

# **Indigenous Shelter Operator Expression of Interest - Guidelines**

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# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In November 2023, Toronto City Council (“City Council”) adopted the [Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy](#) (HSCIS) to proactively inform capital spending decisions to promote recovery and stability in the City of Toronto’s (the “City”) shelter system. This includes short, medium, and long-term goals to transition Toronto's shelter system from an emergency focused COVID-19 response to a long-term, proactive approach to capital planning. This aims to ensure new spaces are proactively acquired, thoughtfully designed to enhance safety and dignity, meet the needs of Toronto’s diverse homeless population, and are well integrated into the surrounding community.

In part, the HSCIS provides a roadmap to develop up to 1,600 new shelter spaces across up to 20 sites over 2024-2033 to support recovery and stability in the shelter system. These HSCIS spaces will provide shelter infrastructure that is purpose-built to better serve shelter clients, improve operations, and allow the City’s Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) division to move away from the use of temporary hotel shelter sites. A key focus of this approach is to look for shelter opportunities across the Greater Toronto Area and in areas of the city that are currently lacking homelessness services. This will help people experiencing homelessness access support in their existing communities.

TSSS is committed to ensuring that its homelessness services, including emergency and transitional shelters, are accessible and responsive to the needs of all people experiencing homelessness, including Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness.

Advancing reconciliation across the homelessness service sector requires meaningful and proactive engagement and collaboration with Indigenous service providers. This work builds on the [City of Toronto Reconciliation Action Plan 2022 - 2032](#), and [Meeting in the Middle Engagement Strategy and Action Plan](#). Meeting in the Middle was co-created to foster better relationships between TSSS and Indigenous organizations to meaningfully address Indigenous homelessness.

Through Meeting in the Middle, Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) has committed to work in partnership with the Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board (TICAB) to co-develop solutions to address Indigenous homelessness. TICAB is an advisory body comprised of Indigenous agencies that work closely with the City to provide recommendations and decision-making for processes and policies in shelter and housing to improve outcomes for Indigenous peoples in Toronto.

TSSS has committed to increase resource allocation for Indigenous service providers to deliver Indigenous-led solutions to address Indigenous homelessness. Through the HSCIS, TSSS has committed 20% of all future infrastructure funding for new shelter development to be allocated specifically for Indigenous shelter services. This includes the development of approximately of four (4) new Indigenous operated sites between 2024 and 2033.

The process for new HSCIS Indigenous site development was co-designed in partnership with TICAB. Key recommendations from this collaborative process include the development a distinct Indigenous application to select Indigenous shelter operators and prioritization of an Indigenous women’s shelter as the first HSCIS Indigenous site. The first HSCIS Indigenous shelter will be an Indigenous women’s shelter, and a Qualified List will be developed for future HSCIS Indigenous

sites. The City is also committed to working with the selected Proponent(s) on the process for land ownership rights for the new shelter site.

## 1.2 Purpose

TSSS developed this Indigenous Stream - Expression of Interest (EOI) process to provide opportunities for Indigenous non-profit organizations across the city to apply to act a Shelter Operator for HSCIS Indigenous shelter sites being developed over the course of 2024-2033.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This Indigenous Stream EOI is a *distinct* process from the General Stream EOI that TSSS launched in September-October 2024. These two EOI streams do not overlap, and applications to the general EOI **do not** carry over to the Indigenous EOI. You must apply separately to both applications, if interested. For more information on that process please visit the [EOI website](#).

TSSS intends to launch these EOIs on a rotating schedule on or around an annual basis over the course of 2024-2033, in alignment with the acquisition of suitable HSCIS shelter sites. The EOI may be fully closed once TSSS has reached its goals, as listed in the HSCIS. This means that organizations that submit an Application ("Proponents") may have multiple opportunities to submit Applications to be selected to operate an HSCIS shelter site. That said, TSSS will allocate a **maximum of one (1)** HSCIS site to each successful lead organization over the 10-year period of the HSCIS (2024-2033). TSSS may determine to omit this limitation *if* there are no other available qualified Proponents for a specific HSCIS site, on an as-needed basis.

Each EOI will have its own schedule, requirements, and supporting materials, all of which will be available on TSSS' [EOI website](#). Details on the specific sites will be provided as information becomes available.

The guidelines set out for this EOI are designed to ensure that Applications are received through an open process and that Proponents receive fair treatment in the solicitation, receipt, and evaluation of its Applications, based on criteria as determined by TSSS. TSSS shall reject the Applications of any Proponent who fails to comply with any such guidelines.

Any proposals/requests for shelter operating funding that are submitted to TSSS and/or the City *outside* of the EOI process will be directed to apply via the EOI process.

The Proponent who (1) is deemed the best match for each HSCIS site and (2) receives the highest score on their Application ("Prospective Proponent") for the respective Qualified List is required to participate in an additional due diligence exercise, including but not limited to a financial review, prior to being deemed the Successful Proponent for the site (see [Section 7.3](#) for more details).

## 1.3 Applicable Standards and Requirements

Successful Proponents shall comply with the building and service delivery expectations outlined in the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#), the [Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines](#), and other standards as defined in the Operating agreement, as required by TSSS.

TSSS values its community partners and is committed to working with both clients and operators to help maintain compliance with applicable standards and models.

## 1.4 Authorities

TSSS is releasing this EOI under the authorities delegated by City Council in [CD24.7](#), as described in reports to City Council in items [EC7.7](#), [EC9.4](#), and [EX15.3](#)

## 2.0 Application Instructions

### 2.1 Important Dates

Please visit TSSS' [EOI website](#) for details on important dates and deadlines. **This schedule is subject to change.** Proponents are responsible for regularly checking the [EOI website](#) for updates and adhering to all timelines.

### 2.2 Who should apply to this Indigenous Operator Expression of Interest?

TSSS is seeking Applications from non-profit organizations that:

1. Meet all the eligibility requirements for this EOI (see [4.0 Eligibility Requirements](#)),
2. Have expertise in providing direct services to Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness, including organizations that do not necessarily have experience operating shelters but do have experience in providing other services to Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness, AND,
3. Have a strong financial record as relates to the operation of said services.

TSSS welcomes joint Applications from non-profit organizations proposing to operate services in partnership in response to this EOI, where one organization is identified as the lead and responsible for executing all agreements with TSSS. In this case, a proposed governance and decision-making model must be provided to clarify the relationship.

Organizations will be scored according to their depth and length of experience in delivering programs and services to people experiencing homelessness, as well as experience in the operation of a municipal emergency shelter. Proponents should also demonstrate its experience in and ability to deliver direct services, as relates to the provisions of these Guidelines.

### 2.3 Application Instructions

Proponents must meet all the following criteria, **prior** to submitting an Application:

1. Read all information available on TSSS' [EOI website](#), including this document, in its entirety.
2. Read the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#), in its entirety.
3. Ensure that your organization meets each eligibility requirement, as defined in [4.0 Eligibility Requirements](#).
4. Complete an electronic Application via Medallia, PRIOR to the **posted deadline** on TSSS' [EOI website](#). Proponents can find the link to the Medallia survey on TSSS' [EOI website](#).

Applications will not be accepted for **any** of the following reasons:

1. Applications that are submitted later than the posted deadline on TSSS' [EOI website](#).
  - a. Note that ad hoc evaluations shall be conducted under special circumstances, as described in [7.5 Ad Hoc Evaluations](#).
2. Applications that are incomplete and/or deemed ineligible.
3. Applications that are not completed in Medallia (e.g., email, fax, physical copy).

### 2.4 Contact

All communications and questions regarding this EOI should be sent via email to ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca **before** the deadline for written questions, as listed on TSSS' [EOI website](#). This deadline ensures (1) TSSS can disseminate the response(s) to the question(s) to other Proponents, where deemed necessary by TSSS, and (2) that other Proponents are given enough time to incorporate said response(s) in its Application.

No City representative, whether an official, agent, or employee, other than those contacted via ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca are authorized to speak for TSSS with respect to this EOI. Any Proponent who uses any information, clarification, or interpretation from any other representative does so entirely at the Proponent's own risk. Any attempt by a Proponent to bypass the EOI process may be grounds for rejection of its Application.

## 3.0 Funding and Resources

### 3.1 Operating Funding

If the Successful Proponent(s) will rely on TSSS for the provision of operational funding, in whole or in part, to cover the costs associated with the delivery of required services specific to the operation of the municipal shelter, TSSS and the Successful Proponent will define reasonable funding levels in the respective Operating Agreement, which are within range of comparable municipally-funded shelter operations, prior to execution of said agreement.

Actual funding levels may vary, based on the type and level of services provided at each HSCIS site, to ensure funding is appropriate to the level of supports required and reasonable within a range of comparable municipally funded shelter operations. Ongoing operational funding is subject to annual review and is contingent on City Council's approval of the annual budget for TSSS.

See section [8.2 Limitations and Acceptance of Applications](#) for details on limitations.

### 3.2 Capital Funding and Facility Specifications

Successful Proponent(s) will operate the emergency shelter program in a facility that is provided by TSSS, unless the Proponent has secured their own facility that meets the requirements of TSSS. Any facility provided by TSSS will comply with the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#). Additional guidelines and models may apply, including the [Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines](#).

These facilities will generally meet the following criteria:

- a) Be designed with input of the Successful Proponent(s) and City staff, where possible.
- b) Accommodate approximately 70-100 spaces, subject to the program delivery model and clients served (e.g., youth programs).
- c) Comply with the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005](#).
- d) Provide maximum privacy for clients, subject to site constraints.
- e) Not use bunk beds, subject to the program delivery model and clients served (e.g., families).
- f) Include sufficient privacy and confidentiality consideration for counselling, programming, case management, and staff office spaces.
- g) Include a designated, secure outdoor space, including an outdoor smoking space.
- h) Include designated indoor and outdoor pet spaces, including service animals.
- i) Include wireless internet connection that will be made freely available to clients.

## 4.0 Eligibility requirements

Proponents must meet ALL the following requirements to be eligible for this EOI:

1. Be incorporated as a non-profit organization with a recently audited financial statement (audited within the last 23 months).

- Unincorporated associations and non-profit organizations may apply with a trustee.
  - **For-profit organizations are not eligible to apply or serve as a trustee.**
2. Be primarily located in the Greater Toronto Area and whose primary activities take place within the Greater Toronto Area.
  3. Be in good standing with the City (e.g., recipients of funding must have met the terms and conditions of previous funding).
    - The organization shall not be in default of the terms and conditions of any current or previous agreements, in the opinion of the division head, with any division, organization, board, and/or commission of the City of Toronto
  4. Commit to and abide by the building and service delivery expectations outlined in the EOI Guidelines (this document) and the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#).
  5. Commit to operating a municipal emergency shelter program for a minimum of ten (10) years, from the date of the execution of the Operating Agreement, subject to (1) the availability of funds, the necessary appropriations of the Applicable Funder, and where applicable, the payment of those funds to the City, and (2) City Council approval of TSSS' operating budgets.
  6. Commit to a referral process for the intaking of clients that may be restricted to City-defined referral pathways, including but not limited to the City's central intake, streets to homes, encampment office, and/or other urgent priorities as directed by TSSS.
  7. Commit to take all reasonable measures to accommodate clients accompanied by their pet, including providing services to people accompanied by a guide dog or service animals as required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.
  8. Commit to paying a minimum of \$53,000 annual or higher to all front-line staff employed by the municipal emergency shelter program, based on 2024 figures.
    - Note: TSSS provides the necessary operational funding to ensure staff working at City-funded shelters are paid at this rate, at a minimum. Details will be clarified for the Successful Proponent in the Operating Agreement.
  9. Commit to the terms that administrative costs (overhead expenses) will be capped at 10% of project expenses, not including staffing.

## 5.0 Service Delivery Requirements

The following is a list of key eligibility requirements for this EOI. Please note that this is a high-level description of requirements that are fully detailed in the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#). In the event of inconsistency and/or contradiction between (1) the requirements described in this list, and (2) the Operating Agreement and/or the Toronto Shelter Standards, the interpretation of requirements in the documents listed in (2) shall take precedence. These minimum requirements may change, based on programming and clients served, as defined by TSSS.

### 5.1 Operational Requirements

- a) Operate the emergency shelter for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.
- b) Maintain and ensure the implementation of business continuity plans.
- c) Commit to regular site visits, audits, and/or reviews by TSSS or other City accountability officers (e.g., Toronto Auditor General, Ombudsman Toronto), as deemed necessary by the City.
- d) Use and ensure the quality and privacy of information accessed through TSSS' Shelter Management Information System (SMIS) to record all relevant client-related information (e.g., intake, triage, admission, standardized assessment tools for best-fit support services, discharge, incident reports, complaints, case management notes, service restrictions).



- e) Participate in program evaluation by TSSS, including an assessment against performance indicators, as outlined in an Operating Agreement.
- f) Participate in collecting and reporting on TSSS performance indicator metrics.

## 5.2 Program Requirements

- a) Provide individualized and housing-focused case management and system navigation supports to clients, including but not limited to (1) follow-up supports, as required, and (2) housing, health, employment, culture, recreation, and referrals to community partners.
- b) Connect clients with appropriate community services, if the required resources are not available on site and/or if additional supports are required.
- c) Accommodate all clients within the applicable sector, regardless of their unique identity and support needs (e.g., ability, gender, age, sexual orientation, race, substance use, state of mental health).
- d) Assist clients to find and secure housing (e.g., permanent housing, supportive housing, long-term care, etc.), working with a "Housing First" approach (for more information see section 5.3 in the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#)).
- e) Provide services to clients in a manner that is client-centred, strengths-focused, human-rights focused, trauma-informed, equity-focused, and supportive to accommodate individuals with a variety of needs.
- f) Operate with a harm reduction approach, in alignment with [TSSS' Harm Reduction Framework](#).
- g) Accept pets and develop related policies and procedures.
- h) Conduct regular case management team meetings.
- i) Participate in a peer support program.
- j) Develop a process to engage clients in identifying program priorities.

## 5.3 Partnership and Community Engagement Requirements

- a) Develop and maintain partnerships with community-based homeless service agencies and health service providers.
- b) Work with TSSS and with other funders (e.g., local health integration networks, private sector, other levels of government, public sector) to access additional resources.
- c) Act as a hub for community connections and integrate services within the community.
- d) Work closely with the community in which the shelter site is located to maintain a positive community relationship, including:
  - i. Maintaining a clean and welcoming exterior of the building and property.
  - ii. Developing a community engagement policy and procedure to provide a timely response to community complaints.
  - iii. Designating a staff lead to respond to questions and complaints from clients, the community, City Council offices, and partners, in a timely fashion.
  - iv. Proactively engaging the community to foster a positive relationship with neighbours, local businesses, and other key stakeholders, and respond quickly to community concerns.
  - v. Leading engagement initiatives in support of the site and surrounding community.
- k) For organizations with less than one year experience operating a shelter: Establish partnerships with existing shelter(s), respite(s), 24-hour drop-ins, and/or 24-hour violence against women/intimate partner violence shelter(s) and/or crisis care facilities to support organizational capacity building in including in the areas of i) shelter operations and ii) asset management.



#### 5.4 Asset Management Requirements

- a) Develop and implement a facility management plan for maintaining cleanliness.
- b) Conduct facility maintenance and repairs, as necessary.
- c) Develop and implement a pest management policy and program.
- d) Participate in regular audits of the building condition.
- e) Conduct and support TSSS in conducting state of good repair work, as required.

#### 5.5 Staffing Requirements

- a) Staffing model (minimum requirement):
  - i. **Manager:** Minimum 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) for the site.
  - ii. **Supervisor(s):** Minimum 1 FTE for case workers, in addition to other supervision for other staff and operations, as required.
  - iii. **Frontline staff:** On site for all operating hours (24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year).
  - iv. **Community Relations and Client Programming:** Minimum 1 FTE.
  - v. **Housing workers/caseworkers:** At a 1:20 staff-to-client ratio.
  - vi. **Maintenance staff:** Minimum 1 FTE.
- b) The following may be part of your staff complement or you may subcontract these services. If you are selected as a 'Prospective Proponent', you will be required to provide details on these supplemental staff roles as part of the Phase 4 of the Evaluation (see section [7.3 Evaluation and Selection Process](#)).
  - i. Cleaning staff.
  - ii. Catering or food preparation staff.
- c) Staff must be adequately trained in a broad range of client service approaches and methods, including, but not limited to, anti-racism/anti-oppression approaches, cultural competence, and are trained to deliver services that meet a Housing First approach, customer service standards, harm reduction strategies, and adheres to health and safety regulations.

### 6.0 Financial Review

Proponents are required to provide financial information in up to two distinct stages (see section [7.3 Evaluation and Selection Process](#)).

This includes:

- 1. **Stage 1:** Via the initial Medallia Application, all Proponents are required to provide basic details on their financial and organizational health. This includes providing a recently audited financial statement, annual operating spending values, current unrestricted reserve fund values, and basic details on the organization.
- 2. **Stage 2:** Prospective Proponents may be required to provide additional financial information which may include, but is not limited to, details on additional funding sources and the associated values, projected revenue, long-term debt, legal disputes and/or liability cases, and liquidity.

## 7.0 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

### 7.1 Evaluation Committee

TSSS established a dedicated Evaluation Committee that is comprised of a selection of staff to oversee the review and evaluation of all completed Applications. The Evaluation Committee may, at its sole discretion, retain additional committee members or advisors as required.

**By applying, Proponents agree that the decisions of the Evaluation Committee are final.**

### 7.2 Evaluation and Selection Process

All Applications will be evaluated through a comprehensive review by the Evaluation Committee, which includes the following phases:

- a) **Phase 1 - Verify Eligibility:** The Evaluation Committee will eliminate all Applications that (1) are incomplete, (2) were submitted after the deadline, and/or (3) do not meet the full set of eligibility criteria, as outlined in these Guidelines.
- b) **Phase 2 - Score Applications:** The Evaluation Committee will review and evaluate each remaining Application using consistent and pre-determined scoring criteria. The Evaluation Committee will add successful proponents to each of the four sector-based Qualified Lists, where applicable (see section [7.4 Evaluation Criteria and Scoring](#) for details).
- c) **Phase 3 - Match Site:** Once TSSS has identified an HSCIS site and confirmed the program sector for that site, the Evaluation Committee will review the Qualified List to identify a “Prospective Proponent”. This phase includes, but is not limited to:
  - Excluding Proponents that indicated that they are not willing to provide services (1) in the area in which site is located, (2) to the sector that will be served at the site, or (3) any other restrictions as listed in the “**Service Delivery Interests**” section of the Application.
  - Selecting the Proponent with the **highest score** from the corresponding sector-based Qualified List.
  - Selecting Proponents that indicated that they have existing experience and/or partnerships/networks in the area.

*For example,* TSSS hypothetically has identified a site in North York and has determined that the site will be an Indigenous women’s site. The Evaluation Committee will consult the Qualified List and (1) eliminate any Proponents that have indicated that they **will not** provide services in North York, (2) eliminate any Proponents that have indicated that they **will not** work with Indigenous women, (3) factor in any other restrictions/limitations indicated by Proponents in their Application, and (4) select the Proponent with the highest score among the remaining proponents on the Qualified List. This Proponent will become the Prospective Proponent for that site.

**Note that Proponents that have applied to this EOI and (1) have a passing score AND (2) are proposing to use their own facility, will be prioritized as a separate Prospective Proponent at this time, given that they will not rely on the HSCIS site that is being offered by TSSS.**

- d) **Phase 4 – Conduct due diligence on the Prospective Proponent:** The Evaluation Committee will invite the Prospective Proponent to participate in the second stage Application.
- If the Prospective Proponent declines, TSSS will return to phase 3 to select a new Prospective Proponent.
  - If the Prospective Proponent accepts, TSSS will request additional information, to be reviewed by subject matter experts across TSSS. This may include requests for, but is not limited to:
    - i. **An expanded financial review**, which allows TSSS to further review detailed information from the Prospective Proponent regarding its financial health. This may also include a deeper review of the financial statement, as provided in the initial Application.
    - ii. **Quality assurance verification** which may include consultation/review with TSSS' Quality Assurance unit for Prospective Proponents that have an expired or active Operating Agreement with TSSS.
    - iii. **Site visits**, which may be applicable to (1) gain a better understanding of the Prospective Proponent's current operations, and/or (2) if the Prospective Proponent is proposing to use its own facility, to verify that the facility meets all applicable standards.
    - iv. **Letters of support** from other funders, if applicable.
  - Note: At this phase, TSSS may reveal details of the respective site, however limitations may be imposed due to the confidential nature of this work.

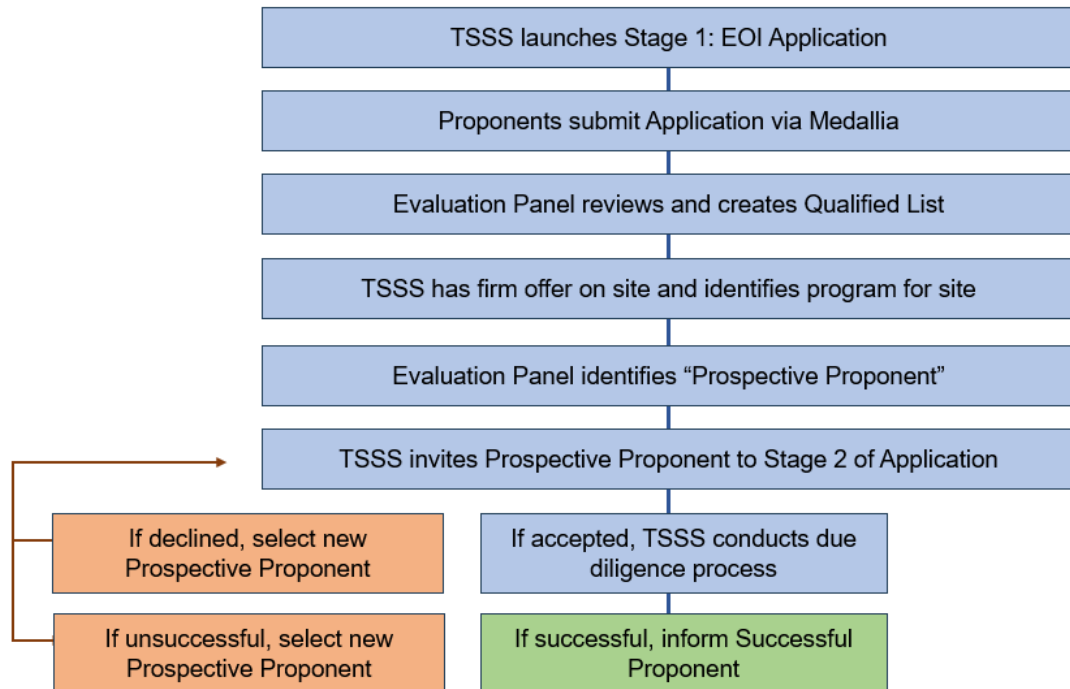
If TSSS **is satisfied** with the Prospective Proponent's responses in Phase 4, the Evaluation Committee will proceed to Phase 5.

If TSSS **is not satisfied** with the Prospective Proponent's responses in Phase 4, the Evaluation Committee will return to Phase 3 to identify a new Prospective Proponent.

- e) **Phase 5 – Final Selection:** The Evaluation Committee will make a recommendation to the General Manager of TSSS to approve its selection of a Successful Proponent that best matches the needs of a shelter site.

The evaluation process will take approximately 1-3 months, depending on the volume of Applications, following the Application Deadline. Once the Evaluation Committee has completed their evaluation of all eligible and complete Applications, they will inform all Proponents with complete and eligible Applications of their outcome, regardless of whether they are the Successful Proponent or not.

Figure 1: Evaluation Workflow



### 7.3 Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

Evaluation Criteria	Value
Section 1: Eligibility Verification	Pass/Fail
Section 2: Service Delivery Interests	Not Scored – Used to match Proponents with HSCIS sites
Section 3: Financial and Organizational Health Verification	15% of Total
Section 4: Service Experience	35% of Total
Section 5: Proposed Shelter Program	50 % of Total
Section 6: Optional: Letters of Support for Proposed Partnerships	Pass/Fail
<b>Total Application Content</b>	<b>100%</b>

The Evaluation Committee will assign each Application with a total score out of 100. The scores in each of these categories reflect the overall quality of the Application and the projected capacity of the respective Proponent to provide shelter services to the respective sector, in alignment with these Guidelines and applicable standards.

Proponents that achieve at least **60/100 (60%)** in each applicable sector will be added to the Qualified List. This means that they are deemed qualified by TSSS to provide services to Indigenous clients experiencing homelessness and shall be **considered** to be selected as a Prospective Proponent for an upcoming HSCIS Indigenous shelter site, pending the remaining Phases of the evaluation.

## 7.4 Ad Hoc Evaluation

The Evaluation Committee shall consider evaluating and selecting Applications that are submitted after the Application Deadline in a separate evaluation (“Ad hoc Evaluation”), outside of the evaluation period for this Application process, **if** the Application meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. The Proponent has (1) secured its own facility that meets all City’s building requirements AND (2) the facility is available for occupancy **before** the current/next scheduled standard evaluation period can be reasonably completed.
2. The Proponent has (1) secured funding to cover significant ongoing operational/capital funding AND (2) there is a risk of that supplemental funding being revoked, if remaining operational/capital funds are not secured **before** the current/next scheduled standard evaluation period can be reasonably completed.

In all cases, Ad hoc Evaluation will only be considered by the Evaluation Committee if confirmation and/or provision of operating funding is required **before** the current/next scheduled standard evaluation period can be reasonably completed. Eligibility for an Application to be considered as part of this Ad hoc Evaluation is solely at the discretion of the Evaluation Committee.

These Ad Hoc Evaluations aim to ensure that TSSS can:

1. Achieve potential cost-savings opportunities by leveraging external funding and/or resources, and by decanting temporary hotels at a faster rate by selecting Successful Proponents outside of the scheduled evaluation periods.
2. Respond to emergent opportunities in a timely manner by selecting Shelter Operators throughout the full course of the HSCIS (2024-2033), while ensuring consistent Application and evaluation methodologies.

## 7.5 Clarifications and Follow-Ups

As part of the evaluation process, the Evaluation Committee may contact a Proponent(s) to verify and/or clarify information submitted as part of its Application. The clarification process will not be used to obtain required information that was not submitted prior to the Application Deadline. This may occur for some, all, or none of the Proponents, at the full discretion of the Evaluation Committee on an as-needed basis. The Evaluation Committee may choose to disregard some or all the supplemental information that is provided by the Proponent as part of this clarification process.

The Evaluation Committee will not accept unsolicited supplemental information provided by Proponents outside of the Application or unsolicited requests to meet with the Evaluation Committee.

## 7.6 Feedback

Unsuccessful Proponents can request feedback from TSSS on its Application via email to ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca within **30 calendar days** of receiving notification of its unsuccessful Application. In this case, TSSS will provide a written summary of opportunities for the Proponent to improve its Application for a future EOI.

The following Proponents **are not eligible** to receive feedback from TSSS on its Application:

1. Successful Proponents.
2. Proponents whose Applications were considered ineligible.
3. Proponents with incomplete Applications.

## 8.0 Appendix A: Terms and Conditions

### 8.1 Definitions

The following definitions shall give meaning to terms used in this EOI:

**Application:** An Application submitted by a Proponent in Medallia, including all the information and documentation necessary to satisfy the Application requirements of this EOI.

**Application Deadline:** The date and time by which all Proponents must submit its completed Application for consideration by the Evaluation Committee, as indicated on TSSS' [EOI website](#).

**Central Intake:** A City-operated, 24/7 telephone-based service that offers referrals to emergency shelter and other overnight accommodation, as well as information about other homelessness services.

**Client:** Any individual or family unit who is in receipt of any kind of support services provided by a shelter and/or support service. Clients can also be referred to as a "Resident", meaning an individual who has been admitted to a shelter's bedded program.

**Emergency Shelter:** A shelter that is accessible by an individual or family experiencing homelessness with or without a referral, with the intention of providing short-term accommodation and the support services required to move clients into housing.

**Evaluation Committee:** A dedicated TSSS committee that is comprised of a selection of TSSS staff to oversee the review and evaluation of all submitted Applications as part of this EOI.

**Expression of Interest (EOI):** The process hosted by TSSS to select Shelter Operators to operate Emergency Shelters at sites developed according to the HSCIS, as described in these Guidelines in its entirety, inclusive of all Appendices and Addenda that may be issued by TSSS. This process is designed to ensure that Applications are received through an open process and that Proponents receive fair treatment in the solicitation, receipt, and evaluation of its Applications, based on criteria as determined by TSSS.

**Freedom of Information (FOI) request:** Formal requests for records of the City of Toronto. For more information, see the City's [freedom of information webpage](#).

**Greater Toronto Area:** The catchment area of the City of Toronto, as defined [here](#).

**Harm Reduction:** A philosophy, approach, set of practical strategies, and policies or programs, aimed at reducing the adverse health, social, and economic consequences associated with substance use (both legal and illegal) in ways that are non-judgmental and non-coercive. Harm reduction as a philosophy and approach can align with abstinence-based shelter programs.

**Housing First:** A service approach that focuses on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into permanent housing and then connecting them to supports and services as needed to stabilize their housing.

**Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS):** A 10-year capital infrastructure strategy designed to proactively inform TSSS' shelter-related capital spending decisions over 2023-2033. Visit [here](#) for more information.

**Indigenous and Indigenous Peoples:** A term used internationally to collectively represent the original inhabitants or those naturally existing in a particular place. In this context, "Indigenous" is used to refer to the First Nations, Inuit and Métis.

**Indigenous Communities:** A term used to collectively refer to the multiple differing communities comprised of diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples within Toronto.

**Indigenous Organization:** A legal entity organized and operated for a collective, public or social benefit of Indigenous Peoples and communities, and that has a majority of members who are First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Indigenous organization is used interchangeably with Indigenous agency.

**Medallia:** An online survey platform which Proponents must use to apply for this EOI.

**Operating Agreement:** A contract between the City and a not-for-profit organization that sets out the terms and conditions of providing services on behalf of TSSS to individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

**Proponent:** There are three (3) designations of Proponents, as part of this EOI, including:

1. **Proponent:** A non-profit organization/association that submits an Application as part of this EOI.
2. **Prospective Proponent:** A Proponent that is selected by the Evaluation Committee to participate in the Phase 4 evaluation for a specific HSCIS site.
3. **Successful Proponent:** The Proponent whose Application best meets TSSS' requirements and has passed the due diligence phase of the evaluation, as determined exclusively by the Evaluation Committee.

**Qualified List:** The Evaluation Committee maintains a Qualified List of Proponents that it has deemed eligible for **consideration** to be selected as the Prospective Proponent for an HSCIS site of the corresponding sector, based on TSSS' determination of best fit. Placement on the Qualified List does not guarantee that a Proponent will be selected as the Prospective or Successful Proponent.

**Shelter Operator:** Either (1) a not-for-profit organization/association that provides shelter services on behalf of the City or (2) TSSS directly providing shelter services in Directly Operated Service (DOS) shelters.

**Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS):** A City of Toronto division that is responsible for the management of Toronto's homelessness service system, encompassing both direct operations and partnerships with community agencies. These services span from emergency shelters and street outreach to 24-hour respite and drop-in programs. The division's mission is to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring. To achieve this goal, TSSS collaborates with various community stakeholders, focusing on a person-centered and outcome-driven approach.

**Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines:** A document that provides best practices to assist those designing and building shelters or undertaking major shelter renovations in



Toronto. The Guidelines are intended to respond to the evolving needs of those experiencing homelessness, and enhance positive outcomes for all shelter users, staff, visitors, and the surrounding community in new and renovated shelters. Recommendations in the Technical Guidelines span a broad range of areas from design principles to functional components of the building, environmental design, and materials and finishes. Visit [here](#) for more information.

**Toronto Shelter Standards:** A document that provides City of Toronto-funded shelter providers and clients with a clear set of expectations, guidelines, and minimum requirements for the delivery of shelter services in Toronto. All emergency and transitional shelters funded or directly operated by TSSS, are required to meet the minimum service standards outlined in the Toronto Shelter Standards. Visit [here](#) for more information.

## 8.2 Limitations and Acceptance of Applications

TSSS will allocate a **maximum of one (1)** HSCIS site to each successful lead organization over the 10-year period of the HSCIS (2024-2033). TSSS may determine to omit this limitation **if** there are no other available qualified Proponents for a specific HSCIS site, on an as-needed basis.

Acceptance of an Application does not commit the City to proceed with an Operating Agreement with the Proponent.

TSSS shall not be obliged to accept any response to this EOI. TSSS may, without incurring any liability or costs whatsoever from the City to any Proponent:

- a) Accept or reject any or all Applications at any time.
- b) Waive immaterial defects and minor irregularities in any Application.
- c) Suspend, modify, and/or cancel an EOI prior to accepting any Application.
- d) Reissue a new EOI, in place of an EOI.

TSSS is relying on the experience and expertise of the Proponent. TSSS reserves the right to disqualify any Proponent who has breached any of the responsibilities listed in this document, in the sole opinion of TSSS.

TSSS has no obligation to provide funding to any Proponents, including Successful Proponents, until an Operating Agreement is signed with the City, based on the requirements of TSSS. The Operating Agreement will be contingent on establishment of funding allocated to the service by TSSS. The relevant terms, text, and/or content of this EOI and the Successful Proponent's Application will be incorporated into an Operating Agreement.

TSSS reserves the right to verify with any Proponent or with any other person any information provided in its Application but shall be under no obligation to receive further information.

## 8.3 Proponent's Responsibility

It shall be the responsibility of each Proponent to:

- a) Read and understand all components of the EOI, including all appendices, forms, and addenda, prior to completing an Application.
- b) Read and understand the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#) in its entirety, prior to completing an Application.
- c) Participate in virtual information sessions regarding the EOI, where possible.
- d) Ensure they meet all the eligibility requirements, as listed in this document.
- e) Ensure all information provided in the Application is complete, true, and not misleading.

- f) Ensure approval of the Proponent's board of directors and executive management prior to submitting the Application.

It shall be the responsibility of each Successful Proponent to:

- Execute an Operating Agreement with the City, as directed by TSSS
- Provide input to the design stage of the respective HSCIS site, where possible and subject to parameters determined by TSSS and/or its consultant(s), available funding, and other emergent factors. This includes, but is not limited to, participating in up to weekly design meetings for approximately one year prior to construction, and participating in up to weekly construction meetings for approximately one year prior to commencing operations.

#### 8.4 Confidentiality

Proponents acknowledge that its Application, including associated documentation, attachments, correspondence (e.g., email), and evaluation details (including scoring and placement on the Qualified List(s)), in connection with or arising out of this EOI, once received by TSSS, is under the custody and control of the City and may be appended to an Operating Agreement, and/or any additional agreements with the Successful Proponent.

A proponent should not include any personal information in its Application. Any confidential information submitted to the City in an Application is a record in the custody or under the control of City and may be subject to a FOI request.

#### 8.5 Omissions, Discrepancies, and Interpretations

A Proponent that finds omissions, discrepancies, ambiguities, and/or conflicts in any of the EOI documentation or is in doubt as to the meaning of any part of the EOI should notify TSSS via email at [ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca](mailto:ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca) no later than the deadline for submitting questions, as listed on TSSS' [EOI website](#).

The decisions and interpretations of TSSS shall be final. No supplementary explanation or interpretation, either in verbal or written form, shall modify any of the requirements or provisions of the EOI documents.

#### 8.6 Addenda

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this EOI, including all associated documents, the information will be posted on TSSS' [EOI website](#). **It is the responsibility of the Proponent to regularly check this website for updates.** Proponents should monitor TSSS' [EOI website](#) to inform itself of any addenda until the deadline. TSSS is not responsible for any incomplete or incorrect Applications resulting from the issuance of an addendum or a Proponent's failure to update its Application in response to an addendum.

TSSS reserves the right to revise this EOI at any time up to deadline for addendums (see on TSSS' [EOI website](#)). When an addendum is issued, the date for submitting Applications may be revised by TSSS if, in its sole opinion, TSSS determines more time is necessary to enable Proponents to revise its Application. TSSS will make reasonable efforts to issue the final addendum (if any) in a sufficient time prior to the closing deadline to allow Proponents to apply.

#### 8.7 Decisions are Final

By applying to this EOI, Proponents agree that any decisions of the Evaluation Committee and TSSS are final.

#### 8.8 Incurred Costs

The City shall not be liable to any Proponent for any costs whatsoever incurred in the preparation, submission, or presentation of any Application, follow-ups, communication, or any other activity that may be requested as part of the evaluation process or the process for the negotiation or execution of an Operating Agreement with the City. The rejection or non-acceptance of any or all Applications shall not render the City liable for any costs or damages to any Proponent.

## 8.9 Post-Application Adjustments and Withdrawal of Responses

Medallia **does not allow Proponents to edit their Application** once it has been submitted. If a Proponent determines the need to edit their Application after submitting and **before** the submission deadline, they must create and resubmit a new Application in its entirety. In this case, the Proponent may contact TSSS via email to [ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca](mailto:ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca) to first assess whether there are opportunities to find a mutually agreeable solution to edit the necessary information without completely resubmitting. This, however, provides no guarantee that TSSS can support.

If a Proponent submits multiple Applications, TSSS will only consider the most recent Application by default, unless the Proponent informs TSSS in writing via email to [ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca](mailto:ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca) to consider one of the other Applications instead of the most recent Application.

A Proponent may withdraw its Application prior to the Application Deadline by notifying TSSS in writing via email to [ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca](mailto:ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca). A Proponent who has withdrawn an Application may submit a new Application in accordance with the terms of the EOI.

## 8.10 Conflicts of Interest

Proponents must disclose to TSSS any potential conflict of interest as part of its Application. If such a conflict of interest exists, TSSS may, at its discretion, refuse to consider the Application.

The Proponent must also disclose whether it is aware of any City employee, City Council councillor, member, or employee of a City organization, board, or commission, having a financial interest in the Proponent and the nature of that interest. If such an interest exists or arises during the evaluation process, TSSS may, at its discretion, refuse to consider the Application or withhold the selection of the Proponent until the matter is resolved to TSSS' satisfaction.