**ANNEX “B”**

**INDUSTRY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSE TEMPLATE**

**INTRODUCTION**

This Request for Information (RFI) is being conducted in advance of issuing a formal Request for Standing Offer (RFSO) for various POR services. The range of services is outlined in Annex “A” of this RFI.

The purpose of the RFI process is to obtain specific feedback from industry on aspects to consider when developing the new POR procurement tools, to ultimately allow PSPC to move forward with a timely procurement process that will result in an effective and efficient outcome for Canada.

Respondents should provide their comments and, where applicable, alternatives and recommendations as well as rationales regarding how the requirements or objectives described in this RFI could be satisfied. Respondents may answer some or all of the predefined questions, and may offer additional comments beyond the predefined questions, as desired.

Respondents should explain any assumptions they make in their responses.

Through the RFI process, PSPC is requesting information from suppliers on the topics below.

For each question, suppliers should reply directly beneath the word “RESPONSE” where indicated in the template below. If information or a document is provided outside of the response area of the template, please indicate where the information can be found and clearly label the referenced document.

**QUESTIONS FOR INDUSTRY**

1. **Corporate Profile – Supplier Information**

**Question #1:** Please provide contact information so that PSPC can get in touch for any needed clarification of your response.

* Company name
* Contact person, email address and telephone number

**RESPONSE – Question #1:**

1. **Pricing Structure by Method for Various Incidence Rates or for Specialized Target Populations**

**For context –** Under the current Standing Offers suppliers were asked to provide a cost per interview for various survey durations (in minutes), and for different probability sample size ranges (e.g., 500 – 999; 1000 – 1499; 1500 – 1999; etc.). Separate pricing grids showing cost per interview were asked for landline, cell phone, online (panel) and online (other e.g., client-supplied lists). An example table follows:

## *TABLE 1 – Fixed unit price for individual landline telephone completions with the adult general public, inclusive of data tabulation*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Initial Period of Standing Offer** | | | | | | |
| **Questionnaire duration in minutes** | **1 to 499** | **500 to 999** | **1000 to 1499** | **1500 to 1999** | **2000 to 2499** | **2500 to 3000** |
| **5 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **6 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **7 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **8 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **9 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **10 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **11 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **12 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **13 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **14 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **15 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **20 minutes** |  |  |  |  |  |  |

For telephone (landline) surveys, the pricing approach also took into account the incidence rates of target audiences by requiring suppliers to provide an additional grid of “additional costs per completed interview” for various incidence rates from 5% to 90%. When costing individual research projects, these additional costs are added to the cost per interview that the firm provided for various survey durations (in minutes). An example table follows:

*TABLE 2 - Additional cost for incidence rates*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Initial Period of Standing Offer** | | | |
| **Incidence Rate** | **Additional cost**  **per interview** | **Incidence Rate** | **Additional cost**  **per interview** |
| **5%** |  | **50%** |  |
| **10%** |  | **55%** |  |
| **15%** |  | **60%** |  |
| **20%** |  | **65%** |  |
| **25%** |  | **70%** |  |
| **30%** |  | **75%** |  |
| **35%** |  | **80%** |  |
| **40%** |  | **85%** |  |
| **45%** |  | **90%** |  |

However, under the current Standing Offers, the pricing approach did not take into account various incidence rates for cell phone or online surveys, i.e., there were no pricing grids for additional costs per completed interview by cell phone or online.

Further, whereas telephone survey samples were specified to be probability samples, there was no distinct pricing for probability or non-probability samples for online methods.

**Question #2:** How do you think Canada should structure the pricing grids in the new standing offers to obtain suppliers’ pricing for lower incidence target audiences (i.e., where the incidence rate in the Canadian adult population is between 5% and 90%) and for non-probability samples:

1. In the case of telephone samples:
   1. Should Canada maintain the current pricing grids for lower incidence landline probability samples?
   2. Should Canada introduce a new pricing grid for lower incidence cell phone probability samples?
   3. Should Canada introduce new pricing grids for non-probability telephone panel samples of the Canadian adult population?
   4. Should Canada apply the current pricing grid (similar to table 1) to pre-screen qualified respondents followed by using a pricing grid similar to table 1 to undertake the actual survey (i.e., conducting a short pre-screening survey interview followed by the actual survey)?
   5. Any other suggestions?
2. In the case of online panel samples:
   1. Should Canada introduce a new/separate pricing grid for panel samples of low incidence in the Canadian adult population (between 5% and 90%) that require further screening beyond the panel’s known demographics?
   2. How should the pricing grid be structured for low incidence audiences? What costs (e.g. labour and any other costs) are typically involved in developing client pricing? Would you have any suggestions about how to derive common pricing units?
   3. Should Canada include separate pricing grids for probability online panel samples and non-probability online panel samples of the Canadian adult population?
   4. Should Canada introduce a new pricing grid that would use a consistent pricing (i.e., a “blended rate”) for online surveys with any specialized target audiences pre-specified by Canada in the standing offers (e.g. Doctors, Farmers, Business Executives, Teachers, Other Professionals, Newcomers/Immigrants)?
   5. Any other suggestions?

**RESPONSE – Question #2a):**

**RESPONSE – Question #2b):**

1. **Security**

Historically, some GC POR projects have included a security requirement, while many GC POR projects have not. For projects that do, the GC requirements are rigorous and may include, but are not limited to:

* Security clearances (reliability level) for organizations and individual personnel.
* General security requirements to protect personal information in documents and IT systems. For some contracts, physical inspection of worksites and IT infrastructure may be required.
* Identification of a Company Security Officer.

Information about Government of Canada Security Requirements can be found at the following link:

<https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/esc-src/index-eng.html>

**Question #3:** Based on the above:

1. What Government of Canada security level, if any, do you currently hold (please specify)?
   1. Organization:
   2. Personnel:
   3. Worksites:
2. What security standards or policies do you follow when providing public opinion research services?
3. For specific projects that include a security requirement, would you be willing to obtain the following security clearances[[1]](#footnote-1), if you do not already have them?
4. Personnel screening at the Reliability level for individuals accessing Protected B information
5. Designated organization screening (DOS) up to the Protected B level
6. Document Safeguarding Capability (DSC) up to the Protected B level
7. Authority to Process IT up to the Protected B level

**RESPONSE – Question #3a):**

**RESPONSE – Question #3b):**

**RESPONSE – Question #3c):**

1. **Web Accessibility**

GC departments are responsible for making their POR reports available to the public via the Library and Archives Canada website, which requires an HTML5 format that is compliant with the [*Standard on Web Accessibility*](https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=23601)*.*

**Question #4:**

1. If HTML conversion (compliant with the Standard on Web Accessibility) of final POR reports were to be included among the usual research services for POR projects under the new standing offers, would your company be able to provide this service?
2. What considerations should PSPC keep in mind if it were to make web-accessible reporting deliverables part of the usual research services for POR projects under the new standing offers. Would you have suggestions on how to structure pricing information which would be used in the next series of standing offers?

**RESPONSE – Question #4a):**

**RESPONSE – Question #4b):**

1. **Social Procurement**

As per the PSPC Minister’s mandate letter, PSPC is expected to develop “initiatives to increase the diversity of bidders on government contracts, in particular businesses owned or led by Canadians from under-represented groups, such as women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities, and take measures to increase the accessibility of the procurement system to such groups while working to increase the capacity of these groups to participate in the system”.

PSPC intends to implement a social procurement approach to leverage the government’s buying power through procurement to support socio-economic objectives and to generate positive societal impacts.

*Social enterprise*

A social enterprise is currently defined as an enterprise that seeks to achieve social, cultural or environmental aims through the sale of goods and services in which the majority of net profits must be directed to a social objective (e.g., reducing environmental impacts of its products or including local training in the community).

*Diverse supplier*

A diverse supplier is currently defined as a business owned or led by Canadians from underrepresented groups, such as women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and visible minorities. Each business is usually defined as being owned, operated and controlled by 51% of a given group (e.g., women-owned business, Indigenous-owned business, persons with disabilities-owned business, or visible minority-owned business).

PSPC is considering various models to confirm that a supplier meets the definition of a diverse supplier.

One option is that suppliers self-certify with an attestation, which would be verified by PSPC through audits throughout the life of the standing offer. A second option is to make use of third-party organizations which verify that suppliers meet the diverse supplier definition and provide a certification for a fee. To our knowledge, the following organizations provide such certification:

* <https://www.buysocialcanada.com/social-enterprise-certification>
* Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council
* WBE Canada, Certified Women Business Enterprises
* Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business
* Inclusive Workplace Supply Council of Canada
* Social Purchasing Project (for social purpose enterprises)

**Question #5:**

1. Could you recommend approaches for incorporating social procurement measures in any future bid solicitation? For example, one approach could be to include a rated criterion in the RFSO to award 5-15% of the total technical score to diverse suppliers.
2. Are you aware of any other organizations, besides those listed above, that certify diverse suppliers or social enterprises?
3. Certification bodies typically charge a fee to certify a business as a diverse supplier or social enterprise. Are you willing to pay an extra fee to be certified? Do you think it is fair or creates a barrier for your entry?
4. Should PSPC use attestation (self-certification) followed by audits, or certification by established certification organizations to qualify diverse suppliers and social enterprises? What other methods would you propose we use to verify diverse suppliers?
5. Do you anticipate that the GC’s commitment to increasing the diversity of businesses owned or led by Canadians from underrepresented groups will have an impact on your participation in any future procurement?

**RESPONSE – Question #5a):**

**RESPONSE – Question #5b):**

**RESPONSE – Question #5c):**

**RESPONSE – Question #5d):**

**RESPONSE – Question #5e):**

1. **Aboriginal Business Set-Aside**

**Question #6:**

1. Are there special programs or objectives within your firm for hiring Indigenous individuals?
2. Has your firm ever, or is it currently providing services to Indigenous communities, people and or nations?

**RESPONSE – Question #6a):**

**RESPONSE – Question #6b):**

1. **Additional Comments**

We welcome comments from suppliers regarding other potential enhancements and/or efficiencies in the upcoming new Standing Offers.

**Question #7:** Are there any other comments you wish to provide regarding the renewal of the POR Standing Offers?

**RESPONSE – Question #7:**

1. There is no cost to the supplier to apply for security screening. After security screening, a supplier may be required to make necessary changes (e.g., security cameras, cabinet locks, software etc.) in order to become compliant with security requirements, which may include incurring costs before the contracted work can move ahead. For personnel security screening, a cost of $45 per person is associated with fingerprinting (the rate is approximate and can change from year to year). For information on PSPC’s Contract Security Program please click on the following link: <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/esc-src/ressources-resources-eng.html>

   . [↑](#footnote-ref-1)