



## CALL FOR THIRD PARTY EVALUATION

### **Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services (N.E.E.D.S.) Inc.**

251-A Notre Dame Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 1N8

#### **INTRODUCTION**

*Maintaining Effective Volunteer Engagement in Serving Newcomer Youth Remotely* is a 2.5-year project operated by Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services (N.E.E.D.S.) Inc. and funded by Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

The main objective of the project is to maintain effective volunteer engagement. The project will generate evidence for effective strategies for using technology to ensure that engagement and contribution of volunteers are uninterrupted in the remote delivery of the IRCC Settlement Program.

This will be done by:

- An approach to recruit volunteers using technology
- An approach to train volunteers digitally
- An approach to monitor and supervise volunteers remotely
- An approach for volunteers to train newcomers remotely in digital literacy and troubleshooting with remote communication technology and tools.

Expected outcomes of the project are:

- Technology is used to maintain effective, remote volunteer engagement
- The engagement and contribution of volunteers in the remote delivery of IRCC Settlement Programs are uninterrupted
- Partners deliver responsive and coordinated settlement and community services.

**(N.E.E.D.S.) Inc. is seeking an External Evaluator** to complete a separate, comprehensive, third-party final project evaluation of this project to assess its success in accomplishing its stated objectives and achieving the intended outcomes.

#### **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services (N.E.E.D.S.) Inc. is a non-profit, charitable organization that provides accessible services and supports to newcomer and refugee children, youth, and their families. N.E.E.D.S. Inc. was established in 1999 by immigrant and refugee women for newcomers to Canada. Our goal is to enhance the integration of newcomers into Canadian society by providing employment, mentorship, education, and social recreational programs as a means to assisting clients in the development of life skills, confidence, and positive social support networks.

N.E.E.D.S. Inc. received a grant from IRCC for Maintaining Effective Volunteer Engagement in Serving Newcomer Youth Remotely project which began on November 12, 2021 and will end on March 31, 2024. To implement the project, N.E.E.D.S. Inc. will engage in an evidence-based approach to maintain

effective volunteer engagement in the remote delivery of settlement services to newcomer youth. Settlement services heavily depend on volunteers and with the onset of the pandemic, several SPOs had to alter their existing mode of delivery. Conventionally, volunteers were recruited through in-person presentations in educational institutions and community organizations and participation in volunteer fairs. However, the conventional approach to volunteer engagement has largely become impracticable during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the project is designed to build knowledge and evidence about the most effective strategies of using technology, community resources and partners to ensure continued recruitment, engagement, and retention of volunteers to support remote delivery of settlement services.

The Project requires a separate third-party evaluation. The amount budgeted for third-party evaluation is \$30,000 over three fiscal years (FY 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24).

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

The evaluation should investigate the following areas:

- (a) Assessment of the implementation of the projects
  - If each activity of the project was implemented as planned
  - The extent to which the volume of services was delivered under each activity
  - The extent to which the project reached the targeted numbers of volunteers and clients
  
- (b) Examination of the attainment of intended outcomes
  - If technology was used to maintain effective, remote volunteer engagement
  - If the approaches were effectively tested to generate evidence for an innovative model for effective volunteer engagement in remote delivery of settlement services.
  - If the project was found effective in ensuring uninterrupted engagement and contributions of volunteers in the remote delivery of IRCC Settlement Programs
  - If the project has generated evidence for effective strategies of using technology to ensure that engagement and contribution of volunteers are uninterrupted in the remote delivery of the IRCC Settlement Program.
  - If the project can be scaled up as a COVID-resilient approach to effective volunteer engagement in the delivery of IRCC Settlement Services.
  
- (c) Identification of strengths and successes of the projects
  - Identify strengths in resources, management, delivery of services, partnering, and achieving outcomes if any
  - Comparative analysis of volunteer engagement approaches of similar SPOs during the pandemic
    - The comparative analysis will include a review of approaches adopted by similar SPOs to continue volunteer engagement in the delivery of settlement services during the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - The comparative analysis will examine the relative effectiveness of the N.E.E.D.S Inc.'s approach to volunteer engagement with the approaches adopted by other local SPOs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- (d) Identification of limitations of the projects
  - Identify limitations of the projects in resources, management, and delivery of services, partnering, and achieving outcomes if any
  - Comparative analysis of the identified limitations with similar SPOs in terms of similar objectives and activities
  
- (e) Identification of the challenges of the projects
  - Challenges with program organization
  - Challenges with program delivery
  - Challenges with resources
  - Challenges related to the targeted program participants
  - Challenges in the engagement of partners
  
- (f) Identification of the lessons learned through implementing the project
  
- (g) Identification of the areas requiring further improvement and provision of recommendations for the sustainability and scale up of the project.

The External Evaluator is expected to use project-related administrative data as well as collect additional data from relevant stakeholders (clients, staff, management, partners, local SPOs etc.) using various methods such as surveys, interviews and focus groups to complete the evaluation while respecting local COVID-19 health protocols and regulations. The external evaluator will provide a comparative analysis of service providing agencies who deliver similar services to similar clients and rely on community volunteers in delivering their services. A final evaluation report must be submitted by March 31, 2024.

## **VENDOR QUESTIONS**

Inquiries regarding this project should be directed to Dr. Mahmudur Bhuiyan, Senior R & D Manager, NEEDS Inc., 251-A Notre Dame Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3B 1N8, email: mahmud@needsinc.ca, phone: (431) 388-1580.

## **EVALUATION PROJECT MILESTONES**

Estimated milestones for the evaluation project are as follows:

- Evaluation project start date: March 01, 2022
- Development of a comprehensive evaluation framework along with necessary tools and timeline: May 31, 2022
- Starting implementation of the evaluation framework: June 15, 2022
- Submission of evaluation progress report: February 15, 2023
- Draft evaluation report submission: February 10, 2024
- Final evaluation report submission: March 15, 2024

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Please submit:

(1) A **letter of proposal** which should include the following information about your:

- a) educational and professional background related to program evaluation
- b) previous experiences of third-party program evaluation
- c) examples of successful completion of multi-year projects evaluation in the past
- d) name and contact information

(2) **Your resume**

(3) A **primary evaluation outline** including sufficient details about your initial thoughts about the steps, methods, timeline for conducting the evaluation.

## **DEADLINE FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION**

Proposals should be submitted to *Dr. Mahmudur Bhuiyan* via email at [mahmud@needsinc.ca](mailto:mahmud@needsinc.ca) by **February 15, 2022**.