



**Request for Proposal**

**For the Provision of External Audit Services  
For**

**The Ottawa Birth and Wellness Centre**

**Issue date: September 20, 2024**

**Closing date and time: November 15, 2024**



## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose of the RFP

The purpose of this request for proposal is to seek proposals from qualified service providers and select a single service provider for External Audit Services and related professional support and advice, for the Ottawa Birth and Wellness Centre (OBWC). The term of the contract will be three years with an option to extend subject to negotiations favourable to both parties.

### 1.2 Services

External Audit Services shall include but not be limited to:

- The examination of the records and financial statements in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards;
- The expression of an opinion on the financial statements and discussions with respect to presentation and disclosure;
- Drafting and producing the financial statements,
- Drafting the necessary notes to the financial statements;
- The presentation of a management letter at the end of each fiscal year audit addressing any internal control, risk or other issues identified during the audit;
- Attendance at 1 Board of Directors' and/or 2 Finance Committee meetings to present the audit plan and the finalized audit; and
- Inform management of emerging reporting issues and practices.

### 1.3 Description of Organization

The OBWC is a not-for-profit community healthcare facility that specializes in natural childbirth and the care of pregnant women, new parents and young babies. Its services include:

- Labour and delivery (3 birth suites)
- Assessment (2 rooms)
- Wellness services (provided by tenants who rent space from the OBWC)

The OBWC receives its funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health (MOH) in addition to a small amount of ancillary revenues generated through renting space to tenants to provide wellness services. The OBWC is required to report to the MOH all financials including the external audit.

The OBWC was incorporated 18 January 2013 in the Province of Ontario. The MOH began funding the OBWC on 1 October 2013 and the OBWC began operations on 3 February 2014.



The OBWC is governed by its own Board comprised of between 3 and 12 members (currently 12), the majority of whom are registered midwives.

The Board annually establishes a plan and budget. The OBWC's annual operating budget is approximately \$1.5M.

The OBWC operates exclusively at its location at 2260 Walkley Road, Ottawa, ON, 24 hours per day, seven days per week and employs 10 to 15 staff and grants appointment to approximately 50 registered midwives.

The OBWC uses Quickbooks Online software for accounting and outsources its payroll processing to ADP. The balance of information technology is based on Microsoft Office products. A large percentage of purchasing of goods and services is done through electronic funds transfer through ScotiaConnect. The OBWC has a Business VISA, a chequing and savings account through ScotiaBank.

The OBWC currently holds and distributes funding for two programs, Rooted and Resilient and Ask Masi, each program having independent chequing accounts through ScotiaBank. The funding for these programs is expected to conclude in spring of 2025.

The OBWC staff and a contracted bookkeeper/accountant complete the financial data entry and the reconciliation and reporting.

In August of 2023, the OBWC experienced a facility wide and devastating flood. The insurance claim associated with this flood is significant and the construction and contents claim is projected to be close to \$3 million. Therefore, the most recent financial statements 2023-24 show a significant variance from previous years financials. The 2024-25 fiscal year is projected to show a further variance and will include the acquisition and recording of capital assets.

#### **1.4 Delivery of Proposals**

Proponents are requested to deliver the proposal electronically in Adobe PDF format and any supporting materials (including examples of reports) **no later** than **Friday November 15, 2024 to**

Jolanta Scott-Parker, Executive Director  
[ED@ottawabirthcentre.ca](mailto:ED@ottawabirthcentre.ca)

Proposals received after the specified date and time will not be considered and will be returned, unopened, to the submitting proponent.

#### **1.5 Contact and Inquiries**

All inquiries should be directed by e-mail to the attention of the Executive Director.  
[ED@ottawabirthcentre.ca](mailto:ED@ottawabirthcentre.ca)

The OBWC may, at its sole discretion, also provide its written response to any inquiry to all other proponents.



## 2 TERMS & CONDITIONS

### 2.1 General

The OBWC shall have the right to reject any or all proposals, for any reason, or to accept any proposals, which the OBWC in its sole discretion deems most advantageous to itself. The lowest, or any, proposal will not necessarily be accepted and the OBWC shall have the right to waive any non-compliance with the requirements or documents set out herein and may at its sole discretion elect to retain for consideration proposals which are non-conforming because they do not contain the content or form required by these documents or because they have not complied with the process for submissions set out herein.

The OBWC shall have the right to further negotiate terms and conditions of the proposal/quotation with the chosen proponent.

The OBWC reserves the right to consider, during the evaluation of proposals:

- information provided in the proposal document itself;
- information received in response to enquiries made by the OBWC of third parties apart from those disclosed in the proposal in relation to the reputation, reliability, experience and capabilities of the person/organization submitting the proposal;
- the manner in which the proponent serves other customers;
- the compliance of the proponent with the OBWC's requirements and specifications; and
- Innovative approaches proposed by the proponent in the proposal.

The proponent acknowledges that the OBWC may rely upon the criteria which the OBWC deems relevant, even though such criteria may not have been disclosed to the proponent. By submitting a proposal, the proponent acknowledges the OBWC's rights under this section and absolutely waives any right or cause of action against the OBWC by reason of the OBWC's failure to accept the proposal submitted by the proponent, whether such right or cause of action arises in contract, negligence, or otherwise.

The OBWC shall assume that every statement in each response to this RFP is true, accurate, and complete. All or selected portions of the response from the selected proponent will become part of any contract entered into by the parties.

Any proposal in response to the RFP may be withdrawn prior to the date set for receipt of proposals. Withdrawal notification must be in written form and delivered to OBWC's contact indicated in Section 1.

Proposals submitted shall be irrevocable for a period of 120 days from the closing date.

Proposals and any accompanying documentation received in response to this RFP shall become the property of the OBWC and shall not be returned. Copies will be retained for archival purposes, as required.



All proponent costs incurred in the preparation of responses to this RFP, including any presentations or site visits, are the sole responsibility of the proponent and shall not be chargeable in any way to the OBWC. Any information contained in the proposal that is submitted in confidence must be clearly identified.

Proposals shall first be reviewed for compliance with the mandatory requirements of this RFP. Proposals not complying with one or more mandatory requirements shall receive no further consideration. This review for compliance will take the form of validating that the statements and supporting material referenced in the responses are of sufficient scope and depth to meet the mandatory requirements.

The OBWC may require a presentation from the proponent in support of their proposal.

### **3 STATEMENT OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES**

#### **3.1 Services**

The proponent of External Audit Services agrees to:

- The presentation of a written communication to the OBWC Finance Committee setting out the proponent's approach and relevant information to be considered in the annual audit examination, risks, timelines, materiality, assumptions and other considerations that are relevant to planning, conduct and reporting of the annual audit,
- Discussions and advice with respect to presentation, notes and other disclosure in the annual financial statements;
- Express an opinion on the financial statements of the OBWC;
- The presentation of a written communication to management and the Board of Directors at the end of each fiscal year audit addressing any internal control or other issues identified during the audit;
- Issue a management letter, if required, that provides recommendations regarding internal controls and opportunities for improvement or efficiency, when applicable;
- Attend Finance Committee and Board of Directors' meetings, to present the final audit and receive questions;
- Prepare and submit the relevant tax and information returns, on behalf of the OBWC;
- Provide continuing education opportunities (newsletters, seminars, conferences) to inform the OBWC of emerging reporting issues and practices.

#### **3.2 Timelines**

The OBWC's fiscal year is from 1 April to 31 March.



The OBWC's Annual General Meeting is held in mid-June. The OBWC's financial statements are approved at this meeting and must be ready for presentation to the Finance Committee anytime after the 1<sup>st</sup> of June

Approved financial statements are required by the funder by 30 June.

### **3.3 Term**

It is anticipated that the successful proponent will enter into a three-year agreement with the OBWC, commencing early December 2024 following the completion of a signed contract by both parties.

In each year thereafter, reappointment is subject to evaluation of auditor performance by the Board and approval by the Members at the Annual General Meeting.

## **4 PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS**

The submitted proposal must follow the format and specifications set out below:

- All proposals must be prepared in electronic format (Adobe PDF format). Each section shall begin on a new page. Each page shall be numbered in sequence and include the proponent's identification;
- Proponents must provide sufficient, relevant data and information under each section to allow evaluation;
- Each proposal must be signed by an authorized agent or representative.

## **5 CONTENTS – SECTION 1: TECHNICAL PROPOSAL**

### **5.1 Title Page**

Identify the proponent: the name, address, e-mail address, telephone and facsimile number of the principal representative responsible for the proposal; the name, address, e-mail address, telephone and facsimile number of an alternate contact person in event of the absence of the principal contact; and the date of the proposal.

### **5.2 Summary of the Proposed Audit Services**

The proponent is expected to include a summary of the services proposed to meet the requirements of the OBWC as outlined in this RFP.

### **5.3 Requirements**

The proponent is expected to respond to each requirement described in Section 3 in the RFP, providing sufficient detail and information to allow for effective evaluation while describing how the requirements outlined in Section 3 will be met. The evaluation will be based on the evaluation criteria identified in section 7 of this RFP document.



#### **5.4 Understanding of Objectives**

The proponent is expected to describe its understanding of the assignment, including overall scope and objectives, noting any specific challenges that may exist for the OBWC.

#### **5.5 Proponent Profile**

Provide a profile of the proponent, including organizational structure, number and location of employees, areas of specialization, number of years in business, major clients list, as well as details of similar program experience.

#### **5.6 Experience of the Proponent**

Provide a profile of the proponent and describe the relevant experience of the proponent. Demonstrate that the proponent's proposed key team members have adequate experience on similar types of contracts. The proponent will provide three (3) references for similar work successfully undertaken with other similar entities, preferably healthcare or not-for-profit organizations. Describe key attributes that are unique to the proponent. Describe the proponent's experience, challenges and successes in similar projects in comparable organizations.

#### **5.7 Approach and Methodology**

Describe the approach and methodology to be followed in completing all aspects of the services required as described in the terms of reference in order to achieve the stated objectives. Describe expected input and support requirements of OBWC staff to meet the objectives.

#### **5.8 Qualifications and Experience of Key Team Members**

Identify the lead person and key team members of the project team to be deployed and describe their individual capabilities, respective roles, professional designation(s) and availability for this contract. Include up to date résumé where appropriate. The résumé should highlight all relevant experience and work, and be limited to four (4) pages.

#### **5.9 Alternative Proposals**

Proponents may wish to submit an alternative approach to meeting the requirements of the OBWC. Such alternatives are welcomed, provided that they comply with the essential requirements set forth in this document and contain adequate justification (including costs) to the alternatives to allow comparison to the base submissions. The OBWC will be the sole decision maker on what alternative is acceptable. Proposals that do not comply with the essential requirements will be rejected.



## 6 CONTENTS – SECTION II: FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

Proponents must submit their financial proposal in Canadian funds. The total amount of Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) must be shown separately, as applicable.

The OBWC would consider it reasonable for the proposal to have a variable cost from year 1 to subsequent years due to the increased volume of financial activity in year 1 related to the flood recovery.

Financial proposals must clearly identify the personnel proposed and the associated category for evaluation purposes only. The OBWC is open to providing any documentation required to make a more accurate proposal, please inquire about any supporting documentation required at: [ED@ottawabirthcentre.ca](mailto:ED@ottawabirthcentre.ca)

## 7 EVALUATION

### 7.1 General

The objective of the proposal evaluation is to select the proponent demonstrating the highest level of competence and capability to provide external audit services to the OBWC at a reasonable cost.

### 7.2 Methodology

The proposal evaluation will be conducted in a two-step process comprising Mandatory criteria and Point rated criteria.

Proposals failing to meet all of the Mandatory criteria will be considered non-responsive. Proposals which meet the Mandatory criteria will be further evaluated using the Point rated criteria. Point rated criteria are weighted based on the relative importance of the criterion.

The successful proponent will be selected based on the best overall value to the OBWC.

### 7.3 Mandatory Criteria

The proponent must be a legal entity. Proponents must provide a statement to certify whether the proponent is a sole proprietorship, partnership or corporate entity, indicating laws under which the entity was registered or formed, together with the registered or corporate name. The proponent must identify any proposed subcontractors and the relationship between the primary proponent and the subcontractor.

Partial bids will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered further.

The proponent must have experience in providing external audit services to at least one health care organization or not-for-profit organization of comparable nature, size and/or complexity.





The proponent's proposal includes the specifications as stated in Sections 4, 5 and 6.

#### **7.4 Point Rated Criteria**

Proposals will be scored on the following rating criteria:

- Proponent Profile. The proponent provides a clear description of its business structure, organization and presence in the Ottawa Region
- Relevant Experience. Demonstrated relevant experience of the firm in providing audit services and other relevant services to entities of similar size, scope and complexity, including not-for-profit or healthcare organizations. The proponent should describe recent past and current projects, including name of the client, scope, description and duration of the audit, value of each service component and various functions and/or business areas in which the proponent has provided services illustrating their magnitude, and assessment of results achieved. Provide names, titles and telephone numbers of the business references.
- Demonstrated understanding of the mission, purpose, operations of, and issues facing the OBWC.
- Approach and Methodology.
  - A clear description of the proponent's approach and methodology to planning, conducting and reporting on the audit and any other communications materials or reports that the proponent would envisage in the provision of audit services.
  - A clear description of the audit timing and plan for how the proponent proposes to coordinate the delivery of audit services including expectations of, and impact on, OBWC staff.
  - A clear description of a transition strategy and plan for audit services if the proponent is unknown to the OBWC.
- Qualifications/role/experience of team
  - The proponent should provide a clear description of its proposed audit team, including the organizational structure, roles and responsibilities of each team member.
  - The proponent should demonstrate that the proposed audit partner has the relevant experience in projects of similar size, scope and complexity, to meet the requirements as described herein.
  - The proponent should describe the proposed audit manager's role and provide a detailed resume. The proponent should describe the proposed audit manager's experience in at least two (2) relevant projects including descriptions of the following for each project.



- Relevant skills and experience of other team members who would be anticipated for assignment to the audits of each of, and both, entities should be clearly identified and described.
- Description of other value-added services which can be offered to the OBWC.
- Overall quality of the proposal. The proponent should provide a complete, well structured, well-written and presented proposal that is easy to follow, understand and evaluate, reflective of the professional nature of the proponent and its reputation, inspiring the confidence of the OBWC.
- Provide a statement of independence and ongoing professional development
- Price showing the HST separately.

While price is a factor in the selection of the successful proponent, it is not the sole criterion. Criteria have been weighted and will be evaluated accordingly. Specifics of the criteria and weighting will not be disclosed to the proponents.

## **7.5 Evaluation Process**

Phase 1: Review of compliance to the MANDATORY requirements

- Proposals shall first be reviewed by the OBWC for compliance with the mandatory requirements of this RFP. Proposals not complying with one or more mandatory requirements shall receive no further consideration. This review for compliance will take the form of validating that the statements and supporting material referenced in the responses are of sufficient scope and depth to meet the mandatory requirements.

Phase 2: Evaluation against the RATED requirements

- Proposals that meet all the mandatory requirements shall be evaluated against the rated requirements by the OBWC Finance Committee.

Phase 3: Evaluation of the references of the highest scoring proponents

- The references provided by the highest scoring proponents may be contacted at the discretion of the OBWC. If the OBWC determines, based on the results of the references, that the proponent does not meet the requirements of the RFP, the proponent will not be given further consideration.
- If the OBWC determines, based on the results of the references, that the proponent does not meet a rated requirement of the RFP as described in proponent's written proposal, the scoring for that portion of the proponent's proposal will be reassessed downward.

Phase 4: Presentation from the highest scoring proponents



The highest scoring proponents may be invited to make a presentation to, and respond to questions from, the Finance Committee.

**Phase 5: Evaluation of the financial capability of the highest scoring proponent**

The highest scoring proponent following the references evaluation, upon request from the OBWC, must provide the contracting authority the necessary financial information to support its ability to perform the contract.

In the event that a proposal is found to be non-compliant on the basis that the proponent is considered not to be financially capable of performing the requirement, official notification shall be provided to the proponent.

**Phase 6: Recommendation**

The highest scoring financially capable proponent, following the references evaluation will be recommended to the Board for appointment as external auditor for the OBWC for the year ending 31 March 2025 and subsequent contract award.

## **8 REFERENCES**

The OBWC requires references from three (2) similar clients in Ontario, including contact names, titles and telephone numbers. This information should include a description of the work performed for the client, length and dates of their contracts.

## **9 ACCEPTANCE OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

The following statement and signature must be provided in the proposal:

We have read, understood and agreed to abide by all information contained in the OBWC's Request for Proposal and are authorized by the proponent to bind the proponent.

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Name of Proponent

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Name of proponent's representative



Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_