



ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

First Nations Education Infrastructure Operations and Maintenance Needs Assessment

INTRODUCTION

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national advocacy organization that works to advance the collective aspirations of First Nations across Canada on matters of national and international concern. The AFN hosts at least two Assemblies each year, where mandates and directives for the organization are established through resolutions directed and supported by the First Nations-in-Assembly, which is comprised of elected Chiefs or their proxies from member First Nations.

In addition to the direction provided by First Nations-in-Assembly, the AFN is guided by an Executive Committee consisting of an elected National Chief and Regional Chiefs from each province and territory. The Executive Committee's decisions are supported and guided by representatives from five national councils: Knowledge Keepers, Youth, Veterans, 2SLGBTQQA+, and Women.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to select a bidder to provide a high degree of professionalism, integrity, and confidentiality for the *First Nations Education Infrastructure Capital and Operations and Maintenance Needs Assessment* ("Assessment").

1. The Assessment will provide a cost analysis that identifies and explains the capital funding needs of on-reserve schools and teacherages. The Assessment should include the following elements:
 - a) Review of existing documentation, including Asset Condition Reporting System (ACRS) reports and nominal roll data to summarize trends in existing infrastructure and funding for schools and teacherages;
 - b) Evaluation of nominal roll data to determine current enrollment;
 - c) Evaluation of on-reserve population for enrollment data trends and annual average growth rate;

- d) Completion of capital costing of all schools on reserve in Canada (immediate, 5, 10, 15, and 20-year planning periods) using the 2024 School Space Accommodation Standard (SSAS);
 - e) Completion of capital costing of all teacherages on reserve in Canada (immediate, 5, 10, 15, and 20-year planning periods) using the 2024 SSAS;
2. The Assessment will provide a cost analysis that identifies and explains the operations and maintenance (O&M) funding needed to maintain on-reserve schools and teacherages. The Assessment should include the following elements:
- a) Estimated actual O&M needs for each on-reserve school;
 - b) Estimated actual O&M needs for each on-reserve teacherage;
 - c) Evaluation of current on reserve school O&M funding compared to provincial/territorial O&M funding, based on data availability;
 - d) A detailed review on remoteness zone multipliers to inform actual needs for each asset in the assessment;
 - e) A literature review analyzing key distinctions between ACRS assessments employed by Indigenous Services Canada for First Nations infrastructure and other asset condition assessment strategies used by provincial governments for provincial schools;
 - f) Costing should be:
 - i. Based on a review of existing documentation, historical O&M information, and a collection of supplier cost estimates
 - ii. Based on type of asset, zone, last approved inspection date, year of construction, estimated life remaining, floor area, general condition rating (GCR), and O&M rating
 - iii. Based on O&M costs from a sample of schools, including janitorial and maintenance staff salaries, supplies, utilities, building insurance, etc.
3. The analysis should expand on previous literature, including the *AFN First Nations Education Infrastructure O&M Needs Assessment (2022)* and the *AFN First Nations Education Infrastructure Capital Needs Assessment (2021)* available online.
4. The consultant will leverage existing relationships with First Nations for costing participation and work with the AFN for additional participants.
5. The assessment will provide both national and regional First Nations costing estimates.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In July 2024, First Nations-in-Assembly passed AFN Resolution 51/2024 *Chronic Underfunding in Education*, which calls on the Government of Canada to fully address the chronic underfunding of First Nations education, including education infrastructure. This resolution builds on the principles outlined in AFN Resolution 46/2022 *Education Infrastructure Capital Reform*, which reaffirms First Nations' Inherent and Treaty rights to education infrastructure and directs the AFN to co-develop policy or program changes to First Nations education infrastructure. As such, the AFN is seeking to update and build upon an existing education infrastructure research collection to assess First Nations' real O&M and capital needs for education infrastructure, Canada-wide.

Shortfalls in O&M allocations cause infrastructure assets to deteriorate more quickly, preventing them from reaching their maximum lifecycle potential. Consequently, First Nations education infrastructure tends to incur capital costs more quickly. Deferred maintenance can also cause health and safety hazards, which violate First Nations' right to provide safe and healthy school and teacherage environments for their staff and students. Indigenous Services Canada's historical funding approach for school capital and O&M have proven insufficient to meet Canada's fiduciary obligations.

The *AFN First Nations Education Infrastructure O&M Needs Assessment (2022)* estimated the total annual cost of First Nations education O&M across Canada to be \$375.2 million for schools and \$67.7 million for teacherages (in 2021 dollars). The *AFN First Nations Education Infrastructure Capital Needs Assessment (2021)* likewise estimated the total 5-year cost for First Nations education capital to be \$3.8 billion for schools and \$976.65 million for teacherages (in 2021 dollars). However, the 2024 federal budget allocated just \$545.1 million over three years for all First Nations' K-12 education infrastructure.

ACRS is used exclusively by Indigenous Services Canada on First Nations infrastructure assets. ACRS is not used as an industry nor provincial standard. First Nations have noted important deficiencies of ACRS assessments, such as their overall lack of detail and their lack of regionally specific evaluation criteria.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

All proposals will clearly identify the name of the proponent and the project title: *First Nations Education Infrastructure Capital and Operations and Maintenance Needs Assessment*.

All proposals will be sent to blerat@afn.ca and received no later than **April 1st, 2025**. Late submissions will not be accepted and will be returned unopened without exception. Other proposal enquiries may be sent to dedwards@afn.ca.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All proposals shall include the following information:

1. Project Overview: This section will include credentials, relevant past and current experience, the approach to the scope of work, a timeline for activities, management approach, work statement and schedule.
2. Capabilities and Experience: This section will highlight relevant experience, skills and capacity, resources and or facilities to support work, foreseeable challenges and how to work with them, examples of recent relevant work.
3. Project Budget: A detailed cost breakdown inclusive of salaries, resources, travel, materials and payment schedule. The budget should include a virtual meeting for project initiation and another for a final presentation on research.

RIGHTS OF THE AFN

The AFN reserves the right to:

- a) reject any or all proposals received in response to this Request for Proposals;
- b) enter into negotiation with one or more bidders on any or all aspects of their respective proposals;
- c) accept any proposal in whole or in part;
- d) cancel and/or re-issue the modified version of a given RFP requirement at any time;
- e) award one or more contracts;
- f) verify all information provided with respect to a given RFP requirement, including the right to request a confirmation of the bidder's legal status and signed documentation; and
- g) award contracts without competition for follow-up work, if any, to the selected bidder for a given project requirement.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

PROPONENT QUALIFICATIONS

The AFN will select the Proponent(s) which, in the AFN's sole discretion, best serves the needs of the AFN. The following is a summary of the general considerations that will be used to determine the Proponent(s) that will be selected:

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| 1. Indigenous involvement and/or capacity | 10% |
| 2. Capacity to do the work | 25% |
| 3. Management of the work | 15% |
| 4. Methodology | 15% |
| 5. Quality of proposal | 15% |
| 6. Price | 10% |
| 7. Quality of the price quote | 10% |

TIMETABLE

The following dates are set forth for informational and planning purposes and may be changed at the AFN's sole discretion.

Description of Deliverables	Due Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Methodology Review	May 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mid-Assessment Briefing	September 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Draft Report	December 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Final Report	January 2026

The timetable is tentative only and may be changed by the AFN, in its sole discretion, at any time prior to the Proposal Submission Deadline.

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Price

Contractors must provide a firm fixed price, including administrative fees, travel, material costs, translation, and **all applicable taxes.**

Confidentiality

Responses to this RFP will be considered as confidential information by the AFN and will be used solely for the purposes of selecting the successful bidder.