated on their organizational experience as it pertains to the scope of this project;
- Previous work: Applicants will be evaluated on examples of their work pertaining to the delivery of virtual applications, reports and/or plans, as well as client testimonials and references;
- Value and cost: Applicants will be evaluated on the cost of their solution(s) based on the work to be performed in accordance with the scope of this project;
- Priority consideration will be given to applicants familiar with the work of COSTI. Please indicate in your application your knowledge and familiarity with our work.

8. Application deadline

All proposals in response to this CFP are due no later than October 30 at 11:59 PM EDT. Any submissions received after this date and time will not be considered. All proposals must be signed by an official agent or company representative submitting the proposal.

Questions during the preparation of the proposal

A prospective bidder requiring clarification may contact

Janet Hallett Senior Director Planning and Program Development Janet.Hallett@costi.org no later than **February 13, 2023**.

Applicants should submit their proposal to:

Janet Hallett Senior Director Planning and Program Development Janet.Hallett@costi.org

[Click here to learn more about COSTI's Programs and Services.](#)

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Read about COSTI's Board of Directors [here](#) and our Leadership Team [here](#).

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