



Request for Proposal (RFP)

For the provision of awards program review services

Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences
200-141 Laurier Ave West, Ottawa, ON K1P 5J3

Issue date: April 20, 2021
Response deadline: May 5, 2021 - 24:00 ET

Inquiries and submissions to be directed to:

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Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (“RFP”) is to state the program review requirements of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences (the “Federation”), and to request proposals (“Proposals”) for such services from Canadian consultants with book award program experience (the “Respondents”).

Subject to the terms and conditions of this RFP, the Federation intends to select one (1) of the Respondents to review the Canada Prize/Prix du Canada book award program, and recommend improvements to the program..

Notwithstanding the issuance of this RFP and/or anything herein to the contrary, the Federation reserves the right, in its sole discretion, without liability to any Respondent, to elect to discontinue the RFP process at any time before the end of the RFP process, including after a notice of award has been issued by the Federation but before the successful Respondent has signed a formal retainer Agreement.

About the Federation

The Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences promotes research and teaching for the advancement of an inclusive, democratic and prosperous society. With a membership now comprising over 160 universities, colleges and scholarly associations, the Federation represents a diverse community of 91,000 researchers and graduate students across Canada. The Federation organizes Canada’s largest academic gathering, the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences (Congress), bringing together more than 8,000 participants each year. Additional information on the Federation’s activities can be found at www.ideas-idees.ca.

The Federation is funded through membership fees, grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and registration fees from annual Congress, and is governed by a volunteer-based Board of Directors (the “Board”) representing the membership.

Scope of work

Review objectives

1. The review’s key objectives are :
 - a) To preserve and enhance the core prize format;
 - b) Address inequities in all aspects of the program;
 - c) Lower barriers to participation among members of underrepresented groups; and
 - d) Improve governance and administration.



2. This review should focus on, but not be limited to:
 - a) Equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization as foundational in all aspects of the prize process;
 - b) The prize objectives;
 - c) Book/publisher eligibility criteria
 - d) Award criteria, in different categories, if relevant
 - e) Jury selection, for different categories, if relevant
 - f) Redistribution of total prize envelope into different prize categories
 - g) The possibility of an Indigenous languages requirement component; and
 - h) Administrative processes and good governance.

Deliverables

The consultant will review and assess all aspects of the program, consult key stakeholders, recommend improvements, and summarize the results in a report with recommendations to the Federation.

Specific items to assess are as follows:

1. **Changes to the jury composition:** Ensuring that jury membership reflects a diversity of the scholarly community, and requiring that people who adjudicate the prize receive training in EDI
2. **Adding a First Monograph prize:** This would focus on early career scholars, where there tends to be greater diversity. There could be four prizes of \$5,000 each:
 - a) Best book (in English and French)
 - b) Best first monograph (in English and French)
3. **Translation to Indigenous languages:** Requirement that the prize money be used to translate the book, or portion thereof, into an Indigenous language (this could be made one of the selection criteria)
4. **Broadening the eligibility criteria:** In order to be eligible, books would have to be published by a Canadian scholarly press, but not necessarily a University Press. Publishers would continue to nominate books, but would not be limited to books that have received ASPP funding
5. **Inventory of major book prizes:** To what extent would it be a benefit to add a publicly accessible inventory of major Canadian book prizes, related to the humanities and social sciences
6. **Identifying niche categories:** Survey major book prizes and identifying any niche the Canada Prize award might be able to address, given the objectives of the prize
7. **Funding for translation:** Survey and assess potential funding opportunities to support the translation of winning book into indigenous languages, including the Department of Canadian Heritage/Patrimoine Canada
8. **Considering the program timeline:** Examine the current timeline (see Annex 1) and recommend any modifications, especially with regard to ideal time for award announcement



The consultant will put forward and assess any additional proposals they see as relevant to strengthening the Canada Prize book awards in alignment with the objectives of the prize.

Context

In June 2020, the 2020 Prix du Canada was awarded to the authors of *Les Bois-Brûlés de l'Outaouais*. This generated widespread controversy both about the book's authors and the book's subject of Métis identity. That controversy, and subsequent social media attention, led to members of the Indigenous Advisory Circle resigning *en masse*, even though they had no role in the adjudication of the prize.

The Canada Prize award is paused for 2020, while the review is conducted. The goal is to re-launch the prize program for the 2022 calendar year.

RFP process

Who may respond

Any consultant who meets the requirements outlined in the Scope of work. Preference will be given to Canadian consultants. The Federation respects, appreciates and encourages diversity. Submissions from all qualified consultants are encouraged.

How to respond

All responses are to be submitted by email in PDF or MS Word format together with any supplementary materials to the email address on the cover of this document. Responses must be received no later than the response deadline specified on the cover of this document.

Questions

The Federation wishes to ensure that all potential respondents have access to the same information in formulating their responses. Any respondent wishing to be copied on the Federation's responses to questions asked by other potential respondents prior to the response deadline is invited to provide an email address to which all questions and responses will be copied.

Response outline

In responding to this RFP, respondents should provide, at a minimum, the following information and supporting documentation. This proposed structure is intended to minimize the efforts of respondents and their analysis by the Federation.

1. Respondent background information, including firm size (if relevant), structure, areas of practice, and demonstrated capacity to work with content in both official languages, though the majority of work will be conducted in English (no more than two pages in length);
2. Respondent's experience and expertise in the provision of program review services to not-for-profit clients;
3. A link to an online portfolio or samples of previous relevant projects;
4. Two or more relevant references including contact information;
5. Identification of individual who will manage the relationship with the Federation;



6. Identification of professionals who will participate in the delivery of services (with accompanying CVs and biographical information);
7. Cost estimates for the services the Federation requires; and
8. Draft timetable with work plan deliverables and personnel availability for entire project

Selection process and timing

Schedule

April 20, 2021	RFP published
May 5, 2021	All proposals must be submitted to the Federation by 24:00 ET. Internal screening will commence.
May 14, 2021	Selection of a successful consultant will be made and negotiation of terms of engagement undertaken.
July 16, 2021	Report with recommendations submitted to the Federation

All proposals will be reviewed based on the response outline above and the selection criteria below. The Federation will not necessarily select the lowest cost proposal.

Selection criteria

1. Proven track record of reviewing programs to offer suggestions for improvement;
2. Demonstrated familiarity with award programs, preferably book award programs;
3. Commitment to communications with client, to answer client emails, questions and requests for changes in a timely and efficient manner;
4. Exceptional attention to detail;
5. Ability to take direction and criticism, while advising client on strategy and best practices;
6. Reliability and commitment to meet the established deadlines; and
7. Agreement that all final materials will be owned by the Federation.

Proposal conditions

Contingencies

This RFP does not commit the Federation to award a contract. The Federation reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or waive irregularities if the Federation determines it is in the best interest of the organization to do so.

Acceptance or rejection of proposals

The timeline above is tentative. While all reasonable efforts will be made to keep to the timeline, all proposals should be presented with a minimum of a three-month guarantee. The Federation realizes that conditions other than lowest cost are important and will award a contract based on the proposal that best meets the needs of the Federation.

Modifications

The Federation reserves the right to issue addenda or amendments to this RFP.



Proposal submission

To be considered, all proposals must be submitted in the manner set forth in this proposal. It is the respondent's responsibility to ensure that its proposal arrives on or before the specified time.

Incurred costs

This RFP does not commit the Federation to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to this request and proposer agrees that all costs incurred in developing its proposal are the respondent's responsibility.

Negotiations

The Federation may require the firm selected to participate in negotiations and submit cost, technical, or other revisions of their proposals as may result from negotiations.

Final authority

The final authority to award a contract as a result of this RFP rests solely with the Federation.

Contact information

All inquiries should be directed in writing via electronic mail to Gina Hill Birriel, Manager, Programs and Policy at ghillbirriel@ideas-idees.ca.