

**Request for Proposals
Professional Services –
Technical Consulting for Connectivity Solutions
along Major Roadways**

Issued by:

Department of Industry, Energy and Technology
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

Issue Date: December 18, 2023

Revised Closing Date: February 12, 2024

(Original January 26, 2024 deadline has been extended)



1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Industry, Energy and Technology is seeking proposals from suitable qualified consultants with specialized telecommunications/communications technology expertise to identify potential connectivity solutions along major roadways with significant mobility service gaps in Newfoundland and Labrador.

To help address challenges faced in meeting the province's connectivity goals, the Provincial Government released a Connectivity Strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador, building on a \$136 million collaboration between the governments of Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador. While telecommunications, including broadband and mobile connectivity services, falls within the constitutional jurisdiction of the federal government, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to identifying innovative and best-fit solutions for connectivity improvements along on major roadways. Improved connectivity will have a positive influence on business and economic development, public safety, health, education and the delivery of public services to all residents of the province.

2. BACKGROUND

According to Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) data for 2021, 94.34% of the population have access to mobile services via LTE (Long Term Evolution) in Newfoundland and Labrador, with 83.31% of the population in rural areas having access. However, there are significant gaps in connectivity experienced along major roadways in the province. LTE coverage of major highways (rank 2) is 56.0%, with a 503km coverage gap, and major roadways (rank 3) has only 29.0% connectivity, with an estimated 1098 km coverage gap.

Recognizing the mobile services complexities faced within the province due to geography, infrastructure, and the costs associated with available technical solutions, officials with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador are working to identify potential cost-effective solutions to improve mobile connectivity. Investing in reliable mobile telecommunication service coverage on major roadways connecting communities is an incremental step in closing connectivity gaps throughout the province.

3. SCOPE & DELIVERABLES

IET is seeking professional services to identify potential mobile LTE or better standard connectivity solutions along major roadways with significant mobility service gaps in Newfoundland and Labrador.

The consultant must have demonstrated experience internationally, within Canada, and/or within Newfoundland and Labrador for similar projects in the areas of telecommunications, communications technology, technical analysis, market and financial analysis, planning and assessment for industrial clients and/or on behalf of a provincial or national government agency. The proponent must be in good standing with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The successful proponent is to:

1. Gather and analyze information about existing infrastructure and coverage along major roadways with significant mobility service gaps.
2. Identify best-fit solutions and related technical and financial requirements.
3. Prepare a synopsis report of observations and recommendations, including estimated costs, probable outcomes, and limitations of proposed solutions.

The project is to be completed within the period provided.

4.0 SCHEDULE

- RFP deadline is February 12, 2024 (Original January 26, 2024 deadline has been extended).
- The successful Proponent will begin work immediately upon approval to proceed.
- The project completion date is May 3, 2024.

5.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Submission Requirements:

Submission procedures are to be followed by all proponents. Proponents should carefully read and follow the procedures required by this Request for Proposals, as any deviation from these requirements may be cause for rejection of the submission. The person authorized to sign on behalf of the Proponent and to bind the Proponent to statements made in response to this Request for Proposals must sign the proposal.

Proposals are to outline the technical and financial requirements to improve cellular coverage along major roadways with significant mobility service gaps, as per the [ISED National Broadband Internet Service Availability Map](#) and [CRTC Roads without LTE Map](#).

Proposal Format

The proposal should include the following:

- Proponent's primary focus of business, services offered, and client base.
- Background and experience, particularly in relation to telecommunications technical expertise.
- Identification of key project manager, and project team members including resumes and contact information.
- In addition to total cost, specify any related budget items and cost, including hourly rates of each specialty. All costs to be quoted in Canadian Dollars and exclude HST. The price will not change based on any currency fluctuations.
- Identification of any sub-contractors, including their role and scope of work and costs attributable to each.

- Proposed methodology, outlining how the work will be advanced and include a detailed timeline, indicating critical inputs, deadlines and deliverables.
- Identification of potential challenges and strategies to overcome these challenges.
- Names of former clients for whom similar or relevant work has been performed should be presented as references, as well as a description of the work completed;
- Proposals to be submitted electronically as one document that includes all annexes and appendixes.

6.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

IET will review all proposals, and select a successful proponent based on the proposal requirements identified (section 5.0) and the following selection criteria:

Criteria	Details	Value	Score
Company and Project Team Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Profile. • Capacity to manage projects, including technical and management capacity. • Relevant telecommunication/technical skills of lead consultant and other team members. • Quality of consultant work and track record for recent and relevant project experience. • References provided relating to project experience. 	35	
Understanding the Project Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of project requirements, scope of work, and deliverables. • Clarity of information. • Detailed methodology in addressing the connectivity gaps identified. 	20	
Work schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Format, clarity, and quality of the proposed work plan and timeline for key tasks. • Identification of information and feedback required and related timing. 	15	
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed costing and total project costs to complete the work. • Lowest bid will not necessarily be accepted. 	30	
TOTAL		100	

7.0 PAYMENT PROCESS

Payment to any successful Proponent will be made upon receipt of electronic invoices, with supporting documentation, in a form satisfactory to IET. Payment of invoices will be in Canadian Dollars within 30 days of receipt.

No payments will be made for the cost of work incurred to remedy errors or omissions for which the successful Proponent is responsible.

In the event of a decision to terminate this work at any point, liability to the successful Proponent will extend only to those costs actually and properly incurred up to the time of such termination.

Either party may terminate on 30 days notice or with cause on such shorter period as set out in the notice.

8.0 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Payment schedule for successful proponents, is as follows:

- 25% upon signing of contract by all parties.
- 65% upon submission of final project report.
- 10% holdback paid upon satisfactory completion of the project.

9.0 SECURITY

The successful Proponent must agree that all information received, information gathered, materials collected and reports produced throughout the course of the project, shall be the sole property of IET and will be returned to IET upon completion of the project. The successful Proponent shall not copy said information, materials or reports. It is understood that the consultant may need to retain one working paper copy for discharge of its professional responsibility. The successful Proponent shall not publish, nor in any way use said information, materials, or reports for any purpose other than to provide such information, materials or reports to IET.

All documents and other records in the custody of or under the control of some or all of the Government or its representatives may be subject to the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015 (Newfoundland and Labrador). The financial value of a contract resulting from this procurement process will be publicly released as part of the award notification process.

The Proponent shall identify specific information in its proposal that may qualify for an exemption from disclosure under subsection 39(1) of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015 (Newfoundland and Labrador). If no specific information

has been identified it is assumed that, in the opinion of the proponent, there is no specific information that qualifies for an exemption under subsection 39(1) of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act, 2015 (Newfoundland and Labrador).

10.0 GENERAL CONDITIONS

- IET is not obliged to accept the proposal with the lowest price, highest ranking or any other proposal.
- IET reserves the right not to accept any proposal and cancel and/or re-issue this Request for Proposals, at any time before awarding the contract, without penalty or cost to government. The Department reserves the right not to discuss proposals with any proponents.
- IET reserves the right to enter into negotiations with any proponent on any or all aspects of their proposal, or to accept any proposal, in whole or in part. IET will not be responsible for any legal costs associated with contract development.
- No payments will be made for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal in response to this request.
- The work performed under any contract resulting from this Request for Proposals will be subject to inspection and acceptance by IET.
- Those individuals represented in the proposal will perform the duties outlined in the proposal. No change in the personnel identified in the proposal will be permitted without the prior written consent of the Department.

11.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals are to be submitted via email to:

Kirk Youden
Director, Sector Diversification
Department of Industry, Energy and Technology
E-Mail: kirkyouden@gov.nl.ca

Proposals must be submitted by **12 noon NDT, Monday, February 12, 2024** (Note: *original deadline of January 26, 2024 has been extended*). Late submissions will not be accepted.

Any question(s) relating to the RFP must be in writing. Any changes or additions to the RFP will be emailed to all parties. All communication regarding this Request for Proposals shall be directed to the contact noted above. Any other communication or information

received from any other individual shall not be considered binding on IET.

IET does not bind itself to accept the lowest priced, highest ranked proposal or any of the proposals received through this RFP.