

Black Mandated Shelter Operator Expression of Interest - Guidelines

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Homelessness Services Capital Infrastructure Strategy (HSCIS)

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 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.

1.2 Black Communities and Homelessness

In December 2017, City Council approved the [Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism](#) to help address the systemic barriers faced by Black people in Toronto and ensure more equitable policies, programs and services. Specifically, recommendation 10 of the Action Plan relates to improving shelter conditions to better support Black Torontonians. The Five-Year Action Plan was the result of a collaborative effort between the City of Toronto and Torontonians of Black and of African descent.

Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) has committed to ensuring that its homelessness services are accessible and responsive to the needs of all Black individuals experiencing homelessness. The creation of a distinct Expression of Interest (EOI) for a Black mandated operator takes into consideration the distinct needs and experiences of Black clients experiencing homelessness. For the development of the Black mandated EOI, TSSS held engagement sessions with Black serving agencies, Black-led community and grassroots organizations interested in operating a municipal shelter. The feedback from these consultations resulted in key recommendation areas which have informed the design of the operator selection process, including the application form, evaluation framework and other aspects of the EOI.

Through the HSCIS, TSSS is developing at least one Black mandated shelter over the 10-year period of the HSCIS (2024-2033). Once a site is secured, the shelter development process may range from three to five years before the shelter site opens.

TSSS continues to work through its service agency partners within the Knowledge Exchange Table to respond to the unique needs of Black populations experiencing homelessness.

Black refers to people of African descent who self-identify as Black. Other terms that are used interchangeably with Black are: Black Canadians, African Canadians, and People of African Descent (e.g. Afro-Latinx, Afro-Indigenous, Afro-Caribbean, East African, West African, Southern

and Central African, etc.). **For the purposes of this EOI, TSSS uses Black to encompass all the terms above.**

1.3 Qualified List

Applicants that achieve a score of at least **60 out of 100** will be added to a 'Qualified List' as part of the HSCIS Black Mandated EOI. This list may be used for future HSCIS sites or for other TSSS' shelter projects, where applicable. If you receive a passing score for the Application, you will be added to the Qualified List.

1.4 Purpose

The City's Toronto Shelter and Support Services (TSSS) division developed this Expression of Interest (EOI) to provide opportunities for **Black Mandated non-profit organizations and groups (also referred to as B3)** across the City to act as a Black Mandated operator.

A **Black mandated (B3) organization or group** is assessed based on four key criteria which includes:

1. **Black-led:** An organization that is led by a majority (50 percent and over) of paid staff and board members who self-identify as Black or are of African descent.
2. **Black-focused:** An organization that has a mandate that explicitly states that it serves Black communities and is grounded in Black/African-centered approaches across services and programs.
3. **Black-serving:** An organization that primarily serves Toronto's diverse Black communities, including but not limited to African-descendant populations, such as Black Francophones, Afro-Indigenous, Continental African, Caribbean descendant, 2SLGBTQ+, queer and trans, refugee and newcomer populations, and Black youth, seniors, children and families.
4. **Community Accountability and Trust:** Responds to the pervasive and emergent needs of Black populations and continually develops and maintains positive relationships within Black communities being served, and with other Black-mandated organizations and groups.

This definition was developed by Social Development, Finance and Administration (SDFA), in close consultation with community organizations as part of the [Black Mandated Funding Framework](#) and expanded to ensure effective partnership to deliver a Black-focused Toronto Shelter site. It aims to address funding gaps and historical underinvestment in community organizations and groups that serve Toronto's Black communities.

To be considered for this EOI stream, applicants must meet the definition of a Black-mandated (B3) organization as described above. Note: If selected to participate in the Due Diligence phase, a Prospective Proponent will be required to submit supporting documentation to verify self-assessment.

Proponents for the current EOI – Black mandated Stream must commit to intaking new/returning Black clients through the City's defined referral processes (e.g., Central Intake, Street to Homes, the Encampment Office). For more information on eligibility, please see [Section 4.0 - Eligibility Requirements](#).

IMPORTANT NOTE: This Black Mandated EOI Stream 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 Black Mandated EOI. For more information on the General EOI process please visit the [EOI website](#). 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.

1.5 Applicable Standards and Requirements

Successful Proponents shall comply with the building and service delivery expectations outlined in the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#), The [Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Directives](#), The [City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy](#), 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.

1.6 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 Black Mandated Operator Expression of Interest?

TSSS is seeking Applications from **Black mandated non-profit organizations and groups** that:

1. Meet all the eligibility requirements for this EOI (see [4.0 Eligibility Requirements](#)),
2. Have expertise in providing direct services and incorporating **Black/African centered approaches** in programming and/or service design for Black individuals experiencing homelessness, **OR** Black mandated organizations that have less than one year of experience operating a shelter program **BUT** do have experience in providing other services to Black individuals experiencing homelessness. **AND**,
3. Demonstrate the financial and organizational capacity to manage funds as it relates to the operation of shelter services.

TSSS welcomes Applications from Black mandated non-profit organizations with **less than one year of experience** operating a shelter. To support your application, you are encouraged to identify **organizational mentors** to support capacity building in the areas of: **(1) shelter operations (2) asset management and/or (3) other, as identified**. Organizational mentors are existing shelter operator(s) who can support the lead organization with capacity building. Organizational mentor(s) can be 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. You will be asked to provide letter(s) of support from each organizational mentor(s).

TSSS welcomes **Applications as a collaborative**. A **collaborative** is defined as a **group of two organizations** where there is a well-defined relationship that includes a designated **lead organization** and a **collaborative organization** working in partnership to operate a shelter. The **lead organization** is responsible for leading the operations of the shelter and delivering shelter services and programs. A Prospective Proponent should be prepared to provide a **collaborative partnership agreement** at the Due Diligence phase of the EOI. A collaborative member organization may come from diverse sectors and backgrounds, where relevant. **Note: A collaborative is different than a trustee organization, where the trustee is providing supports with fund administration and other operational supports.**

Unincorporated Black mandated organizations or groups can apply to the Black mandated EOI, by partnering with a **trustee organization**. **This applies ONLY if the lead organization is an unincorporated association and/or incorporated non-profit organization WITHOUT a financial statement that was audited within the last 23 months.** A trustee organization is a non-for-profit organization that provides supports with fund administration and other operational supports. **A trustee cannot be a for-profit organization, unincorporated association, municipal organization, or government organization.** If you are the Prospective Proponent, you will be required to provide a commitment letter and/or agreement between the trustee and lead organization at the Due Diligence phase of the EOI.

IMPORTANT NOTE: A trustee organization cannot act as both a trustee and as a collaborative organization in the EOI.

Proponents will be evaluated and scored according to their depth and length of experience in delivering programs and services for Black individuals experiencing homelessness, their financial and organizational health, strength of proposed shelter program, and experience in the operation of a municipal emergency shelter.

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. Read [The Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Directives](#), in its entirety.
4. Read [The City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy](#), in its entirety.
5. Ensure that your organization meets each eligibility requirement, as defined in [4.0 Eligibility Requirements](#).
6. 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 [7.4 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](#) this includes [The Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Directives](#). 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.
- 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 a Black Mandated non-profit organization and/or group (**also referred to as B3**). A Black mandated (B3) organization or group is assessed based on four key criteria which includes:
 - **Black Led:** An organization that is led by a majority (50 percent and over) of paid staff and board members who self-identify as Black or are of African descent.
 - **Black-focused:** An organization that has a mandate that explicitly states that it serves Black communities and is grounded in Black/African-centered approaches across services and programs.
 - **Black-serving:** An organization that primarily serves Toronto's diverse Black communities, including but not limited to African-descendant populations, such as Black Francophones, Afro-Indigenous, Continental African, Caribbean descendant, 2SLGBTQ+, queer and trans, refugee and newcomer populations, and Black youth, seniors, children and families.
 - **Community accountability and trust:** Responds to the pervasive and emergent needs of Black populations and continually develops and maintains positive relationships within Black communities being served, and with other Black-mandated organizations and groups.
2. 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 unincorporated associations, municipal or government organizations are not eligible to serve as a trustee.**
3. Be primarily located in the Greater Toronto Area and whose primary activities take place within the Greater Toronto Area.
4. 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

5. Commit to and abide by the building and service delivery expectations outlined in the EOI Guidelines (this document) and the [Toronto Shelter Standards](#), this includes [The Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Directives](#).
6. 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 municipal 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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](#) and [The Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Directives](#).** 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, as outlined in the Toronto Shelter Standards.
- c) Commit to regular site visits, audits, annual evaluations /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) Provide hygiene products specific to Black individuals. For more information see Section 9.1.2 Toiletries and Hygiene of [The Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Directives](#).
- d) Apply an Anti-Black racism lens to create programs, policies and services that promote client outcomes and ensure staff safety.
- e) Incorporate Black/African-centered approaches to shelter programs, policies, and services.
- f) Designating a CABR lead to support the site implementation of CABR policies, programs and supports. For more information see Section 10.3.6 Black Clients of [The Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Directives](#).
- g) Provide culturally appropriate food and nutrition for all service users.
- h) Develop a process to engage clients in identifying culturally appropriate program priorities.
- i) Ensure that service users have access to culturally competent health and mental health services and supports, as well as resources that address the effects of trauma on Black individuals and families.
- j) Provide safe spaces for Black clients and staff.
- k) 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).
- l) 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](#)
- m) 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.
- n) Operate with a harm reduction approach, in alignment with [TSSS' Harm Reduction Framework](#). For a definition of harm reduction, please visit [Section 8.1 Definitions](#).
- o) Accept pets and develop related policies and procedures.
- p) Conduct regular case management team meetings.
- q) Participate in a peer support program.
- r) 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. Home and Community Care Support Services, 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 culturally appropriate community engagement policy and plan from an Anti-Black racism analysis lens 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.
- e) For organizations with less than **one year experience operating a shelter**, you would be required to identify and establish partnerships with organizational mentor(s). An organizational mentor is an 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. Organizational mentor(s) would support the lead organization in capacity building in the areas of (1) shelter operations (2) asset management and/r (3) other areas, as identified.

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 [7.2 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. For a full list of training and professional competencies required, please see Section 12.4.2 of the Toronto Shelter Standards. Training includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. Anti-racism/anti-oppression approaches.
 - ii. Cultural competence.
 - iii. Housing First approach
 - iv. Customer service standards.
 - v. Harm reduction strategies and
 - vi. Health and safety regulations.

6.0 Financial Review

Proponents are required to provide financial information in up to two distinct stages (see section [7.2 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 in the Due Diligence exercise 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.
- c) **Phase 3 - Match Site:** Once TSSS has identified an HSCIS Black Mandated site, the Evaluation Committee will identify a “Prospective Proponent” from the Qualified List. This phase includes, but is not limited to:
 - Excluding Proponents that indicated that they are not willing to provide services in the area in which site is located.
 - Selecting the Proponent with the **highest score** from the Qualified List.
 - Selecting Proponents that indicated that they have existing experience and/or partnerships/networks in the area.
 - **Note: Site constraints will influence the population group for this shelter which would be considered in the matching exercise.**

For example, TSSS hypothetically has identified a site in North York and has determined that the site will be a Black Mandated 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)** factor in any other restrictions/limitations indicated by Proponents in their Application, and **(3)** 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 a facility they already own, 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 of the EOI Process. Not every component in the Due Diligence exercise will be applicable to all Prospective Proponents. TSSS reserves the right to **exempt and/or reduce** these requirements for the Prospective Proponent, at the sole direction of TSSS.
- 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.
 - The Due Diligence exercise includes, but is not limited to:
 - i. **Financial review:** This component assesses the current state of the financial and organizational health across several indicators. This may also include a deeper review of the financial statement, as provided in the initial Application.
 - ii. **Risks review:** This component assesses any potential risks and ensures that your organization has a strong health across several risk indicators. This component may assess your lead organization's or trustee organization's audited financial statement(s), any available City records, and any available public information on the organization.
 - iii. **Compatibility with Toronto Shelter Standards:** This component assesses compatibility between the Prospective Proponent's existing principles, policies and processes and the Toronto Shelter Standards requirements.
 - iv. **Site visits:** 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.
 - v. **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.

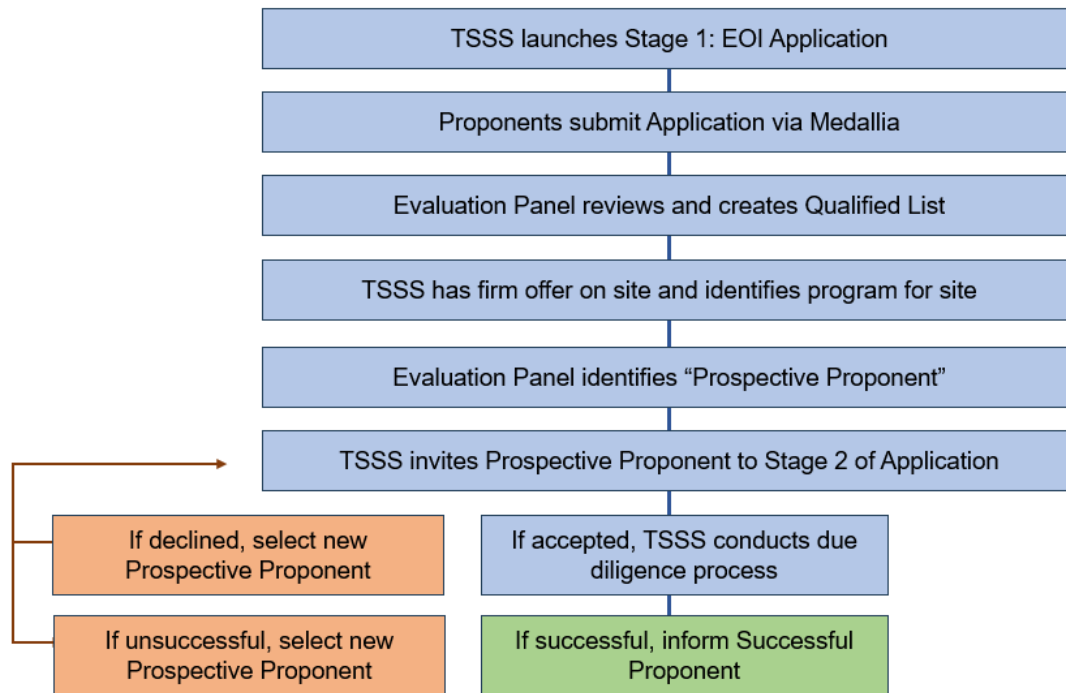
If TSSS **is satisfied** with the Prospective Proponent's responses in **Phase 4**, the Evaluation Committee will proceed to **Phase 5**.

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.

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 (includes B3 self-assessment and general eligibility questions)	Pass/Fail
Section 2: Service Delivery Interests	Not Scored – Used to match Proponents with HSCIS Black Mandated site
Section 3: Financial and Organizational Health Verification	10%
Section 4: Current Experience	41%
Section 5: Proposed Shelter Program	49%
Section 6: Capacity Development (Optional)	Not Scored – Used to identify areas for capacity building and partnerships for mentorship
Section 7: Community Letters of Support (Optional)	Not Scored
Total Application Content	100%

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 the EOI Application will be added to the Qualified List. This means that they are deemed qualified by TSSS to provide services to Black individuals experiencing homelessness and shall be **considered** to be selected as a Prospective Proponent for an upcoming HSCIS Black Mandated 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:

Anti-Black racism: The policies and practices that are embedded in Canadian institutions that reflect and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping and/or discrimination that are directed at people of Black African descent and are rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization here in Canada.

Anti-Black racism lens or analysis: The application of the understanding of anti-Black racism to the planning, development, operation, resource allocation and evaluation of policies, services, practices, and spaces, with the intent of achieving transformative change. More details can be found in the [Anti-Black Racism Analysis Tool](#).

Anti-racism: An active and consistent process of change to eliminate individual, institutional, and systemic racism.

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](#).

Asset Management: Entails state of good repair maintenance and small capital projects. This includes work for planned and/or emergency construction and maintenance projects.

Black: Refers to people of African descent who self-identify as Black. Other terms that are used interchangeably with Black are: Black Canadians, African Canadians, and People of African Descent (e.g. Afro-Latinx, Afro-Indigenous, Afro, Caribbean, East African, West African, Southern and Central African, etc.). For the purposes of this EOI, TSSS uses Black to encompass all the terms above.

Black/African-centered approaches: Practices, frameworks, principles, values and ways of working that are anchored, respond to and recognize the distinct needs and unique

experiences (i.e. cultural, historical, anti-oppressive and intersectional) of diverse Black communities in the delivery of programs and/or services.

Black focused: An organization that has a mandate that explicitly states that it serves Black communities and is grounded in Black/African-centered approaches across services and programs.

Black-led: An organization that is led by a majority (50 percent and over) of paid staff and board members who self-identify as Black or are of African descent.

Black Mandated: A Black-mandated organization or group is assessed based on four key criteria which includes: **(1)** Mandate or mission: Has a mandate that explicitly states that they serve Black communities and are grounded in Black/African centered approaches across services and programs; **(2)** Governance: Is led by a majority (50 percent and over) of paid staff and board members who self-identify as Black or are of African descent; **(3)** Population Served: Primarily serves Toronto's diverse Black communities, including but not limited to African-descendant populations, such as Black Francophones, Afro-Indigenous, Continental African, Caribbean descendant, 2SLGBTQ+, queer and trans, refugee and newcomer populations, and Black youth, seniors, children and families; **(4)** Community Accountability & Trust: Responds to the pervasive and emergent needs of Black populations and continually develops and maintains positive relationships within Black communities being served, and with other Black-mandated organizations and groups.

Black serving: An organization that primarily serves Toronto's diverse Black communities, including but not limited to African-descendant populations, such as Black Francophones, Afro-Indigenous, Continental African, Caribbean descendant, 2SLGBTQ+, queer and trans, refugee and newcomer populations, and Black youth, seniors, children and families.

Collaborative: A group of two organizations where there is a designated lead organization and a collaborative organization working in partnership to operate a shelter. The lead organization is responsible for leading the operations of the shelter and delivering shelter services and programs. Each organization has specific roles and responsibilities as part of this collaborative.

Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) standards: Confronting Anti-Black Racism standards was added to the Toronto Shelter Standards (TSS) in response to Action 10.2 of Toronto's Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. This was released in December 2023, visit [here](#) for more information.

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.

Diaspora: A group of people who spread from one original country to other countries.

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.

Interpersonal Racism: Involves negative attitudes towards others, expressed through conscious or unconscious actions like microaggressions, racial bullying, discrimination and hate crimes.

Institutional Racism: When organizations like schools or workplaces have rules and policies that unfairly benefit the dominant group over equity-deserving communities. This can lead to unequal results and advantages for the dominant group, even though these policies may not explicitly mention race.

Lead Organization: A lead organization is defined as an incorporated or unincorporated (would require trusteeship) non-profit organization, responsible for leading the operations of the shelter and delivering shelter services and programs. This organization would be responsible for signing and executing all agreements with the City.

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

Organizational Mentor: Organizational mentor(s) can be 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. These organizations would support the lead organization with capacity building in the identified areas, as per Section H on the EOI Application.

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.

Structural Racism: Refers to deep-rooted societal inequities that privilege certain groups while disadvantaging others based on race, affecting various social institutions and outcomes.

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.

Trustee Organization: A trustee organization is a non-for-profit organization that provides supports with fund administration and other operational supports. **A trustee cannot be a for-profit organization, unincorporated association, municipal organization, or government organization.**

8.2 Limitations and Acceptance of Applications

TSSS will allocate **at least one (1)** Black Mandated HSCIS site to the successful lead organization over the **10-year period** of the HSCIS (2024-2033).

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 Proponent, including a Successful Proponent, 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 the 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 the 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) Read [The Confronting Anti-Black Racism \(CABR\) Directives](#), in its entirety prior to completing an Application.
- d) Read [The City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy](#), in its entirety, prior to completing an Application.
- e) Participate in virtual information sessions regarding the EOI, where possible.
- f) Ensure they meet all the eligibility requirements, as listed in this document.
- g) Ensure all information provided in the Application is complete, true, and not misleading.
- h) Ensure approval of the Proponent's board of directors and executive management prior to submitting the Application.

It shall be the responsibility of the 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

The Proponent acknowledges that its Application, including associated documentation, attachments, correspondence (e.g., email), and evaluation details (including scoring and placement on the Qualified List), 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.

The 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 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, the 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 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 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. 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.