REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

To Define and Cost Preliminary IM/IT Architecture Requirements for a Proposed Network of First Nations Data and Statistical Centres

Submission Due Date: <u>October 9, 2020</u>

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) is a non-profit organization federally incorporated under the *Canada Incorporation Act* since 2010. It operates with a special mandate from the Assembly of First Nations (Resolution #48, December 2009) and is governed by a national board of directors appointed from each of the ten First Nations regions.

The FNIGC's mission is to assert data sovereignty and support the development of information governance and management at the community level through regional and national partnerships, in collaboration with First Nations. FNIGC adheres to free, prior and informed consent, respects nation-to-nation relationships, and recognizes the distinct customs of nations. Our vision is for every First Nation to achieve data sovereignty in alignment with its distinct world view.

FNIGC's origins date back to 1996 with the need to address significant health data gaps between First Nations and Canada, and to guide the implementation of the OCAP® principles of ownership, control, access, and possession -- which set standards on how First Nations data should be collected, protected, used, and shared.

Over the last 24 years, FNIGC has established recognized expertise in conducting unique national and regional survey programs that support First Nations government efforts to build culturally relevant portraits of their communities. Today, FNIGC is Canada's premier source for First Nations-led, community-driven information about First Nations people living on reserves and in northern communities.

Building on this foundation, FNIGC and its regional partners are now in a position to further advance the data sovereignty vision through the implementation at the national and regional levels of a newly developed First Nations Data Governance Strategy (the Strategy).

The Strategy supports a phased implementation (see excerpt of the implementation plan [here](#)). Building an integrated network of 11 First Nations-led Data Governance Centers[1] across Canada (ten regional and one national) from the ground up, with capacity to do data collection, storage, sharing, analytics, and the production and dissemination of reliable, relevant, and trusted information, statistics, and services to First Nations governments, communities, and other partners requires an appropriate level of planning and deliberation, in real time. This includes the establishment of data centers (or data hubs) at the regional level.

A key element of this transformation is leveraging existing capacities which have been established over the years from the national survey program to build the additional capacities needed for the governance and stewardship of all core First Nations' data sources, including through the repatriation of existing data sets such as administrative data collected by other level of governments.

To prepare for this major transformation, FNIGC and its regional partners require expertise (through this RFP) to notionally identify and define key IM/IT architecture components, options, and preliminary cost ranges to support a (multi-year) phased implementation of the Strategy with affordable and scalable solutions. Outcomes from this RFP will be used to inform the development of a more comprehensive business case for consideration by the federal government to support of the establishment of the proposed network of First-Nations-led Data Governance Centers.

The Contractor must have experience in designing, modelling, and costing enterprises, business information, applications, and technological architectures, including in decentralized environments that enable secured collaboration between multiple partners, including through data sharing and data linkages, as well as through modern data analytics and visualization tools.

The Contractor will be required to translate the [First Nations Data Governance Strategy](#) (i.e. its vision, key outcomes, priorities, business requirements, and the phased implementation strategy) into high-level IM/IT requirements and preliminary costs. The Contractor should be familiar with the newest technologies and advanced designs and be able to articulate the proposed solutions with easily accessible languages and tools for consumption by First Nations and partners. Experience in working with First Nations or Indigenous peoples more broadly is required.

BACKGROUND

FNIGC is responsible for a wide-range of work, from research and planning to surveys and training. To-date, the development and administration of a national First Nations survey program in collaboration with our Regional Partners have been at the core of our day-to-day work. These surveys include: The First Nations Regional Health Survey (FNRHS), the First Nations Regional Early Childhood and the Education and Employment Survey (FNREEES).

In 2016, First Nations leadership resolved that data sovereignty is a cornerstone of nation rebuilding and as such, directed that federal funding be provided to develop a national First Nations data governance strategy and to establish Data Governance Champions in each region, or fully functioning Regional Information Governance Centres equipped to support First Nations data-related needs and activities.

In 2018, $2.5 million was allocated in the federal budget for FNIGC to support the *"design of a national data governance strategy and coordination of efforts to establish regional data governance centres."*

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[1] Also referred to as Regional Information Governance Centres or RIGC's

In March 2020, FNIGC submitted a [First Nations Data Governance Strategy](#) (FNDGS) to Indigenous Services Canada (ISC), articulating a vision, overarching principles to achieve the expected outcomes, a roadmap with key priorities for action, and a multi-year, phased implementation plan. The proposed strategy also included specific recommendations for two priorities: **Priority 1** was to establish, as a foundational stepping stone, 11 First Nations "Data Champion Teams" at the regional and national levels as early as in 2021-22 and **Priority 2** was to secure bridge funding for pre-implementation work in 2020-21.

Preparatory work has so far involved completing a preliminary scoping and costing of the core functions that would be performed by each of the 11 Data Governance Centres. They include:

1. Governance;
2. Data Policies, Standards, and Methods;
3. Data Collection and Relationships with Respondents and Data Providers;
4. Research and Analysis;
5. Data Dissemination, Users' Inquiries, and Support; and
6. Data Centers (Data Hubs).

The development of notional or preliminary costs for **the IM/IT infrastructure requirements** that would be required to support the effective functioning and operations of those Data Governance Centers, including their integration as a national network, is essential.

PROJECT GOALS

The short-term goal of this RFP is to scope out the key IM/IT infrastructure needs, components, and options (e.g. shared computing, on-site infrastructure, cloud solutions, etc.), along with preliminary cost ranges to:

a) Support the effective operations, management, and service delivery of the 11 Data Governance Centers given their core functions, current level of capacities and their targeted maturity levels as set out in the Strategy. This includes (back and front end) IM/IT requirements such as intranet, shared computing solutions, servers, database requirements, data analytic tools, specialized applications, client centric solutions such as data visualization, web portals, and the infrastructure for the data centers; and,

b) Ensure, at the enterprise-wide level, the effective governance, integration, alignment, interoperability, and secured collaboration between the 11 First Nations data centres (e.g. interoperability of core data, systems and applications, secured communications and data sharing capacities etc.).

At this early stage, and given the inherent uncertainties associated with a multi-year transformation like this, only high-level (notional) IM/IT infrastructure solutions, options, and preliminary costs will be required. More detailed IM/IT architectures and costing will be required from the Contractor as part of this RFP once specific enterprise and business requirements are further refined and/or validated through analysis and engagement with key stakeholders (i.e. primarily First Nations and the federal government). Analysis and engagement will take place through the fall and winter and into 2021.

IM/IT solutions and options needed for this initiative must be affordable, interoperable, scalable, and adaptable to various capacity levels and the pace at which First Nations achieve higher levels of maturity across regions.

TARGET AUDIENCES

The primary target audience is FNIGC decision makers (Directors and Executive level staff) who will determine the most appropriate approach(es) based on the information and analysis provided by the Contractor. The Contractor's input will be used by FNIGC to inform the development of more comprehensive business case(s) in the future, for consideration by the federal government in support of the establishment of the proposed network of First-Nations-led Data Governance Centers.

SCOPE OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

Due to the conceptual nature of this project, FNIGC will work collaboratively with the Contractor throughout term of the project. The IM/IT architectures will play a key role in helping FNIGC decision makers understand the bigger picture in terms of operating and managing complex data and information systems landscapes.

The ultimate outcome for this project is a target state architecture and roadmap that will address the needs of an emerging network of regional and national information governance centres (including specific information data architecture and data flows, application architecture, and data sources and interfaces that align with industry standards and best practices). Enterprise Architectures and guiding principals will also be a key deliverable.

Specifically, the scope of work includes the following major activities and deliverables that focus explicitly on ensuring FNIGC can define and communicate to non-experts the IM/IT required (applications and technological infrastructures) to establish 11 fully functioning Data Governance Centers. The Contractor shall use best practices in conducting the appropriate activity level and leverage emerging proven technologies as part of the proposed solutions.

Deliverable 1 (by November 30th, 2020)

1.1 Complete an in-depth review and analysis of the First Nations Data Governance Strategy's roadmap along with the Data Governance Centers' core functions and operating environment with the goal of translating key business requirements into IM/IT architecture needs and options. This review and analysis should include an impact assessment of the data landscape (data lands and users) in which the Data Governance Centers operate.

1.2 Review and assess existing IM/IT infrastructures in place that support the national survey program to leverage those capacities and/or ensure their alignment with future IM/IT architectures. This may include a review of relevant FNIGC's documentations, such as program evaluations and survey reports, which will be made available.

1.3 Develop a high-level identification and description of possible IM/IT capacity maturity levels that could be realistically achieved by each of the Data Governance Centers over a multi-year horizon as proposed in the Strategy along with their underlying assumptions.

1.4 Define the criteria for assessing the possible IM/IT architectures (i.e. options) including their key success factors, cost-drivers, risks and other assumptions.

1.5 Provide high-level notional descriptions, definitions, and costs (i.e. with preliminary or indicative cost ranges) for each selected option including underlying assumptions and an assessment of the benefits, limitations, risks, and assumptions.

1.6 Document the main infrastructure components and related costs for each option.

1.7 Develop visuals (schematic) as applicable to enable the clear and simple communication of all of these preliminary requirements, options, and implications.

Preliminary costing assumptions made through deliverable 1 will need to be unpacked and validated with additional information, benchmarks, and more detailed analysis as engagement with First Nation regional partners and federal partners progresses through the fall 2020.

Deliverable 2: (Time to be determined)

As FNIGC refines, details, and further validates the business requirements and implementation of the strategy the Contractor shall also:

2.1 Refine and detail the IM/IT architecture requirements, including proposed capacity maturity levels to be achieved over time, possible roadmaps, options, and costing.

2.2 Develop higher quality (more concrete) estimates and cost-benefit analysis for the proposed IM/IT architectures options and implementation strategy as required.

PROJECT TIMELINE

This project is slated to start as soon as possible and will have an approximate 6-month timeline; the timelines below will be confirmed and agreed to by both parties:

- Deliverable 1 is expected to be completed within the first 6 to 7 weeks of the contract initiation.
- Deliverable 2 is expected to be completed by March 31, 2021.

BUDGET

The budget for this project is to be determined.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. The depth and breath of qualifications and expertise of the bidder -- all submissions should clearly demonstrate experience and expertise in designing and implementing enterprise architectures (including business, information, application, and technological architectures).
2. Demonstrated knowledge and experience working with Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations.
3. Feedback and testimonials from past clients on similar projects.
4. Proposed budget and timelines.

A presentation or interview may be conducted at FNIGC's discretion. The FNIGC will not be obligated in any manner to any proposal whatsoever and at its sole discretion, may choose to terminate the Request for Proposal process and not enter into a contract with any prospective Contractor. The Contractor should be able to work within constraints of budget, schedules, and skill shortages.

PROPOSAL TIMELINE

Submissions should be emailed to Erin Corston, Senior Advisor, Partnerships and Capacity, at ecorston@fnigc.ca no later than **October 9, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. EST**.

PHASE 1
Early and foundational
(0-3 years)

2021-23: Foundations in motion

- Data champion teams are in place (2021)
- Roles and accountabilities for data champion team members are formerly defined, including deliverables and timelines (2021)
- Re-designed governance models are in place at the national and regional levels (2021)
- First Nations begin to participate at relevant provincial, territorial, and federal data tables (2021)
- The first planning cycle with rights holders for data priority setting is completed, including service identification and core standards. (2021-2024)
- Core functions and forms of regional centres are defined and costed (2021-2023)
- Progress is made in inventorying datasets, assessing quality, and identifying opportunities for data repatriation (2021-2024)
- Human and IM/IT capacities are assessed regions and at national level, including business, data, and IT architectures (2021-2023)
- Funding request for implementation of Phase 1 detail plans (including data centres 'needs) is completed/submitted to ISC (2023-2024)
- Rights holders benefit from early wins including on data access and discovery, gap bridging, OCAP® implementation and trust or ethic frameworks (2022-24),
- Progress on collaborative initiatives with provinces and territories and Canada is enabled — e.g. National Outcomes Based Framework (NOBF), UNSDGs, data sharing or linkage projects etc. (2021-2024)
- Initial accountability frameworks or metrics in place, including reporting on results achieved (2022-2024)

*Assuming minimum transition-funding is provided

PHASE 2
Leveraging and advancing
(3-5 years)

2023-2026: Data stewardship in motion

- Data centres are resourced and implementation of Phase 1 approved plans begins (2024-2025))
- Governance is integrated into business lines and increasingly formalized at all levels
- Stewardship on high-value data sets is taking place (inventory, access, quality, discovery, standards, interoperability, and data management)
- Policies and procedures are enforced for security, and ethics to protect privacy and user integrity
- Regional data centres (and rights holders or communities) are getting increased access and use of data to meet priority needs
- A secured intranet (including shared platforms and applications) is implemented (could be advanced under Phase 1)
- IM/IT infrastructure and skills are in place to support a more comprehensive set of services
- Rights holders benefit increasingly from tangible improvements
- Progress on collaborative initiatives with provincial, territorial, and federal partners is accelerated, including progressive transfer of data stewardship and statistical function (and other services as chosen by rights holders, enabled by data sovereignty)
- Accountability frameworks and metrics are more comprehensive and robust

PHASE 3
Mature and transformative
(≥ 6 years)

2026 and beyond: Data sovereignty in motion

- Governance is fully integrated and optimized
- Data centres are fully functional with comprehensive sets of services
- Processes and infrastructures are aligned and interoperable, and standards well-adopted
- Data stewardship is more comprehensive
- Data gaps are being closed on multiple fronts
- Right holders have access to the knowledge they need for resourcing and transformation including taking control over service delivery, advancing self-determination and improving the quality of life in communities
- Accountability frameworks and metrics are integrated and matured