

# Black Mandated Shelter Operator Expression of Interest

## Information Session Questions and Answers

April 2025

### Introduction

This document serves to clarify details of the 2025 Black Mandated Shelter Operator Expression of Interest (EOI) as a follow up from the 2025 information sessions.

Please note that the information in this document shall not modify any of the requirements or provisions of the EOI, as described in the Guidelines. The Guidelines take precedence.

For more information, please visit the [EOI webpage](#) or contact Toronto Shelter and Support Services via email at [ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca](mailto:ShelterEOI@Toronto.ca).

### **Q1. Who was consulted for the development of the Black Mandated EOI?**

- The City held two engagement sessions in December 2024 and a follow-up session in January 2025 with Black serving agencies and Black-led community organizations interested in operating a municipal shelter.
- During the consultation session we discussed the following:
  - Barriers faced by emerging organizations without direct experience operating shelters.
  - Strategies to improve accessibility and additional supports.
  - Ways to apply an Afrocentric framework to the EOI process that is inclusive and reflects the diversity of potential applicants.
  - Additional sections to include in the EOI to ensure a comprehensive evaluation and alignment with the program goals.
  - Strategies for incorporating an Anti-Black Racism lens into the EOI process.
  - Feedback on the timeframe for the application period.
  - Any considerations in the design of the EOI.

### **Q2. How was the feedback incorporated?**

- From the consultation, there were 5 identified areas of recommendations:
  - Eligibility requirement
    - Inclusion of a separate section on the B3 criteria.
    - Note: TSSS adopted the B3 criteria developed by Social Development, Finance and Administration (SDFA) Central CABR Unit as part of the Black Mandated EOI framework. This definition was expanded to ensure effective partnership for the implementation of a Black Mandated Shelter.
    - TSSS would request supporting documentation at a later stage for the B3 self-assessment section.
  - Trusteeship

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- Inclusion of questions to address potential power dynamic imbalances between the trustee and lead organization.
- Expanding the existing trustee framework included in the General and Indigenous EOIs.
- Encouraging unincorporated organizations to apply to this EOI if they secure a trustee.
- Additional Support/Capacity Building
  - Maintaining email support and conducting two information sessions that were held in April 2025.
  - Encouraging mentorship partnerships if the lead organization has less than one year of experience operating a shelter.
  - TSSS has committed to supporting the successful applicant with capacity building before the shelter opens (if applicable).
- Historical organization response
  - Opportunities for organizations to provide information on current and proposed programming for the Black clients.
  - Incorporating an Anti-Black Racism lens in the questions and evaluation of the EOI.
- Inclusivity and improving accessibility
  - Placing greater emphasis on non-traditional areas in the evaluation.
  - Extending application deadline in comparison to previous EOIs.

### **Q3. Who is eligible to apply to the Black Mandated EOI?**

- The City is seeking applications from organizations who meet the definition of a Black-mandated (B3) organization and/or group and are interested in operating a shelter for Black people 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. organizational mentors). The City of Toronto is committed to support non-profit Black Mandated organizations through capacity development.
- Be an incorporated organization with a financial statement audited within the last 23 months. Unincorporated organizations can apply with a trustee organization.
- Commit to and abide by the terms of the Toronto Shelter Standards, Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Directive, The City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy and other applicable standards.
- Commit to accept referrals to the shelter program through the City's defined referral processes.
- Be primarily located and provide services in the Greater Toronto Area.
- For a full list of eligibility requirements, please see Section 4.0 – Eligibility Requirements of the Black Mandated EOI Guidelines.

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### **Q4. What sectors and populations are being prioritized, if any for the Black Mandated EOI?**

- Currently, no specific sector or population group are being prioritized for the Black Mandated EOI. The City is accepting applications from eligible organizations that will serve Black individuals experiencing homelessness.
- During the EOI matching phase, TSSS will consider site constraints to determine the best-suited population group for the shelter site.
- TSSS will continue to assess and evaluate the EOI process and use the upcoming Street Needs Assessment (SNA) results to determine priority groups, if necessary.

### **Q5. Is there a set number of sites for the Black Mandated EOI?**

- TSSS has committed to creating at least one Black Mandated Shelter as part of the HSCIS.

### **Q6. Why is TSSS not disclosing the site location before submitting the EOI?**

- The City is in the final stages of signing an agreement and conducting due diligence for the shelter site. During this time, the location must be kept confidential in order to maintain the City's negotiating position and ensure best value for taxpayer dollars.
- The Prospective Proponent will be advised of the site location as soon as possible and be given the opportunity to accept the site. If they do not accept the site, they will remain on the Qualified List for future opportunities.
- Once they are confirmed as the Successful Proponent, they will be invited to participate in design of the site during construction.

### **Q7. How do I apply if I do not have audited financial statements and do not have a non-profit status?**

- Organizations that do not have **a non-profit status** can partner with another organization as their trustee.
- This requires a legal agreement between the two organizations. The trustee assumes financial oversight of your organization. They are responsible for financial reporting and must ensure funds provided by the City are included in annual audited statements.
- In the application, you do **not need to include a legal agreement** outlining the nature of the trusteeship. However, if the Proponent moves forward in the EOI, they may be asked to provide a copy of the legal agreement confirming this partnership during the due diligence stage.
- The trusteeship section is **not scored** in Stage 1 – if applying, you must provide full details to the questions to move forward. However, in the due diligence stage, the **nature of the trusteeship** will be assessed as part of the evaluation process.

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### Q8. What do I do if I am incorporated and do not have audited financial statements?

- To apply for this EOI, you must be able to provide audited financial statements (within the last 23 months).

### Q9. Who is eligible to be a trustee?

- A trustee **MUST** be an incorporated non-profit organization.
- A trustee is an organization that is a non-for-profit organization that provides support with fund administration and other operational supports.
- For profit organizations, unincorporated associations, municipal organizations, or government organizations **CANNOT** serve as a trustee.

### Q10. I am interested in partnering with another organization. How does this work?

- There are two ways to partner with another organization for this EOI application.
  - The first is applying as a **collaborative** - a group of two organizations where 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. Please note, only one organization is identified as the lead and is responsible for executing all agreements with the City.
  - The second is applying as a **mentor** – this applies only if the lead organization has less than one year of experience operating a shelter program. The applicant is expected to identify at minimum, one mentor organization.
- If you are applying as a collaborative, you will be required to submit a partnership agreement at a later stage in the EOI process.
- Please note that a collaborative organization is different than a trustee organization.

### Q11. What is the maximum character capacity for each question?

- The maximum character capacity varies across questions, depending on the type of question. The Application will automatically notify you once you have reached maximum for any question.
- Most open text fields are limited to a maximum of 2,000 characters. That said, the following open text questions have reduced maximums:

39. Please confirm the dollar value of your organization's current annual operational spending.

- Maximum: N/A

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40. Please confirm the dollar value of your organization's current unrestricted reserve fund.

- Maximum: N/A

44. Include a brief explanation of why the collaborative was formed and the role of the collaborative organization. Please include details on roles, responsibilities, and contributions.

- Maximum: 750 characters

47. Please indicate the location(s) within the Greater Toronto Area that your agency has experience delivering services (e.g., entire GTA, Downtown Toronto only, Scarborough only, Westhill only, Etobicoke only).

Note: Your response to this question will be used for the purposes of matching your organization and will not factor into scoring.

- Maximum: 750 characters

48. Please indicate the location(s) within the City of Toronto boundaries in which your organization is willing to provide services (e.g., entire City, North York only, Scarborough only, Westhill only, Etobicoke only).

Note: Your organization will only be considered for an HSCIS site located in the areas that you have indicated.

- Maximum: 750 characters

51. How many unplanned change(s)/turnover(s) of Senior Leadership (e.g., executive director, directors, board of directors, general manager) has your organization experienced within the last five (5) years? Please enter "0" if your organization has experienced no unplanned change(s) or turnover(s) within the last five (5) years.

Important note: Both this question and the following question are scored together, where one cumulative score is assigned both questions. Please ensure to provide as much valid information in both questions, as possible, to ensure that your responses are scored appropriately.

- Maximum: 750 characters

52. If applicable, please describe the reason(s) for the unplanned change(s)/turnover(s). Please do not include any personal information in your response.

Enter N/A if your organization has not experienced any change(s)/turnover(s) of Senior Leadership within the last five (5) years.

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Important Note: Both this question and the previous question are scored together, where one cumulative score is assigned to both questions. Please ensure to provide as much valid information in both questions, as possible to ensure that your responses are scored appropriately

- Maximum: 750 characters

53. Please describe your organization's Mission, Vision, and Values. Please include a link to your most recent Annual Report, if applicable.

- Maximum: 2000 characters

55. As indicated in Question 54, please describe your organization's experience in providing targeted program/services for Black individuals experiencing homelessness. This should include details on program type, methodology, specialized programming, program model, response to population needs, and outcomes.

- Maximum: 2000 characters

57. As indicated in Question 56, please identify policies and/or standards that address Anti-Black racism that the organization has implemented.

- Maximum: 2000 characters

59. As indicated in Question 58, please describe any Black/African-centred approaches such as practices, frameworks, principles, values and ways of working that respond to the distinct needs and unique experiences of Black individuals experiencing homelessness.

- Maximum: 2000

61. Please describe how your organization addresses interpersonal and structural Anti-Black racism experienced by individuals who self identifies as Black or of African descent. This should include specific strategies or initiatives the organization currently has in place to challenge these forms of racism within your policies, practices, and interactions with service users

- Maximum: 2000 characters

63a. Please describe the lead organization's experience in operating a municipally and/or provincially funded shelter, respite, drop in, and/or mobile crisis supports This should include details on program type, methodology, specialized programming, program model, response to population needs, outcomes. Please be as specific and detailed as possible when describing your experiences, but do not include any personal information.

- Maximum: 2000 characters

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63b. Please describe your collaborative organization's experience in operating a municipally and/or provincially funded shelter, respite, drop in, and/or mobile crisis supports. This should include details on program type, methodology, specialized programming, program model, response to population needs, outcomes. Please be as specific and detailed as possible when describing your experiences, but do not include any personal information. Please complete this question only if you are applying as a collaborative.

- Maximum: 2000 characters

65. Please provide a brief description of your organization's vision for your proposed shelter program for Black individuals and how it addresses the needs for Black individuals experiencing homelessness from an Anti-Black Racism lens.

Your response should include a proposed population group, any specialized programming and/or services, approaches to service delivery and care, program vision and how you define program success. Ensure that your response includes how the proposed shelter program improves outcomes for Black individuals experiencing homelessness. Note: You must commit to accepting clients being referred through the City's defined referral pathways, including Central Intake, Street to Homes or the Encampment Office.

- Maximum: 2000 characters

66. Please provide a detailed overview of the lead organization's proposed program model, including program priorities, methodology, principles, implementation, and deliverables from an Anti-Black racism lens. Your response should include a proposed program model, program priorities, methodology, principles, implementation, and deliverables

- Maximum: 2000 characters

67. Shelter operators funded through the City of Toronto are required to work closely with the community in which the shelter site is located to maintain positive community relationships. This includes proactively engaging with community members especially community members within the Black or African diaspora to foster positive relationships and developing a community engagement policy to respond to community complaints.

Please describe how the lead organization will foster and maintain positive relationships with the surrounding community (e.g., neighbours, local businesses, community partners, police, hospitals, schools). Your response should include details on why and how you use this approach(es) (e.g., your methodology, principles, implementation, continuous improvement, deliverables) and how you perceive that this approach(es) impacts both clients and the

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surrounding community. For further reference, please refer to the [Toronto Shelter Standards \(TSS\)](#).

- Maximum: 2000 characters

68. Please describe the lead organization's approach to the congregation of service users outside your proposed shelter (e.g., loitering, smoking). Your response should include details on why and how you use this approach(es) and how you perceive that this approach(es) impacts both shelter clients and the surrounding community.

- Maximum: 2000 characters

### **Q12. What are the assessment timelines? When will the successful Proponent be announced?**

- The City is looking to announce the successful proponent for the Black Mandated EOI in 2025. The applications will close on May 30th, 2025. Shortly after, the City will move to the assessment and evaluation stage, which consists of an evaluation of the EOI Application, a matching exercise and due diligence assessment. From this, the Evaluation Committee provides a recommendation to the General Manager to approve the successful proponent.
- These phases will take a couple of months to complete with the aim of announcing the successful proponent in 2025.

### **Q13. What is the approximate size of the new shelter sites?**

- Sites being sought are generally 20,000 square feet. to accommodate approximately 70-100 individuals.

### **Q14. Is the intention that the successful Proponent continue to fundraise at the same level to support operations?**

- Yes, the expectation is that the successful Proponent will continue to fundraise to support operations.
- Actual funding levels may vary based on the type and level of services provided at the site, ensuring that funding is appropriate to the level of support required and reasonable within a range of comparable municipally funded shelter operations. Ongoing operational funding is subject to annual review and contingent upon City Council's approval of the annual budget for TSSS

### **Q15. Can an agency submit two applications: one as an individual applicant and another application as an organizational mentor?**

- TSSS welcomes individual applications from Black Mandated non-profit organizations **AND**
- TSSS also welcomes applications where the organization is listed as a mentor in another organization's EOI submission.