

# **Indigenous Shelter Operator Expression of Interest**

**Application and Process Overview**

**November 2024**

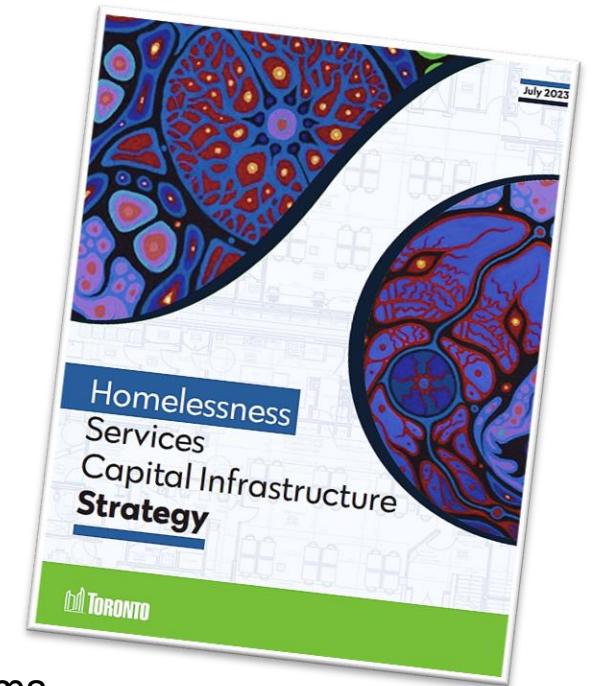
# Overview of Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) Division

- TSSS is responsible for managing a coordinated and effective system of shelter homelessness services. Toronto's homelessness system provides immediate, housing-focused, person-centred services:
  - Emergency shelters
  - 24-hour respite sites
  - 24-hour drop-ins
  - Temporary COVID-19 response programs
  - Street outreach services and encampment response to individuals living outdoors
  - Daytime drop-ins
- TSSS works closely with 75+ community service providers and sector partners to deliver these services.

# Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS)

**The Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS) was adopted by City Council in Nov 2023, and the subsequent HSCIS: Real Estate Strategy was adopted by Council in Feb 2024. Through the HSCIS, 20 new shelter sites with approximately 1,600 spaces will be developed from 2024 to 2033.**

- This includes 16 permanent shelters with 1,280 spaces to replace temporary hotel programs
- Three (3) permanent expansion sites with approximately 280 spaces to respond to pressing sector needs (Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness, families and youth).
- One (1) permanent swing space (80 spaces) to support planned major SOGR work at shelter sites.
- 20% of all future infrastructure funding will be allocated to Indigenous sites (minimum four new Indigenous shelters)



# HSCIS New Shelter Development



- City is currently in process to secure five (5) sites by the end of 2024. The site search is focused on locations that can facilitate ~ 80 spaces per site. Development for these sites should begin soon afterwards (2025). This includes a minimum of one (1) of the first new locations dedicated as an Indigenous shelter.
- As committed through Meeting in the Middle Engagement Strategy, TSSS will work with the Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board (TICAB) to co-develop the process for Indigenous Shelter development.

# **HSCIS Indigenous Shelter Operator Expressions of Interest**

# What We Heard: Indigenous Shelter Development

- Traditional procurement processes and applications do not work well for Indigenous organizations. Develop a distinct process for Indigenous organizations that also provides opportunities for organizations that are not shelter operators.
- There is a current gap in Indigenous shelter spaces for Indigenous women and families. Indigenous women have the highest mobility across the shelter system. The first HSCIS Indigenous shelter should be an Indigenous women's site.

# Indigenous Shelter Expression of Interest

- TSSS developed an **Indigenous Shelter Operator Expression of Interest (EOI)** process to:
  - Provide opportunities for Indigenous non-profit organizations to apply to act as a shelter operator for Indigenous HSCIS shelter sites being developed over 2024 – 2033.
  - Ensure that all Indigenous organizations that apply (“Proponents”) receive fair treatment in the solicitation, receipt, and evaluation of their Application(s).
  - Identify operators prior to or early in the design stage of new HSCIS shelters to allow selected operators to advise on the site development process.

# Indigenous Shelter Development Process

- While the first HSCIS Indigenous site will be a shelter for Indigenous women, TSSS will develop a Qualified List for future Indigenous sites as locations become available from 2025 onwards.
- Selecting a shelter operator prior to site development ensures that the operator is actively involved in the building design and development from the beginning.





# Indigenous EOI

- This EOI aims to establish a Qualified List to identify Indigenous non-profit organizations to operate shelters expected to open in or around 2026 – 2027, as part of the HSCIS.
- Organizations will be scored according to their depth and length of experience in delivering programs for Indigenous client groups, as well as experience servicing peoples experiencing homelessness.
- Organizations without direct experience operating shelters are welcome to apply and will be given the opportunity to provide information on the organization's plan for capacity development (i.e. program partnerships). The City of Toronto is committed to support Indigenous organizations through capacity development and mentorship opportunities.

# EOI Details

# Indigenous Organizations

- The Indigenous Shelter Operator EOI is **only** open to Indigenous organizations
- Non-Indigenous organizations will not qualify or be considered through this stream
- Indigenous Organization is defined as:
  - ☐ Indigenous-led and primarily serves Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Metis and Inuit)
  - ☐ At least 50% of organization's leadership (Board of Directors and Executive Management Team) is Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, Inuit)

# Resources and Funding

- TSSS intends to provide the Successful Proponent with necessary operational and capital funding, as required, within a reasonable range of comparable municipal shelter operations.
- Actual funding levels may vary, based on the type and level of services provided at each HSCIS site.
- Non-profit organizations who have secured their own capital funding are encouraged to apply. TSSS will prioritize Applicants that have a passing score and are proposing to use their own facility, given that they will not rely on the HSCIS site that is being offered by TSSS.

# Program Partnerships: Capacity Development

- A lack of experience operating a shelter or homelessness service will **not disqualify** organizations from consideration to operate an HSCIS Indigenous site.
- Applicants with **less than one (1) year of experience operating a shelter program** will be required to identify partnerships with existing shelter operator(s) to support organizational capacity building.
- This includes partnerships with:
  - existing shelter(s),
  - respite(s),
  - 24-hour drop-ins,
  - 24-hour violence against women/intimate partner violence shelter(s)
  - crisis care facilities

# Program Partnerships: Capacity Development

- The plan for capacity development should be submitted as Letter(s) of Support from each proposed partner organization.
- The Letter(s) of Support should include:
  - written statement in agreement for the proposed partnership(s),
  - brief description on the nature of the proposed partnership(s),
  - overview of how the partnership(s) will support capacity development in the areas of shelter operations and/or asset management, and
  - identified timeline for the proposed partnership(s)

# EOI Resources

# Key Resources

- This presentation provides a **high-level overview** of the EOI.
- TSSS's Shelter EOI website will contain full details, including:
  - The EOI Guidelines
  - Details on deadlines
  - The link to the application
  - Contact information (ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca)



# Key Documents

- **The Toronto Shelter EOI Guidelines:** Defined details of the EOI
- **The Toronto Shelter Standards:** City of Toronto-funded shelter providers and clients with a set of expectations, guidelines, and minimum requirements for the delivery of shelter services
- **Toronto Shelter Design and Technical Guidelines:** Best practices (design principles, functional components, environmental design) to assist those designing and building shelters, or undertaking major renovations
- **Application Form** (in Medallia, online platform)

# Eligibility and Requirements

# Who Should Apply?

- TSSS is seeking Applications from Indigenous non-profit organizations that:
  - Meet all the eligibility requirements for this EOI,
  - Expertise providing direct services to Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness,
  - Have a strong financial record as relates to the operation of said services.
- TSSS welcomes joint Applications from organizations proposing to operate services in partnership in response to this EOI, where one organization is identified as the lead.

# 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 (or apply with trustee).
2. Be primarily located and provide services in the Greater Toronto Area.
3. Be in good standing with the City.
4. Commit to and abide by the terms of the EOI Guidelines and the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#).
5. Commit to operating an emergency shelter program for a minimum of 10 years.
6. Commit to intaking new/returning clients through the City's defined referral processes (e.g., Central Intake, Streets to Homes, the Encampment Office).
7. Commit to take all reasonable measures to accommodate clients accompanied by their pet, including service animals.
8. Commit to paying a fair living wage, at a minimum of \$53K annual or higher to all staff at the site.
9. Commit to allocating no more than 10% of annual gross operational funding towards administration at the site.

# Service Requirements

All HSCIS sites will provide the following scope of work:

## **Operational Requirements**

- Operate 24/7 365 days a year
- Commit to regular site visits/audits and annual program evaluation by TSSS
- Use TSSS's Shelter Management Information System (SMIS)
- Participate in collecting and reporting on performance indicators.

## **Asset Management Requirements**

- Implement cleanliness, pest management, and maintenance policies and plans
- Participate in regular building condition audits
- Support state of good repair work

# Service Requirements

## Program Requirements

- Provide culturally safe programming for Indigenous peoples experiencing homelessness
- Provide individualized and housing-focused case management
- Connect clients to external services when necessary
- Work from client-centred, strength-focused, trauma-informed lenses
- Provide harm reduction in alignment with [TSSS's Harm Reduction Framework](#).
- Participate in peer-support and client-engagement programs
- Accept pets and develop related policies/procedures

# Service Requirements (Continued)

## Partnership and Community Engagement

- Build connections with community homeless and health service agencies.
- Work with TSSS and other funders for additional resources.
- Maintain strong community relations (e.g., maintain a clean facility, respond to complaints, proactively engage with the community)

## Staffing Requirements

- Maintain required staffing levels, including a 1:20 staff-to-client ratio for housing/case workers
- Provide a broad range of training to staff (e.g., anti-racism, cultural competence, Housing First, and relevant health and safety regulations)

# Application Process



# Application Instructions

1. Read all information available on TSSS's EOI webpage, including the EOI Guidelines.
2. Read the Toronto Shelter Standards.
3. Ensure that your organization meets all eligibility requirements, as listed in the EOI guidelines.
4. Complete an electronic application via Medallia prior to Application closing: January 29, 2025.

# Application Instructions

The Application form will ask for:

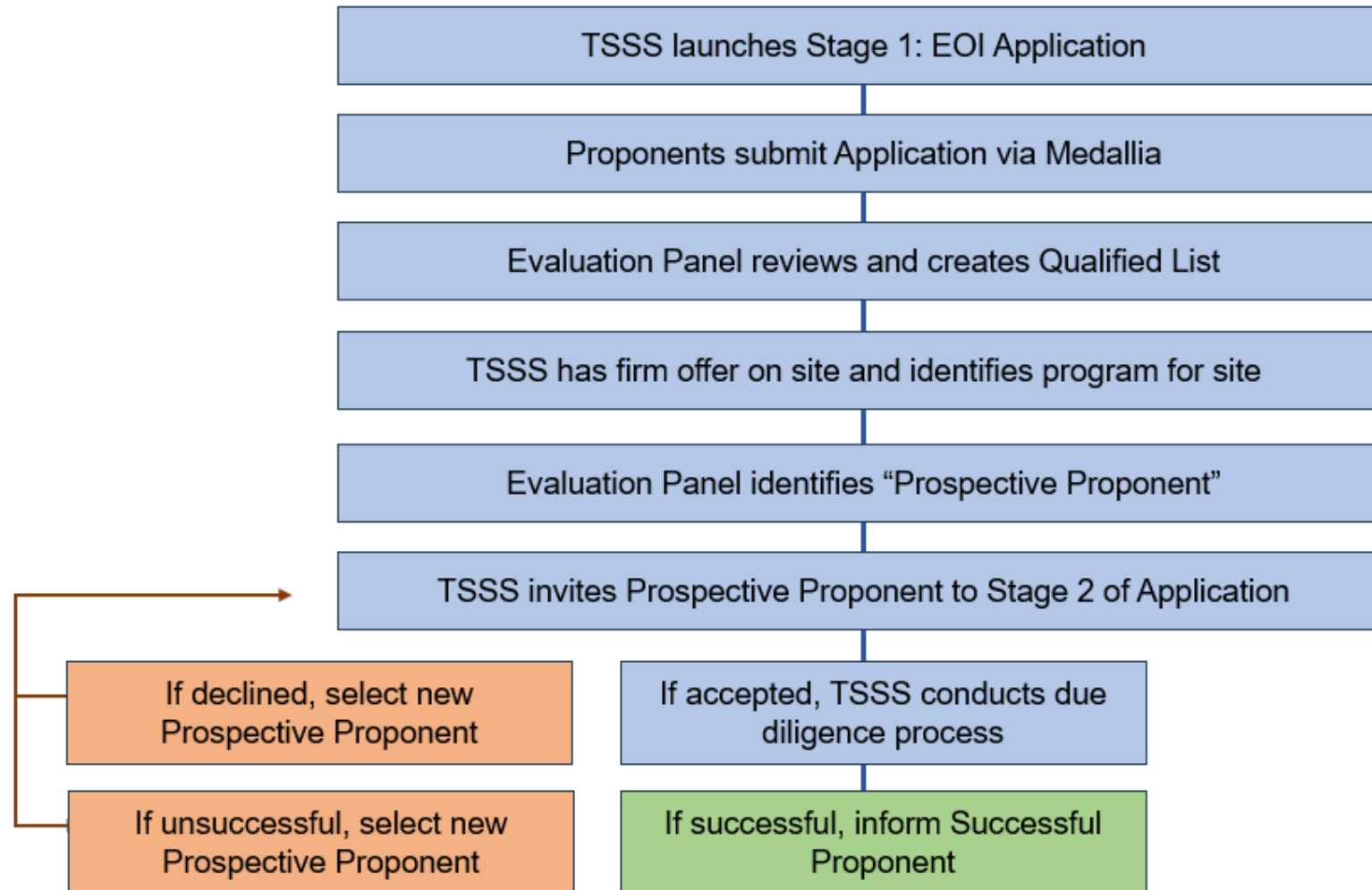
1. Basic organization details
2. Financial and organizational health  
(*e.g., financial statement, history of operations, staff turnover*)
3. A verification of the eligibility requirements
4. Your service delivery interests (e.g., sector, geography)
5. Your program and service experience
6. Your partnerships and community relations
7. Optional: Letter(s) of support for program partnerships
8. Optional: Community letter(s) of support

# Recommendations

1. Review the PDF copy of the survey ahead of time, to ensure that you have all necessary information. Note that you cannot submit via PDF, and you must submit via Medallia.
2. **Write your responses in a separate word document prior to entering information into Medallia** to ensure that you have a backup. This is essential in the event of a power outage or computer crash.
3. If you are unsure at any time, contact TSSS at [ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca](mailto:ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca).
4. If you use the "back" button in this application, you will be redirected to the previous screen BUT you will lose all information that you entered on the current page and subsequent pages.
5. Ensure that you have enough time to complete the survey in one session, otherwise use the pause button to continue later.

# Evaluation Process

# Evaluation Process



# Scoring

- Information collected in the application is used to verify eligibility, inform the evaluation committee, match proponents to sites, score applications, and inform due diligence.
- The following three application sections factor into scoring:
  1. Financial and Organizational Health Verification
  2. Service Experience
  3. Proposed Shelter Program
- The following application sections will be evaluated as Pass/Fail to continue:
  1. Eligibility verification
  2. Letter(s) or support for proposed partnerships **(only if required)**

# Announcements

- The evaluation will take approximately 1-3 months following the Application Deadline, depending on the volume of Applications.
- Once the Evaluation Committee has completed their evaluation, they will inform all Proponents of their outcome, regardless of whether they are the Successful Proponent or not.
- Unsuccessful Proponents can request feedback from TSSS 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 their application for a future EOI.