

Photo credit: Tumi Tours/Nanuq Lodge
Picture of Jackie Nakooluk and his grandson, Nash



FOREWORD

We are pleased to present, on behalf of the Departments of Community and Government Services (CGS) and Economic Development and Transportation (EDT), this latest Government of Nunavut Reference Guide entitled “*Doing Business with the Government of Nunavut*”. The Reference Guide is intended to support the government’s ongoing efforts to enhance the clarity and transparency of its procurement activities and to assist local businesses by providing a plain language guide to the Government of Nunavut’s procurement policies and procedures.

This Reference Guide represents the first step of a broader initiative under the Department of Community and Government Services’ Procurement, Logistics & Contract Support Division to work closely with the Nunavut business community to enhance the understanding of the role it plays in the planning and delivery of procurement support services for the Government of Nunavut. This Reference Guide focuses on the perspective of the vendor community and will assist local vendors as they respond to Government of Nunavut calls for Tenders and Requests for Proposals.

This guide also contributes to a government-wide effort, coordinated by the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, to reduce “barriers to business” in the territory. It is an important companion document to the government’s *Guide to Starting a Business in Nunavut*. Together, both guides support the government’s commitment to the growth of private business and to the strengthening of its role in the territorial economy.

This Reference Guide will be regularly updated to ensure it reflects current government procurement practices. We are hopeful that it will serve as a helpful reference for your business. Your comments and feedback are always appreciated and will be used to improve future versions of the Reference Guide.

Thank you



We want to help you do business with us.

PURPOSE

Each year the Government of Nunavut (GN) enters into contracts with suppliers for a wide range of goods and services – anything from office supplies to specialized medical equipment. We replace flooring, purchase vehicles and many other goods and services necessary to maintain government operations and provide programs and services for Nunavummiut. We buy many of these goods and services directly from Nunavut businesses. If you own or operate a business in Nunavut, we want to help you do business with us.

This Reference Guide is designed to help you understand the government procurement process. Should you require any additional information or assistance, please contact:

Manager

Procurement, Logistics & Contract Support Services Division
Department of Community and Government Services
Government of Nunavut
(867) 975-5427 direct
(867) 975-5450 fax
procurement@gov.nu.ca

Senior Buyers

Procurement, Logistics & Contract Support Services Division
Department of Community and Government Services
Government of Nunavut
(867) 975-5838 or
(867) 975-5406
(867) 975-5450 fax
procurement@gov.nu.ca

Contracts Advisor

Procurement, Logistics & Contract Support Services Division
Department of Community and Government Services
Government of Nunavut
(867) 975-5415
(867) 975-5450 fax
procurement@gov.nu.ca



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Objectives	4
Approach	5
Nunavummi Nangminiaqtunik Ikajuuti (NNI Policy)	5
Government Contract Regulations	10
Procurement Policies and Thresholds	10
Procurement Methods	12
Public Advertising	18
Business Resources	19
How to Respond to Requests for Proposals	22
The RFP Evaluation Process	32
The RFP Debriefing Process	34
NNI Policy Appeal and Procedures (NNI Appeals Process)	35
Glossary of Terms	37



OBJECTIVES

A Contract Authority is set out in the Financial Administration Act and its accompanying Regulations and refers to a Minister, Deputy Minister or designated public officer of a GN department. Only Contract Authorities may enter into contracts on behalf of the GN.

In the Department of Community and Government Services (CGS), we play the lead role in meeting the Government of Nunavut (GN)'s procurement requirements for goods and services. In particular, the department is recognized as a "Contract Authority" for securing goods and most services purchased by the government. With our specialized procurement expertise, CGS is directly responsible for most government procurement as well as assisting business to understand the procurement process and providing other government departments with advice and guidance about procurement and contracting practices.

Services provided by CGS's Procurement, Logistics & Contract Support Services Division include:

- Providing technical advice for businesses concerning the application of GN procurement policies and procedures;
- Management of the procurement process for a wide range of goods and services (including sealift logistical support services);
- Administration of tenders and requests for proposals for GN departments, and/or providing assistance as required;
- Working closely with the *Nunavummi Nangminiqaqtunik Ikajuuti* (NNI) Secretariat in the Department of Economic Development and Transportation (EDT) and participating on the NNI Working Group;¹
- Providing businesses with guidance and support with respect to understanding the proposal evaluation and bid adjustment process;
- Reporting on the GN's contracting and procurement activities;
- Delivering workshops, presentations, training and development to help businesses understand the procurement process; and
- Providing logistics and management of GN sealift operations.

¹ CGS' Purchasing, Logistics and Contract Support Services Division provides advice and guidance to the NNI Working Group from a procurement perspective, ensuring any changes to GN purchasing policies are consistent with procurement practices and would not unduly or negatively impact the buying power of the GN.



APPROACH

The GN's procurement process strives to obtain the best value for Nunavummiut. In order to preserve the integrity of the competitive process, the evaluation of responses is undertaken objectively, consistently and without bias towards any particular supplier.

Two primary processes are used to procure goods and services and to ensure the fairness of the process. They are:

Request For Proposal (RFP) responses are evaluated against a pre-determined published set of criteria in the RFP documents, with a contract awarded to the proposal that receives the highest score from a qualified proponent. Weighting of criteria is determined before responses are received for evaluation and form part of the RFP document. Inuit content is a mandatory rating criterion, carrying a minimum weight of 15% in accordance with the NNI Policy. This process provides evaluation committees with the right tools for a fair, transparent, accountable and unbiased method of awarding government contracts.

Request For Tender (RFT) responses are awarded based on the lowest price received from "responsible and qualified" bidders. In complying with all the specifications of the tender, the only criterion for evaluating bids is price.

RFPs and RFTs are explained further under the "Procurement Methods" section of this Guide.

All CGS procurement staff also adhere to the GN Code of Conduct and the Purchasing Management Association of Canada's *Professional Code of Ethics*.

NUNAVUMMI NANGMINIQAQTUNIK IKAJUUTI (NNI POLICY)

On April 1, 2000, the GN established the *Nunavummi Nangminiqagtunik Ikajuuti* (NNI Policy) in conjunction with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) as a tool to facilitate and strengthen the development of the Nunavut economy while encouraging representative participation of Inuit and Nunavut-based business interests in meeting the GN's procurement requirements for goods and services. The NNI Policy is applied to all GN procurement methods regardless of the contract value.

Two primary processes are used to procure goods and services and to ensure fairness of the process – Request For Proposal and Request For Tender.

The GN's business incentive policy, *Nunavummi Nangminiqagtunik Ikajuuti*, encourages participation of Inuit and Nunavut-based business interests in meeting the government's procurement requirements.



The Policy has the following objectives:

1. Good Value and Fair Competition

To secure goods and services for the GN at the best value, recognizing the higher cost of doing business in Nunavut, and using a contracting process that is clear, fair and equitable.

2. Strengthening the Nunavut Economy

To build the economy of Nunavut and its communities by strengthening business sector capacity and increasing employment.

3. Inuit Participation

To bring about a level of Inuit participation in the provision of goods and services to the GN that reflects the Inuit proportion of the Nunavut population.

4. Nunavut Education and Training

To increase the number of trained and skilled Nunavut residents in all parts of the workforce and business community to levels that reflect the Inuit proportion of the Nunavut population.

Businesses interested in contracting with the GN to meet its requirements for goods and services are encouraged to review the NNI Policy at www.gov.nu.ca/nunavut/nni/nni.pdf and to contact the NNI Secretariat at the Department of Economic Development and Transportation for further information on how to register as a qualified Inuit or Nunavut based business.

NNI Secretariat Executive Coordinator
Tel: (867) 975-7835 / 1 888 975-5999 tollfree
Fax: (867) 975-7870
nniadmin@gov.nu.ca
www.nni.gov.nu.ca

The following are frequently asked questions with respect to the GN's NNI Policy and are provided to illustrate some of its major elements. Further explanations are always available by contacting the NNI Secretariat (as noted above) or by referring to the Policy itself.

Is there a relationship between the NNI Policy and the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement?

- Yes, the NNI Policy is aimed in part at implementing the GN's obligations under Article 24 of the NLCA.



What procurement benefits or incentives are provided to qualified Inuit, Nunavut-based or local businesses as a result of the policy?

- Under the NNI Policy, all qualified Inuit-owned, Nunavut-based or local businesses obtain a favourable price adjustment of 7% for each criterion met (to a maximum of 21%) to help these businesses compete against bids from other bidders. The NNI Policy also establishes a minimum Inuit content criterion for evaluating Request For Proposals and provides other procurement incentives such as bid adjustments for Inuit participation in employment, project management and training. These incentives are designed to partially offset the higher cost of doing business in Nunavut, increase business sector capacity, increase Inuit participation and support training for Nunavut residents in all sectors of the workforce.

All qualified Inuit-owned, Nunavut-based or local businesses obtain a favourable bid adjustment of 7% (to a maximum of 21%) when competitive bids are evaluated.

How would the NNI Policy apply to a Construction Tender?

- First of all, all tenders submitted should meet the minimum contract requirements specified in the Tender and should demonstrate a capability of carrying out the work.
- The Tender will contain a provision that requires the general contractor to invite Inuit, Nunavut-based or local companies to bid on any sub-contracts that will be entered into, subsequent to the award of the main contract.
- Tenders for construction contracts with a labour component over \$300,000 will include a detailed training plan for Inuit workers. The labour component calculation is based on estimates of payroll expenditures made by the general contractor and subcontractors for Nunavut, Inuit and local payroll expenditures that form part of the bid; and the bid adjustment for estimates of Inuit payroll expenditures shall be limited to the minimum requirement set out by the Contract Authority.
- Calculations for the application of bonuses and penalties are based on whether minimum threshold requirements have been met and Inuit participation in employment, project management and training. However, the maximum total bonuses and penalties cannot exceed 25 percent of the total labour price submitted with the successful proponent's bid.
- A bid adjustment would be applied based on the following:
 - (i) Nunavut business status, an adjustment of 7%
 - (ii) Inuit firm status, an additional adjustment of 7%
 - (iii) Local business status, an additional adjustment of 7%

Construction Tenders require general contractors to invite Inuit, Nunavut-based or local companies to bid on sub-contracts entered into after the contract award.



- In the absence of any qualitative or contrary considerations based on quality of goods and services, conduct, past performance, or other similar considerations, the lowest tender after adjustments would be awarded the contract.

What about a Tender for the supply of goods?

Bid adjustments are only applied for qualified Inuit, Nunavut-based or local businesses that are appropriately registered with the GN under its NNI Policy. For further information, please call the NNI Secretariat at (867) 975-7835 or 1 888 975-5999 tollfree or email nniadmin@gov.nu.ca

- All of the factors identified above for construction tenders apply. However, the Nunavut business status bid adjustment only applies when the company listed in the bid is a qualified Inuit, Nunavut-based or local supplier approved by the GN for supplying the category of goods or materials identified in the bid.
- For tenders for the supply of goods only, not including the materials portion of a bid for a construction contract, a bid adjustment cap will apply and bid adjustments values will only be applied to the first \$ 100,000 of the bid value.

What about a Request For Proposal (RFP)?

- All proposals submitted must meet the minimum contract requirements specified in the RFP and demonstrate a capability of carrying out the work.
- All proposals with a labour component with an estimated cost in excess of \$300,000 will include a detailed training plan for Inuit workers. In the case of maintenance contracts, a training plan must be included where the contract cost is estimated to exceed \$ 250,000.
- All proposals meeting the minimum contract requirements specified in the RFP, and where applicable the labour component requirements, will be evaluated to determine which appears to offer the best overall value to the GN, based on the evaluation criteria established in the RFP.
- For proposals where there is a clear cost criterion, the applicable bid adjustment values identified for tenders will be applied to that portion of the evaluation.
- Inuit content criteria will also be included in the evaluation criteria established for each RFP. The Inuit content values are, at a minimum, 10 percent for Inuit employment, and an additional 5 percent for Inuit ownership.

Minimum Inuit content values are 10% for Inuit employment and an additional 5% for Inuit ownership.



When no local business submits a bid or proposal how does the local business status adjustment apply?

- When no local business submits a bid or proposal, any qualifying Inuit or Nunavut-based business submitting a bid or proposal shall be deemed to be a local business and the Local Business incentive and adjustment applies to those bids.

Can the GN restrict Tender and RFP invitations to qualified Inuit and Nunavut-based businesses only?

- Yes. Tender and RFP invitations with a value of less than \$25,000 can be issued exclusively to qualified Inuit and Nunavut based businesses where sufficient competition exists. Sufficient competition exists when there are at least three companies in Nunavut that are interested and capable of performing the work. The GN may also invite the participation of Inuit firms that are not based in Nunavut, provided they are included on the NTI Inuit Firms Registry.

RFTs and RFPs with a value of less than \$25,000 may be offered exclusively to Inuit and Nunavut based businesses if there are at least three companies in Nunavut that are interested and capable of performing the work.

How is the NNI Policy enforced?

- Each Contract Authority within the GN is responsible for monitoring and enforcing contracts under which they expend funds. Contract performance is monitored in all contracts to ensure contractors are achieving contracted NNI Policy obligations. Associated NNI Policy bonuses or penalties are applied prior to final payment on contracts.
- Each Contract Authority within the GN must provide monitoring and enforcement information to the responsible department.
- The GN, through the responsible department, must provide NTI with the outcomes of its monitoring and enforcement activities in a timely manner.
- Contractors that consistently fail to achieve Inuit content commitments in contracts could be “deemed irresponsible” and denied access to participating in future government procurement activities.

A “responsible” firm is one which is considered capable of meeting the contract requirements and possesses sufficient reliability and integrity to perform as necessary. Contract awards can only be made to firms that are “responsible”. To be deemed “irresponsible” means that the business is not eligible for future contracts with the GN.



Does the NNI Policy outline specific procedures for contracting and business opportunities in Nunavut's parks?

- Yes, Appendix “C” of the NNI Policy outlines specific procedures for contracting and business opportunities within Nunavut's parks. Businesses should familiarize themselves with Appendix “C” if they intend to bid on work with respect to Nunavut parks.

Per the Government Contract Regulations, the Minister, Deputy Minister (or the designated public officer) of the Department of Community and Government Services is the GN's primary Contract Authority for goods and most services.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACT REGULATIONS

The Government Contract Regulations (GCRs) of the Government of Nunavut apply to contracts entered into by the GN, except contracts of employment. The GCRs control who may make which contracts – Contract Authorities - and the method of procurement. The GCRs recognizes that the Minister (or Deputy Minister or delegate) of the Department of Community and Government Services² is the primary Contract Authority for the GN for goods and most services. The GCRs further identify Ministers (or their delegates) who have specific authority for contracting certain types of services on behalf of the GN such as the Minister of the Department of Justice for legal services and the Minister of the Department of Finance for insurance services. This does not preclude the Executive Council (otherwise known as Cabinet) to exercise paramount authority in these matters.

PROCUREMENT POLICIES & THRESHOLDS

The GN enters into contractual arrangements with suppliers in order to procure goods and services that are vital to the effective operation of the government and the provision of programs and services to Nunavummiut. In order to meet its procurement objectives the GN is guided by various formal and informal processes. Formal processes include the application of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), Nunavut Acts and Regulations, as well as GN policies. In addition, all contracting in Nunavut is affected by the application of Canadian common law. CGS' Procurement, Logistics and Contract Support Services Division strives to recognize and adopt best practices in its procurement processes and procedures.

Operating within these formal and informal guidelines, the GN procures goods and services in different ways depending on their value and type.

The following table outlines the competitive bidding and procurement method that is used by the GN to acquire goods and services based on the estimated value of the purchase:

² Formerly known as the Department of Public Works and Services as set out in the GCRs.



Table 1: GN Procurement Methods

Requirement	Estimated Value	Method	Form	Contract
Goods	Under \$5,000	Sole Source (1)	By phone	LCA (4) /CC/PO
	\$5,000 to \$25,000	Invitation (5)	RFQ	PO
	Over \$25,000	Advertise (2)	RFT	PO
Services (including consulting)	Under \$25,000	Invitation (5)	RFP	SC
	Over \$25,000	Advertise (2)	RFP	CS
Maintenance	Under \$5,000	Informal quotes (6)	By phone	LCA (4) /SC
	\$5,000 to \$100,000	Invitation (5)	RFT	MC
	Over \$100,000	Advertise (2)	RFT	MC
Construction (3)	Under \$5,000	Informal quotes	By phone	LCA (4) /SC
	\$5,000 to \$100,000	Invitation (5)	RFT	MC
	Over \$100,000	Advertise (2)	RFT	C
Architectural Engineering	Under \$5,000	Invitation (5)	Letter	AE Short
		Invitation (5)		AE Long
Miscellaneous	\$5,000 to \$50,000		RFT	SC

Notes

- (1) Sole source contracts are contracts entered into under limited circumstances which are not subject to the competitive process.
- (2) Public advertising requires that the intended purchase be posted on the RFP/Tender Notification Listing³ and in local newspapers.
- (3) For construction projects notice must also be posted within the relevant community.
- (4) LCAs are used to purchase goods or services from Nunavut-based vendors. For purchases outside of Nunavut, a credit card or purchase order must be used.
- (5) Invitation is used within Nunavut only when there are at least three businesses offering the goods and services required.
- (6) Quotes are estimates provided by vendors upon request.

Legend

LCA	Local Contract Authority
PO	Purchase Order
SC	Service Contract
MC	Request for Tenders Construction or Services Contract – Minor Works
C	Construction Tender and Contract Document – Major Works
AE Short	Architectural/Engineering Agreement – Short Form
AE Long	Architectural/Engineering Full Services Agreement – Long Form
CS	Pro-Forma Agreement – Consulting Services

³ The Tender Notification Listing is an electronic bulletin board found on the GN website at www.gov.nu.ca/nunavut/english/business/



PROCUREMENT METHODS

Public RFTs and RFPs issued by the GN are listed on the GN's website www.gov.nu.ca under "Nunavut Business Information".

Public and invitational tenders or RFPs are methods by which the GN lets businesses know it needs to acquire goods or services. You can learn about current GN business opportunities by visiting the RFP/Tender Notification List, which is accessible through the GN website at www.gov.nu.ca. Follow the "Nunavut Business Information" link.

For high value purchases the GN uses a formal tendering process. All high value tenders either are advertised publicly or by invitation and are open to all eligible businesses.

The GN utilizes standard documents for tendering and contracting which have been approved by the Department of Justice. These documents contain standard terms and conditions and standard instructions to bidders. These are explained further below.

Winning a contract with the GN is easier when you know how we make our buying decisions.

REQUEST FOR TENDER

A "responsive" bidder is one which submits a proposal which meets the RFT or RFP requirements in all material aspects.

A Request for Tender (RFT) is an invitation to a supplier (bidder) to submit a bid for the supply of goods, services or construction where the department clearly knows what it wants and how it should be done. The RFT has very clear and precise requirements for the material or performance specification requested, including the quantity, delivery date and the bid submission deadline. Only bids from qualified responsive and responsible bidders that are received prior to the tender closing date and time are considered.

There are established minimum periods for which a tender must remain open depending on the value of the requirement. Other considerations impacting the tender period include method (invitational or advertised), type (good, service or construction) and the complexities and particulars of the requirements. Overall, there must be sufficient time for suppliers to prepare an appropriate response. As all qualified responses to an RFT contain the same information in terms of the good or service to be provided, the only factor that can be assessed is price (after application of bid adjustments under the NNI Policy). It is assumed that all other factors being equal, the lowest (adjusted) price represents the best value for Nunavummiut and would be selected.



The objectives of RFT are to:

- create requests for bids from suppliers (bidders) for the supply of goods, services or construction contracts that are valued at \$5,000 and over;
- create opportunities under the NNI Policy to support qualified Inuit, Nunavut based and local businesses; and,
- Create price comparisons to enable procurement officers to seek out the best purchase price for the goods, services or construction requirements requested.

All RFT responses (bids) must:

- be signed by an authorized representative of the supplier acknowledging acceptance of the tender's terms and conditions;
- be received, including printed facsimile responses, on or before the closing date and time, and at the location indicated in the tender;
- contain the tender security required by the tender call, where applicable; and,
- be irrevocable⁴ for the duration of the time specified in the tender call.

REQUEST FOR QUOTATIONS

A Request for Quotation (RFQ) is an invitation to a supplier (bidder) to submit a quotation indicating the pricing terms for the supply of a material or the provision of a service where price is less than \$25,000. The RFQ specifies the material (service), quantity, delivery date and the bid submission deadline.

An RFQ is an invitation to suppliers to submit a quote for providing specific goods or services where the price is less than \$25,000.

The objectives of RFQs are to:

- create requests for quotations from supplier (bidders) for the supply of goods or services that are valued between \$5,000 and \$25,000;
- create opportunities under the NNI Policy to support qualified Inuit, Nunavut-based and local businesses;
- create records in which quotations are maintained; and,

⁴“Irrevocable” is the term used to mean that the response can not be withdrawn, changed or altered in any way during the specified period. It, in effect, becomes binding.



- create price comparisons to enable procurement officers to seek out the best possible purchase price for the goods or services requested.

All RFQs responses must:

- be signed by an authorized representative of the supplier acknowledging acceptance of the quotation's terms and conditions;
- be received, including printed facsimile responses, on or before the closing date and time, and at the location indicated in the quotation; and,
- be irrevocable⁵ for the time specified in the RFQ call.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

A Request for Proposal (RFP) is a formal solicitation document inviting proposals for the delivery of a good, service or project. The RFP describes the existing situation or issue and asks a supplier (otherwise referred to as a “proponent⁶”) to offer its ideas for a solution. RFPs are used by the GN when:

- a department has identified a need for which it is not sure of the best solution;
- a government department wishes to consider factors other than price when selecting a contractor;
- the department would like to see the contractor's approach – or methodology – towards addressing the identified requirement;
- the requirement is complex;
- the program is new and the department would like ideas on how to deliver it; or,
- the department would like to see if there is an alternative to the way it usually acquires the product or service.

All RFPs responses must:

- meet the mandatory proposal submission and evaluation criterion requirements stated in the RFP; and
- be received, including printed facsimile responses, on or before the closing date and time, and at the location indicated in the RFP.

⁵ “Irrevocable” is the term used to mean that the response can not be withdrawn, changed or altered in any way during the specified period. It, in effect, becomes binding.

⁶ Refer to definition on page 24.



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

A Request for Qualifications is a formal solicitation document inviting interested businesses to become pre-qualified bidders or proponents for a particular requirement, thus having to avoid the need to review, process and evaluate a large number of lengthy proposals. Although seldom used, the process may be used when a department anticipates a large number of firms are interested in an RFP and the department wishes to pre-qualify proponents prior to initiating the full RFP process.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

An Expression of Interest (EOI) is a document that is used when a government department has a requirement for a sophisticated multi-skilled team or specialized expertise and very few companies possess the required skills or experience. This process is sometimes used to determine whether there are contractors available with the right qualifications for the specific project and to assess their level of interest. An EOI does not lead to a contract, or commitment, and is only the beginning stage of a process that should lead to the issuing of an RFP or RFT.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

A Request for Information (RFI) is a formal solicitation document that is sometimes used when a government department identifies a requirement and wants to see what, if anything may exist in the market to address the requirement. An RFI process will not necessarily result in a direct purchase, or commitment, but is only the beginning stage of a process that should lead to the issuing of an RFP or RFT.

LOW VALUE PURCHASES

For low value purchases under \$5,000, government departments have three choices:

- **Get three or more quotes from known suppliers to obtain a competitive price**

Government departments can approach three Nunavut based businesses that they know offer the goods or services they need. They typically request the price, availability, timeline and anything else that may be important to meeting their needs. For goods, a department might ask for a



If you want to sell your goods or services to the GN, you should be registered with the NNI Secretariat. This also ensures that your business is among the list of qualified suppliers.

particular quality or standard. For services, a department might ask the qualifications of the business. The key to getting an opportunity to bid on this type of government contract is to make sure your business is known to the people in government who might need what your business has to offer. Government departments need to know about you before they can approach you for a quote. Registering your business with the NNI Secretariat is important if you wish to sell goods and services to the GN.

- **Local Contract Authority (LCA) or Government Credit Card**

Government departments can approach a locally based business for the purchase of goods like office supplies, services like catering, or transportation and communication services. They decide what they need, get it, and pay for it by using a Local Contract Authority (LCA) or government credit card.

- **Standing Offer Agreement (SOA)**

Government departments can approach a Nunavut based business with whom the GN has entered into a Standing Offer Agreement (SOA). Businesses engaged under an SOA arrangement have already gone through a public tender process. They have agreed to offer a particular good or service at a set price for the time period covered by the SOA. The GN uses SOAs when it anticipates a need for products or services at a defined pricing schedule under agreed conditions. For Nunavut based vendors payment is made by LCA, otherwise a requisition should be forwarded to procurement.

Does CGS provide unsuccessful small business suppliers (bidders) with useful feedback?

Yes, for all purchases in excess of \$25,000 a regret letter is sent to bidders and unsuccessful proponents. Suppliers may contact procurement staff to obtain feedback about why their bid or proposal was unsuccessful. Getting feedback on an unsuccessful proposal is very important for all suppliers, especially for small businesses. The cost of submitting a proposal for a small business is proportionately greater than for a large or mid-sized company because smaller businesses typically do not have internal resources or access to affordable expertise to produce and submit proposals regularly. Knowing what made the difference between a supplier's unsuccessful proposal and the successful one gives the supplier valuable information and insights that can be useful when submitting future proposals to the GN.



How can I improve my chances when bidding?

Research every opportunity and develop your contacts. The more research you do the more opportunities you'll have to bid. Visit the RFP/Tenders Notifications List at least weekly and when qualified, respond to as many tenders and RFPs as you can. Get to know how government procurement works. To do that, you need to target your market. To sell your goods and services to the GN, you have to get out there and market them.

How should I handle bid documents?

Read everything thoroughly; each bid document is unique. Read every instruction carefully and remember to respond to each of the requirements, otherwise your bid will be considered “non-responsive”.

If the terms of reference are unclear, ask detailed questions well in advance of the submission deadline. Most Tenders and RFPs have a deadline for asking questions. This is very important because your questions can result in an “addendum” (change to the RFP requirements) or a clarification response. Questions must be submitted in writing according to the instructions in the RFP documents.

Deadlines are firm. You must get your bids to the right place at the time indicated on the bid document. Late bids are considered non-responsive.

How are Tenders amended?

Tenders are amended by addendum issued by the GN contracting authority. An addendum is any change or clarification to the tender documents issued during the time between the tender and the closing date. For all contractors who bid on the same tender package, addenda must be used to ensure all bidders receive written notification of changes or clarifications made during the tender call period. Addendums are normally only deal with issues that have a major impact on the requirements.

⁷ According to the Government Contract Regulations, “responsive” means that the person has submitted a bid that conforms in all material respects. Being deemed “non responsive” indicates that the person has submitted a bid that does not meet the requirements as set out in the bid documents. The bid will be disqualified from any further consideration.



Be sure to follow these 6 tips!

What are some good bidding tips?

1. Each bid document is unique. Read it very carefully. Everything you need to know about doing the job should be in it.
2. If you don't understand something, call the procurement officer listed on the front of the document. All bidders are entitled to the same information.
3. Pay attention to the mandatory requirements. You must meet all of them, otherwise your bid will be considered non-responsive.
4. Bid documents specify the dates, times and locations of the bidders' conferences, if any. Bidders' conferences are intended to ensure that bidders have a clear understanding of the technical, operational and performance specifications, as well as the financial and contracting requirements.
5. Be accurate with figures: make sure you know what expenses you're responsible for, add them correctly and quote according to the tender specifications.
6. Deliver your bids on time and to the right place, as specified in your bid document. Bids will be accepted only if they are received prior to the posted due date and time (bid closing). Bids received after contract award will be returned unopened and will not be considered.

If you have questions, be sure to contact the identified contact within the timeframe provided for written questions.

If I have questions about a Tender or RFP, who should I contact?

In a competitive process, it is important that all communication between proponents and the GN go through a single contact such as CGS, the GN's primary contract authority, to ensure that consistent information is made available to all interested parties.

How long will it take to get paid?

In recognition of the higher cost of doing business in Nunavut, the GN assists qualified Inuit or Nunavut based businesses by providing 20 day payment terms. Be sure to include the purchase order or contract number on your invoice.

PUBLIC ADVERTISING

Each year the GN enters into many contracts with suppliers for a diversified range of goods and services; from the procurement of office supplies and vehicles to the construction of schools and government buildings. Government buyers procure thousands of different types of products and services. In order to secure those goods and services at the best value and support the economy of Nunavut and



its communities, the government endeavors to communicate its requirements across Nunavut.

When your business is seeking entry into the government market, and indeed all types of markets, you should do your homework and be well prepared. Access to government contracts depends on your understanding of the target market and a serious assessment of your business's resources and abilities, and strategic and competitive position.

How do I find out about GN contracting opportunities?

Before you consider bidding on a government contract you need to know where, and how, to access GN procurement information. In order to provide you with the up-to-date procurement information you need, CGS promotes the government's current contracting activities in two ways:

1. The GN RFP/Tender Notification List

CGS maintains the GN RFP/Tender Notification List which is accessible through the GN website at www.gov.nu.ca. Follow the Nunavut Business Information link. The List is intended to provide interested businesses with an opportunity to access tender information easily and quickly. The List is updated daily.

2. Newspaper Advertising

All public Tenders and Requests for Proposals are translated and advertised in local newspapers. In addition, in January the government places advance notice ads in local newspapers for upcoming large construction tenders and "As & When" Maintenance Service Tenders.

All GN Tender and RFP notices provide the following information: 1) a brief description of the requirement, 2) when the Tender or RFP was issued, 3) the closing date of the Tender /RFP, and 4) the name of a contact person where you can obtain additional information.

BUSINESS RESOURCES

Department of Economic Development and Transportation

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation is committed to supporting small businesses and community-based economic development by providing assistance to new and existing small businesses through investment in new business attraction, retention and expansion. Information about the programs available can be accessed through the Business Development section of EDT's website at www.edt.gov.nu.ca.

Be sure to check the GN's website for its Tender/RFP Notification List and local newspapers regularly for new GN requirements.

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation provides assistance to new and existing small business. EDT's new website is a good resource of information for business owners. www.edt.gov.nu.ca



The department offers several programs and services to support the development of business in Nunavut.

The Nunavut Equity Investment Fund provides financial support to larger Nunavut business ventures, while the Small Business Support Program offers financial assistance for new and existing small businesses.

The department also provides financial support to regional Chambers of Commerce in Nunavut, and to regional Business Development Centres, which offer loans and other business services.

Larger businesses that are unable to access sufficient debt capital from commercial sources may apply for a loan to the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation.

The department, in partnership with Industry Canada, operates the Canada-Nunavut Business Service Centre, which provides comprehensive information on business services in Nunavut, including the Nunavut Community Business Inventory, which lists businesses and services available in each Nunavut community. The department has also published a companion guide entitled “Guide to Starting a Business in Nunavut.”

Further business development information is also available through contacting the organizations below in each region:

Kitikmeot Business Development Centre

Manager, Community Economic Development
Department of Economic Development & Transportation
Tel: (867) 982-7560
Fax: (867) 982-3204

Kivalliq Business Development Centre

Manager, Kivalliq Business Development Centre
Tel: (867) 982-7560
Fax: (867) 982-3204

Baffin Business Development Centre

Manager, Baffin Business Development Centre
Tel: (867) 979-1303
Fax: (867) 982-1508



For program information, please contact:

Community Operations - Qikiqtaaluk

Manager, Community Economic Development/Acting Director Community Operations Qikiqtaaluk
P.O. Box 389, Building # 1045
Pond Inlet, NU X0A 0S0
Phone: 867-899-7344
Fax: 867-899-7348

Community Operations - Kivalliq

Manager, Community Economic Development
P.O. Box 002, Rankin Inlet, NU X0C 0G0
Phone: 867-645-8451
Fax: 867-645-8455

Community Operations - Kitikmeot

Manager, Community Economic Development
P.O. Box.316, Kugluktuk, NU, X0B 0E0
Phone: 867-982-7460
Fax: 867-982-3204

Canada-Nunavut Business Service Centre

Manager
Phone: 867-975-7860
Fax: 867-975-7885

Nunavut Business Credit Corporation

Chief Executive Officer
Phone: (867) 897-3637
Fax: (867) 897-3648



HOW TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

An RFP is a formal solicitation document inviting proposals for the delivery of a service or project. The RFP describes the existing situation or issue and asks potential suppliers (otherwise referred to as “proponents”) to offer their ideas for a solution.

The following are frequently asked questions which are provided to help clarify the terms and process for responding to an RFP.

Please explain the word “proponent.”

When proposals are invited by the GN, the term “proponent” is used to describe an individual or company that submits, or intends to submit, a proposal. This term is used to differentiate between the participants in the RFP process, and those participating in another solicitation process where the laws governing the process may be different.

How long does the process take?

From the time you first see the RFP advertised it could be many months before a contract is signed. However the length of the process varies significantly from project to project and many contracts are signed within a few weeks of the proposal closing date. The RFP will often provide an outline of the anticipated timeline. If a timeline does not appear in the RFP it may be a good idea to ask the procurement contact person identified in the RFP about the expected timeline.

What information do I get from the RFP?

The RFP will usually explain the role of the department, describe the background of the project, outline some of the problems the department is facing, describe the scope of the project and provide the parameters for submission of solutions. The RFP will tell you exactly how to lay out your proposal, how it will be evaluated, to whom you should address questions, submission details and the final date and time for submission. Make sure you follow the instructions to the letter.

Before you start drafting your proposal, find out what requirements, if any, are mandatory – the components that must be included. Mandatory requirements are evaluated objectively on a simple pass/fail basis. You have to meet all of the mandatory requirements for your proposal to be responsive, and only responsive proposals get evaluated.



How do I know if my company is qualified to submit a proposal?

Generally you or your company is qualified if you are considered a “Responsive and Responsible Vendor,” which means your company complies with the provisions of the bid solicitation, including specifications, contractual terms and conditions, and you can reasonably be expected to provide satisfactory performance on the proposed contract based on reputation, references, performance on previous contracts, and your financial and other resources.

How much time can I expect to spend on preparing a proposal?

It is difficult to provide advice on this because so much depends on the complexity of the requirement and the magnitude of the potential contract. Some proposals take as little as half a day to prepare and some may take a month or more. This is also dependent on whether you have drafted a proposal before.

Will I be notified if any changes are made to the RFP before it closes?

Yes, all proponents are notified if changes are made to the RFP, including the Terms of Reference, evaluation criteria or timeline. Once you have requested the RFP documentation from the departmental contact person your name and contact information are on the list if any additional notification is required. Any changes to the RFP will be communicated to proponents via addendums.

If the RFP is complex, does the department hold a meeting to explain the expected requirements in detail?

It is not a requirement to hold a proponents’ meeting, however occasionally such meetings are held. Proponents’ meetings provide potential proponents with an opportunity to ask questions, gather additional information, or express concerns related to a specific RFP. When proponents meetings are held, minutes or a transcript of the meeting are taken and made available to all interested proponents, including those who were unable to attend.

What makes one proposal better than another?

The proposal that best demonstrates that it meets the department’s specified needs will receive the highest score. Before you start writing, there are two things you should determine: your audience and your message.



Your audience is usually fairly easy to identify; proposals are generally evaluated by staff of the government department that issued the RFP. They will be actively involved in the subsequent contract, often with the additional involvement of CGS's Procurement, Logistics and Contract Support Services Division. CGS often suggests to departments that they consider including some or all of the following people in the evaluation process: program manager, technical advisor, financial analyst, client representative and someone from CGS.

Another important component is the message. What exactly is the department looking for? Your proposal should not just describe what you would do if successful, it must be able to convince the department that:

- you understand the situation and can offer ideas for a solution; and,
- the objectives will be achieved by entering into a contract with you.

You, as the proponent, are in the best position to decide what goes into your proposal, keeping in mind that the proposal must address all the basic requirements in order to score well.

What are some of the elements that make a RFP response successful?

The following are some of the main elements that should be addressed when developing a successful RFP response:

1. What does the client department precisely require?

Knowledge of the department's concerns, issues and expectations are of utmost importance. As you set out preparing your proposal, keep the Terms of Reference, Statement of Work and Evaluation Criteria at hand - referring to them often because you are required to respond to the requirements stated in the RFP. Address each and every point directly and with a sufficient amount of technical and management information.

2. Can you really solve the problem?

This is an extremely important question that you must resolve before submitting a proposal. You need to self-evaluate the skills, resources and the capability of your project team to address the problem you're being asked to resolve. You need to clearly convey in your proposal whether or not you can provide the department with the exact skills needed to complete the project within the required timeframe and proposed budget.

3. What are the department's main requirements?

Departments generally list their main requirements in the RFP. Understand what matters most to the department, and organize your proposal in that



order. If necessary, do not hesitate to bring to the department's attention any ambiguities in the RFP. This can best be accomplished by contacting the CGS representative in its Procurement, Logistics and Contract Support Services Division

4. What is the scope of the project?

Understand the scope of the work, including the nature of the project, the required team size and the project timeline. Use this information along with your rates and fixed resource costs to develop a reasonable project cost estimate.

5. If you were the department, what would you expect from the proposals?

Ask yourself, "If I were on the committee evaluating proposals from different proponents, how would I choose between them?" By assessing your proposals strength against the evaluation criteria you will get a good idea about your proposals chance for success.

6. Can you offer more than one solution?

Try to give the department alternatives to choose from. By proposing alternative solutions you are showing that you not only understood the problem clearly, but you have also invested a great deal of time and effort to understand the project's business objectives and offered the best possible solutions. However, if you wish to propose an alternative approach to resolving the problem described in the RFP, and would like to propose it, you should respond to the specific request made in the RFP first - offering your solution as an alternative approach.

7. What experience do you have with similar projects?

Ensure you identify relevant past projects, knowledge and experience that showcases your project team qualifications in the required areas. Evaluation criteria often give the most weighting to the project team's knowledge, skills and past experience. If appropriate, include past work samples.

8. What is your value proposition?

Can you provide more than what the department is looking for? For instance, if the department requires an administrative manual, and the RFP does not provide specific detail, you could suggest sample formats and provide a draft Table of Contents. It helps to show you are making an extra effort and that you can demonstrate you have the knowledge, skills and experience to provide a quality product.

9. Who is on your project team?

Identify the most skilled candidates for your project team and include key resumes in the proposals' appendix to illustrate that your organization has the skills, knowledge and experience to effectively complete the project. A skilled team also shows that your learning curve, or time to deployment, will also be shorter.



10. Don't assume the department already knows your abilities.

It is a common mistake to assume that because you have dealt with the government or a particular client department before, that you can assume they know your organization and the skills you have to offer. Keep in mind that each proposal is evaluated objectively - based solely on its content.

11. What are the deadlines?

Although project deadlines are often outlined in the RFP, various factors can arise before the contract is signed that can delay the project deadline. It is important to propose realistic deadlines and provide a rational if the deadlines are later than expected. It also helps to note in your rational that you are doing so to avoid any compromise on quality. Include a chart in your proposal that includes all tasks and proposed completion dates.

Where do I start?

Read all the instructions and explanations provided in the RFP, and ensure that you understand the department's concerns and the scope of the project. Pay special attention to the Terms of Reference, Statement of Work and the Evaluation Criteria. In addition, highlight any mandatory requirements stated in the RFP. If you or your proposed project team cannot meet all of the mandatory requirements you should reconsider whether or not to submit a proposal – keeping in mind that failure to meet any stated mandatory requirements will result in your proposal being rejected.

Each RFP issued will include a pro-forma contract which should be reviewed in detail. Should your company be awarded the contract, the contract to be signed will be the similar to the sample contract provided. Particular attention should be paid to the insurance section.

Each RFP document includes an outline of the RFP evaluation criteria and their weightings. This is an outline of what the Evaluation Committee considers to be of priority ranked in accordance with a percentage. The criteria should assist the RFP respondents to know where to place significant emphasis.

What format should my proposal take?

Every RFP is unique, so read it very carefully. Many RFPs will include a suggested format, such as the one described below. If so, the suggested format and sequence should be followed to ensure your proposal receives full consideration. If no format is suggested, the following would probably work for most proposals:



Main Body of the Proposal

The following sections should comprise the main body of the proposal.

1. Title or Cover Page and Envelope

Proposals must include a Title Page and Envelope that clearly show the RFP title; RFP reference number, closing date and time; the proponent's name and address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address and the name of a contact person.

2. One page letter of introduction

Proposals should include a one page letter of introduction signed by an authorised signatory for the proponent. The letter of introduction should preferably be on the proponent's official business stationary. The introduction page is also a good place to identify if your company is a Nunavut based, Inuit owned and/or local business.

3. Table of Contents

Proposals should include a Table of Contents. All major parts of the proposal should be identified by volume and page number. (Make sure all of the pages are numbered)

4. Executive Summary

Proposals should include a one or two page Executive Summary. This section of the proposal should describe the most important features of the proposal. It should contain an overview of the proponent's company background and qualifications, and should condense and highlight the contents of the proposal and facilitate evaluation of the proposal by the department.

5. The Main Body of the Proposal

This section is the heart of the proposal. Although each RFP requirement is different, some of the main things to consider including are: an outline of the reasons for conducting the review or evaluation; an outline of the current situation or barriers; your work plan outlining what you propose to do and showing how this will be an effective solution to the perceived problem; your methodology, breaking down in detail how the proposed work will be accomplished – both in the work to be done and the resources committed; a summary of your project teams experience and qualifications which enables them to carry out the work effectively and efficiently; and a proposed list of the people or organizations that will be interviewed. In this section you need to demonstrate that you understand the issues, you have a strong and capable team, and you have proposed a methodology that will arrive at the best solution.



6. Project Schedule or Timeline

Proposals should include a project schedule or timeline that, if possible, conform to the timeline identified in the RFP. The project schedule should break-down the components of the work into clearly identified timelines specifying important phases or milestones that are tied to the work outlined in the methodology and culminate in the project being completed by the proposed due date. However, if you anticipate that it is not possible to meet the original due date, your project schedule should reflect the timeline you feel is achievable.

7. Price Details or Pricing Formula

This section of the proposal should include a detailed breakdown of all eligible project costs, preferably tied to the actual work (hourly or daily rates) required by each individual involved in the project to complete the work. Air-fares, hotel, meal per-diem costs and other eligible project expenses should also be listed.

8. NNI Preference

The GN's NNI Policy was established as a tool to facilitate the economic development of Nunavut and to encourage representative participation of qualified Inuit and qualified Nunavut based businesses while meeting the GN's requirement for goods and services. This section should highlight your status under the policy, including whether or not your company is Nunavut based, Inuit owned or locally based. You also need to identify the percentage of Inuit labour working on the project and any plans you have to incorporate Inuit training into the project.

Appendices

The following sections should preferably be included in the appendices section of the proposal.

9. Staff Qualifications and Proponent Experience

This section of the proposal should describe your companies past experience in more detail, particularly in relation to the project requirements listed in the RFP, including a list of all major projects successfully completed. You should also include staff resumes (preferably no longer than two pages in length) for each project team member. It is important to show that both your company and the project team are fully qualified; having the education and/or past experience necessary to successfully complete the project.

10. References

While often not specifically asked for, it is often a good idea to include a few references, or names of individuals (including contact information) who can provide positive support for projects or work that you have successfully completed in the past.



11. Any Additional Information

Any additional information such as brochures, examples of past work, etc. should be included at the end of the proposal.

Can I sub-contract? How should this be addressed in the proposal?

Yes, you are usually free to sub-contract as long as no conflict of interest is created by your doing so. The RFP usually asks you to identify all sub-contractors in your proposal and state that you are willing to take responsibility for work performed by the sub-contractor(s). If you are awarded the contract and later want to change one of the sub-contractors you will have to get approval from the department to do so.

Can I get together with another company to submit a joint proposal?

Yes, as long as the proposal makes it clear that one of you is going to take overall responsibility for the work, and as long as there is a legal entity with whom the government can enter into a contract. Again, this is only permitted where no conflict of interest is created.

How can I prepare a schedule with accurate timelines when so much depends on decisions the department makes as the project proceeds?

Perhaps your schedule can make certain assumptions and highlight the various decision points. A separate explanation could identify the assumptions and explain how different decisions might affect the schedule. However, if the department has told you when it wants the work done, make sure you clearly illustrate that your solution meets the department's deadlines.

What should the Proposal Cost or Costing Formula look like?

Cost is usually a major component on any proposal. Rather than a single, total cost for the proposal, your costing formula should generally include a complete and detailed cost breakdown of all the costs associated with the proposal, including your team members' involvement in time and the applicable rates for their services, the cost of materials, equipment rental, travel, hotels, accommodation and meal per diems. This itemized costing information helps to substantiate and justify your bid for the project.



While all RFPs have different requirements and factors that affect the final cost, the following table provides an example of how to explain the calculation of your costs:

Table 2: Contract Costs

	Unit	Daily Rate	Total
Professional Fees			
Employee A **	25.5	700.00	\$17,850.00
Employee B *	10.0	600.00	\$6,000.00
Employee C	12.0	500.00	\$6,000.00
* Nunavut based		Sub Total	\$29,850.00
** Inuit			
Travel Costs			
Employee A			
Airfaire (2 trips - Iqaluit/Rankin Inlet)	2	1,300.00	\$2,600.00
Accommodation	8	200.00	\$1,600.00
Per-Diem (Northern rates)	8	115.00	\$920.80
		Sub Total	\$5,120.80
Miscellaneous Expenses			
Long distance calls/fax		175.00	\$175.00
Incidentals (e.g. copying & supplies)		500.00	\$500.00
		Sub Total	\$675.00
		Total	\$35,645.80

Does it matter how my proposal looks?

There may not be any points allocated to the beauty of the proposal, but first impressions count. You want the department to believe that your company is professional and organized, and your proposal should reflect this. It shouldn't be necessary to go to a lot of expense, but care should certainly go into presentation.

Your proposal should be easy to read and to understand. Use plain language and write in short, clear sentences. You want to make sure the evaluation team gets the right message. Errors can be distracting; so although you are not writing a novel and are not being given marks for creative writing, your spelling and grammar should be accurate.



Is there anything I should specifically avoid doing or saying?

- Avoid underestimating the evaluators. People evaluating the proposals are knowledgeable in their fields. Proposals that contain lots of glitz but little substance will not score well.
- Don't take this opportunity to point out flaws in the department's existing program unless it is necessary to do so in order to describe the benefits of your proposal. Proposals should be upbeat and positive and should suggest solutions.
- Don't impose conditions on the department. If you make it too difficult for the department to accept your proposal, you can be reasonably sure the proposal won't be accepted.
- Define any acronyms used and refrain from using technical jargon. Your proposal should stand on its substance and not be overly complicated to describe your solution.
- If you are making any assumptions in preparing your proposal, make sure they are clearly stated.
- Do not rely on anyone else to get your proposal in on time. Late proposals can not be accepted, regardless of the reason for being late.

How soon will I find out whether or not I've won?

Whether you have won or not, you will usually be notified of the outcome within a week or two of the award decision, providing the department has all the necessary approvals to proceed.

How long will it take to get paid?

Payment of invoices for contracts, goods, or services owing by the GN and its public agencies is due 30 calendar days from the latter of the date of completion of the service/supply of the goods or, the date of receipt of the invoice. However, in recognition of the higher cost of doing business in the north, the GN will assist qualified Inuit or Nunavut based businesses by providing 20 day payment terms. Be sure to include the purchase order or contract number on your invoice.



Before finally submitting my Proposal, can you provide a final checklist?

- ✓ Ensure everyone involved in putting together the proposal has read and understood the instructions and requirements.
- ✓ Ensure the proposal addresses everything the department asked for.
- ✓ Ensure the proposal meets all of the mandatory requirements.
- ✓ Ensure an original document and the requested number of copies are submitted, quoting the department, project title, project number, closing date, and the proponents name on the outside of the envelope.
- ✓ Ensure the proposal is delivered using a method consistent with the terms of the RFP.
- ✓ Ensure your proposal is submitted on time.
- ✓ Ensure that if you are faxing your proposal, all of the conditions for facsimile transmitted proposals outlined in the RFP are followed.
- ✓ Ensure all questions or enquiries concerning the RFP are in writing and submitted to the department according to the timelines and instructions outlined in the RFP.
- ✓ Ensure your logo or legal corporate name is on each page so they can be identified if the proposals are taken apart by the Evaluation Committee.

THE RFP EVALUATION PROCESS

How are proposals evaluated?

As soon as possible after the closing date, an evaluation committee meets to review the proposals that were received in advance of the closing deadline. The first thing the committee does is make sure each proposal has met all of the mandatory criteria requirements. Proposals that do not meet all of the mandatory requirements are considered unresponsive and are put aside - receiving no further consideration.

Those proposals meeting the mandatory criteria are assessed and given points to indicate how the proposal performs against each of the evaluation criteria. This can be done by each committee member giving a number and the recorder writing down the average of the marks, or it can be done by consensus. Either way, the proposal is discussed in detail and opinions are exchanged as to the extent to which each criterion is met. A scoring form is then used to tally the scores by proponent.



How are RFP evaluation criteria determined?

The evaluation criteria are determined by the RFP Evaluation Committee of the GN after reviewing the scope and parameters of the specific project. The criteria will be different for each RFP and will reflect the individual needs and priorities of the department. Only desirable criteria have weightings, which must be stated in the RFP.

Although individual RFP criteria can vary (except for the Inuit Preference), the following criteria and percentage weighting have been used for example purposes:

- 35% - Contractors knowledge, skill and experience
- 25% - Methodology
- 25% - Price
- 15% - Inuit Preference (10% for Employment and 5% for use of Inuit Firms)

Are evaluation criteria used other than those identified in the RFP?

No. The Evaluation Committee can only evaluate your proposal in accordance with the criteria and weightings previously indicated in the RFP.

How is the price criteria evaluated and scored?

When assigning points for price, departments frequently use a formula that awards the lowest proposal price full points (all points available for price) and then compare prices in the remaining proposals to this lowest price to determine a pro-rated point value. This is done after bid adjustments have been applied to the price for each eligible proposal that qualifies under the NNI Policy. However, to avoid bias, the price formula is always established before any review of the proposals is started.

What do the percentages beside the evaluation criteria mean?

They show the weighting that will be placed on each criterion during the evaluation process. Proposals are usually weighted on the following criteria: knowledge, skills and past experience; methodology; price; and Inuit preference. If “methodology” shows as 25%, it means that points for methodology will account for 25% of the total mark. So, if your proposal scores full marks for methodology you will have scored at least 25% toward the total mark. While the assigned individual percentages for the first three factors may vary for each proposal, under the NNI Policy Inuit preference is at a minimum rated at 15% (10% for employment and 5% for use of Inuit firms).

Note: all proposal ratings are kept confidential and are not released to any proponents.



THE RFP DEBRIEFING PROCESS

The GN recognizes the importance of RFP debriefing requests by unsuccessful proponents. The debriefing process recognizes that the proponent spent time, money and effort preparing their proposal. It also ensures that the proponent understands the reciprocal work done by the government. By explaining the RFP evaluation process, as well as the amount of time and effort expended by the evaluation committee, most proponents concerns can be alleviated.

More importantly, through the debriefing process proponents can learn from their mistakes so they can hopefully improve their ability to prepare and submit better proposals in the future, which benefits the government by encouraging more skilled suppliers.

Can I get feedback afterwards to find out how I can improve any future proposals?

Yes. Once the decision has been announced you can request information in the form of a “debriefing”, conducted either through a meeting or by means of a telephone conversation with one or more members of the evaluation team. Sometimes the debriefing can take place immediately, other times the department will ask you to wait until the contract is signed.

When are debriefings held?

Debriefings are only held at the request of a proponent sometime after the award is made and the contract is in place.

Who conducts the debriefing?

The best person to conduct a debriefing is the RFP coordinator or government staff member who organized the process. The members of the RFP evaluation committee can attend or not. Often, a representative from CGS’ Procurement, Logistics and Contract Support Services Division will be called upon to assist in the debriefing meeting.

What process is used?

Debriefings can be handled by letter, through a telephone conversation or a face-to-face meeting. If the telephone is used, it should be followed up with a brief letter confirming that the proponent’s questions were answered and that the proponent was satisfied with the debriefing.



What can you expect to learn during a debriefing?

- An understanding of the thoroughness of the evaluation process and how the evaluation criteria were applied to your proposal.
- Where your proposal ranked in the final scoring, but not in relationship to any other specific proposals. For example, you might learn that “Out of five proposals, yours ranked third (or fourth, etc.).”
- Areas where your proposal was strong and scored well.
- Areas where your proposal was weak and scored poorly.
- Advice on how you can improve future proposal submissions.

NNI POLICY APPEALS PROCEDURE

For purposes of appeals, the NNI Policy establishes an independent Contracting Appeals Board to address challenges filed by unsuccessful bidders or proponents who wish to challenge the award of a government tender or RFP. The Appeals Board will examine the application of the NNI Policy only,

What steps generally describe the process when an unsuccessful bidder or proponent wishes challenge an award?

- The unsuccessful bidder or proponent who wishes to challenge the award of a tender or RFP must do so in writing within 5 business days of the award announcement. The challenge must be directed to the Contracting Authority and copied to the GN NNI Policy Advisor.
- The Contracting Authority has 5 business days to respond in writing and must copy the GN NNI Policy Advisor.
- If, after a further 5 business days have elapsed, the unsuccessful bidder or proponent is not satisfied with the response of the Contracting Authority, the unsuccessful bidder or proponent may appeal the award directly to the Contracting Appeals Board.
- An appeal to the Board must be in writing and directed to the Secretary of the Appeals Board within 15 days of the award announcement.
- The Secretary of the Board shall immediately give notice of an appeal to the Board, Contractor, NTI and the Contracting Authority. Where the appeal



filed with the Board does not fall within the jurisdiction of the Board the appeal may be dismissed by order of the Board without holding a hearing.

- In addition to the unsuccessful bidder or proponent, the Contracting Authority and NTI have the right to participate in the proceedings before the Board.
- The Board shall hear the appeal as soon as possible; but no later than 10 business days after the appeal has been filed with the Board.
- The Board may receive representations and evidence from the parties in writing, by conference call or in person.
- The Board shall be provided with access to the Bid or Proposal of the appealing bidder or proponent and of the Contractor for the purposes of determining the Appeal.
- The proceedings are recorded, but conducted in an informal manner.
- Decisions by the Board are by consensus, or failing consensus by majority vote, with the Board making its decision as soon as possible after the hearing.
- The Board then gives written reasons, which may include recommendations, (signed by the Commissioners) in their decision, which is then distributed to all parties who participated in the appeal.
- The Contracting Authority is not obligated to accept the recommendations of the Board for remedial action, in whole or in part, but must issue reasons for its decision.

Before filing an appeal with the NNI Contracting Appeals Board, unsuccessful bidders or proponents are encouraged to seek more detailed information on the appeal process by reviewing the NNI Policy, or by contacting the NNI Secretariat under the Department of Economic Development & Transportation.

Toll free: 1-888-975-5999

Tel: (867) 975-7835

Fax: (867) 975-7870

Email: NNIadmin@gov.nu.ca

or visit our website at www.nni.gov.nu.ca



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Qualified Nunavut Based Business

A business that has met the requirements to be defined as a Nunavut Business under the NNI Policy and is listed on the NNI Business Registry as such.

Qualified Inuit Business

A business that has met the requirements to be defined as an Inuit Firm under the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement and is listed on the NTI Inuit Firm Registry as such.

Qualified Local Business

A business that has met the requirements to be defined as a Nunavut Business or Inuit Firm and is listed on the NNI Business Registry or Inuit Firm Registry as based in the community where the services are required.

Qualified Nunavut Supplier:

A business that has met the requirements to be a Nunavut Business under the NNI Policy as well as a Nunavut Supplier as defined by the NNI Policy for the “Good” being purchased. The business must be listed on the NNI Business Registry as a supplier for the “good” in question to receive the Nunavut Supplier incentive adjustment.

Qualified Local Supplier:

A business that has met the requirements to be a Nunavut Business under the NNI Policy as well as a Nunavut Supplier as defined by the NNI Policy for the goods being purchased. The business must be listed on the NNI Business Registry as a supplier for the goods in question, and must be based in the community where the goods are required, to receive the Local Supplier incentive adjustment.