



Request for Proposal for Consulting Services – #2012-01

North Central Saskatchewan Enterprise Region Inc. (NCER)

Release Date: February 6 2012

Closing Date: February 24 2012

1.0 INTRODUCTION

NCER Investment Readiness and Attraction 2012 Program

The North Central Enterprise Region (NCER) is an economic development agency designed to provide the focus and leadership necessary to build a thriving North Central Saskatchewan Economic Region. Our mandate and vision is to assist the region to increase business and industry competitiveness, realize its economic potential and compete globally.

The NCER endeavors to continue its pro-active approach to investment readiness and attraction by completing following items over the next year:

1. Development of a comprehensive value proposition for investing in North Central Saskatchewan;
2. Identifying investment opportunities within in existing supply chains in North Central Saskatchewan;
3. Having support available to NCER and partners on investment lead follow up.

2.0 BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVE

North Central Enterprise Region continues to move forward with its strategies to attract and retain people and investment. Major initiatives to date include a branding report and development of key messages; a labour strategy; and recently the strategy to attract external investment into the Region. The investment attraction strategy is consistent with the branding and key messages of the Region, particularly the Region as a hub for north/central Saskatchewan and a premiere tourist destination.

In 2010 the work involved the selection of three priority attraction sectors, using a matrix to determine which are most promising; following this was development of Sector Fact Sheets with variations applicable to electronic media; the third phase was the development of a supplier development strategy. The full report can be located at www.ncer.ca. The report identified the primary target audiences:

- Mine-related manufacturers – particularly those in the 2nd and 3rd tier (i.e. generally small-to-medium size manufacturers;
- Green energy and green technology relates services;
- Real estate developers, particularly for the tourism industry.

These target audiences were selected based upon North Central's strong potential related to mining exploration and development in the Region and farther north. Along the opportunities for new and existing businesses in the Region to service mining companies

with supplies and services, there will also be a need for businesses who can support the environmental and sustainable development demands of mining companies and related organizations.

In 2011 in Phase II of our Investment Attraction Program, NCER and partners took a more pronounced focus on lead generation. This work included the development of a Lead Management System and Outcall Program.

Having already identified the specific sectors that we will target for Investment Attraction and having a number of leads within these sectors - NCER needs to ensure that we can provide all the necessary opportunities, information and one-on-one support to prospect companies to enable them to build a compelling business case to invest in the region.

The Strategic Objectives of the Project include:

- (1) The building of strategic partnership networks with stakeholders involved in Investment Attraction including Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada and Enterprise Saskatchewan Representatives;
- (2) Increase the NCER's and partners ability to provide one on one support to prospect companies in target sectors;
- (3) Qualifying targeted leads in priority sectors and advancing those leads into prospects;
- (4) Raising awareness of the unique locational strengths of the North Central Enterprise Region in priority sectors;
- (5) Further define the value proposition for investing in North Central Saskatchewan in an effort to assist companies in building the business case to make investments in the region.

3.0 REQUEST

You, a potential supplier of these services, are invited to submit a proposal to provide the services as detailed in this document, in accordance with the terms, conditions and response guidelines contained herein.

3 complete copies of your proposal, plus one electronic copy on CD/USB drive in PDF format, are to be forwarded to:

Jonathon Theaker
Chief Executive Officer
North Central Enterprise Region
#137 -1061 Central Ave
Prince Albert, SK. S6V 4V4

By: February 24th 2012 4:00 p.m. Local Time

Proposals received at the specific identified location after the closing time will not be considered.

NCER reserves the right not to accept any proposals submitted and can re-open the competition for this contract. The successful supplier may not necessarily be the lowest bid submitted.

4.0 INQUIRIES

Inquiries, interpretations and questions regarding this RFP are to be directed to Jonathon Theaker, at jtheaker@ncer.ca or 306-953-4030.

5.0 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

RFP Release Date: February 6th, 2012
Closing Date: February 24th, 2012 4:00 pm local time
Interviews/Presentations: February 27th to February 29th 2012
Award of Contract (approx): March 1st, 2012
Anticipated Project Start Date: March 5th, 2012
Delivery Required By: December 1st, 2012

6.0 RFP PROCESS

Upon closing, the project partnership evaluation team will review all proposals for completeness and compliance to the requirements of this RFP. Incomplete proposals will be rejected and receive no further consideration.

7.0 PERIOD OF AGREEMENT

The term of any resulting contractual agreement will be from the date of award to December 15th 2012 or as determined by the NCER.

8.0 REQUIREMENTS – SCOPE OF WORK

The budget for this project for both components is not to exceed \$ 50,000 **including all travel and expenses**. Provide an all-inclusive fee. Individual components are listed below. Partnership or collaborative bids are welcomed.

Suggest Component Maximum (including travel and taxes)

Part I and II – Development of a detailed value proposition for investing in the North Central Sask. Region and development of related tools. Research and reporting on investment opportunities in existing supply chains: \$40,000

Part III – Lead/Prospect and Qualification Support: \$10,000

Bids will be accepted for all components or Parts I / II combined and Part III separate. NCER reserves the right to award Parts I / II and Part III to different firms.

8.1 Primary Responsibilities

The NCER endeavors to develop a comprehensive value proposition for investing in the North Central Saskatchewan Region that will assist in building the business case for NCER leads and prospects to invest in the region. NCER also requires a firm to undertake research to identify specific opportunities within the region's priority supply chains that would support investment in the region.

Having already identified the specific sectors that we will target for Foreign and Domestic Investment Attraction and having identified a number of targets and leads within these sectors - NCER needs to ensure that we can provide all the necessary opportunities, relevant information and one-on-one support to the prospect companies to enable them to build a compelling business case to invest in the region.

At a minimum, the successful consultant will be required to:

I) Develop a Value Proposition for Investing in the North Central Saskatchewan Region including:

"A value proposition is a promise of value to be delivered and a belief from the customer of value that will be experienced. A value proposition can apply to an entire organization, or parts thereof, or customer accounts, or products or services Developing a value proposition is based on a review and analysis of the benefits, costs and value that an organization can deliver to its customers, prospective customers, and other constituent groups within and outside the organization" (Wikipedia, January 24th 2012)

- a. Developing a detailed value proposition for investing in the North Central Saskatchewan Region and the development of related tools that will assist in building the business case for NCER leads and prospects to make investments in the region.

This would include a literature review of the following:

1. Applicable labour market information focusing on available labour pool, our labour market strategy, and training programs;
 2. Cluster information in target sectors to identify complementary industries/businesses and demand requirements;
 3. Available regional major infrastructure reports/information to identify areas that would support investment (i.e. transportation corridors, serviced commercial land);
 4. Incentives and funding programs available in the region applicable to target sectors;
 5. Any gaps or barriers that would hinder investment attraction to the region;
 6. The recent Regional Investment Attraction Strategy, Lead Management and Outcall Program;
 7. Other as identified.
- b. Investigate partnership opportunities with First Nations and other groups/businesses in the region in relation to the development of the value proposition;

- c. Completing a comparison of operational costs of the region to similar or competing areas (utilities, taxes, etc.). Information is to be reported in documents that support the value proposition;
- d. Identification and/or development of tools that assist companies and the region in preparing return of investment calculations;
- e. Other: as proposed by the consultant.

Notes:

- a) The value proposition is to be developed and captured in appropriate mediums so it can be easily communicated to NCER partners and marketed to potential foreign and domestic investors.
- b) Communication and implementation strategies for the value proposition are to be developed and integrated into the existing regional investment attraction program.
- c) Information and activities completed are to be outlined in a detailed report.

II) Supply Chain Opportunities:

Research opportunities within the supply chain in priority sectors to identify three to five specific examples or opportunities that support (or warrant) investment in targeted sectors:

- a) Develop/compile information that supports identified opportunities;
- b) Opportunities must be captured in appropriate mediums so they can be easily communicated to partners and marketed to potential foreign and domestic investors;
- c) Strategies for integration into existing investment attraction program are to be developed;
- d) Other: as proposed by the consultant.

III) Lead/Prospect and Qualification follow-up support including:

- a) Further qualification of existing set of leads including calls to leads.
 - a. Identification/qualification of 10-30 primary leads or prospects from existing lead/target sets.
- b) Providing assistance to NCER and partners in following up with information requests from leads/prospects and supporting companies in building the business case for investing in the North Central Sask. Region.

Note: Use of NCER's Current Lead Management System and Client Relationship Management (CRM) system is required.

- All final reports that include listings all completed activities and other material will be provided in hardcopy (10 colour copies) as well as in electronic word and PDF format.

- During the course of the work, regular meetings will be scheduled, as required and agreed to by the Consultant and project partnership, in order to assure that the work is completed in a timely manner. These meetings may be in person or via conference call.
- The Consultant will make a presentation to applicable project partnership and the NCER Board of Directors upon completion of the responsibilities. The Consultant may be asked to present findings to a wider public audience consisting of business people, municipal government and other stakeholders within the North Central Saskatchewan Region.

Suggested Milestones and Deliverables:

On or before March 31, 2012	Part I Draft complete
On or before August 1, 2012	Part I Complete and Part II Draft Complete
On or before October 15, 2012	Final written reports completed.
By the end of November 2012	Presentation to a range of stakeholders on the findings of the project.

8.2 Agency Responsibilities

The North Central Enterprise Region and its partners can provide existing research and documentation that will assist the consultant with the foundational knowledge needed to initiate an effective and timely process. NCER can also provide the successful consultant contact information for stakeholder organizations when required and if needed in order to initiate necessary conversations.

9.0 PROPOSAL RESPONSE GUIDELINES

To ensure your proposal is considered for evaluation, you are required to present proposals, in the order presented below, that includes the following:

9.1 Cover Letter

A covering letter, dated and signed by an official authorized to negotiate and make commitments and provide any clarifications with respect to the proposal on behalf of the supplier.

Provide an indication of any deviations or exceptions to the terms and conditions outlined in this RFP document.

9.2 Company Profile

A brief company profile indicating time in business and location of office(s). Include details regarding your company’s experience in economic development activities, programs, and/or policies. Specific work related to investment attraction for regional or municipal entities should be noted.

9.3 Project Plan

A proposed plan that clearly describes the methodology and approach that will be used to deliver/meet the objectives of the requirements outlined in Section 8.0.

Clearly indicate all steps to be taken from start of contract to completion of the project.

Provide a response indicating the number of resources, specific costs of each resource and how they will be allocated (percentage per activity or component); as well include timelines associated with each phase of the project.

9.4 Proposed Resources

For each proposed resource, provide the following information:

- Name, location and role of resource.
- Indication of the knowledge, education, qualifications and/or skill sets the resource possesses to deliver the required services.
- Experience in:
 - The North Central Saskatchewan Region
 - Economic Development related programs and/or policy development
 - Investment Attraction Program and Strategy development:
 - Lead Management and Support activities;
 - Research on existing supply chain;
 - Federal and Provincial Investment Attraction Policy.
 - Project Management and Facilitation.
- Provide similar sample work complete (or web links to).
- Provide details as to where and when the stated experience was obtained.
- Provide details on established contacts/networks in NCER priority sectors both domestic and international.
- Provide an indication of strengths the proposed resource will bring to the project.

To validate the experience of the proposed resources, short-listed suppliers will be required to provide, upon request, three (3) references (including contact name and telephone number) for each proposed resource.

9.5 Sub-contracting

If a sub-contractor is proposed for any portion of this project, please provide a supplier profile for each sub-contractor, outlining the nature of their proposed involvement, the nature of the relationship.

To validate the experience of the sub-contractor, short-listed suppliers will be required to provide, upon request, three (3) references (including contact name and telephone number).

9.6 Costs and Charges

Provide an all-inclusive fee including travel and expenses.

Provide detailed breakdown of proposed use of each resource including rate and estimated hours/days.

EVALUATION

10.1 Stage 1 – Written Proposal

The first stage will consist of an evaluation of the written proposal to rate how the supplier meets the detailed project requirements:

	Maximum Points
Supplier Experience	15
Proposed Approach	25
Project Work Plan	30
Proposed Staffing Resources	15
Project Costs	10
Proposal Clarity	5
.....TOTAL POINTS	

Points for the project costs will be completed by allocating the maximum points available to the lowest priced proposal. All other proposals will be pro-rated accordingly.

The written proposal and accompanying documentation submitted by the supplier becomes property of the NCER and will not be returned.

10.2 Stage 2 – Interview/Presentation (Optional)

	Maximum Points
Interview/Presentation	25
TOTAL POINTS	

The second stage of the evaluation will be based upon an interview/presentation by the supplier

Short-listed suppliers may be required to attend an interview or make a presentation to the evaluation team. The interview/presentation should be given by the resources directly involved in the performance of the required services. NCER shall not be liable for any costs for preparation or presentation of proposals by the contractor.

The interview/presentation must be based on the contents of the supplier's proposal and should further clarify the proposal.

The evaluation team will ask questions about the contents of the proposal or presentation for clarification purposes. Clarifications made by the supplier during the interview/presentation will become part of the supplier's proposal and may be included in any contract negotiations.

TOTAL COMPETITION SCORES

	Maximum Points
Stage 1 - Written Proposal	100
Stage 2 - Interview/Presentation (Optional)	25
TOTAL POINTS	125

In submitting a proposal, the supplier agrees that the decision of the evaluation team will be final. Suppliers acknowledge and understand that the evaluation team is not obligated to seek clarifications concerning proposals. Decisions to request clarifications or to conduct interviews/presentations are at the sole discretion of the NCER.

Recommendation of award will be based on best value. Best value will be determined by combining the scores of the written proposal, the interview/presentation and the reference checks.

The highest scoring proposal will be chosen as the preferred supplier.

11.0 CONTRACT NEGOTIATION

NCER will negotiate a contractual agreement with the preferred supplier. If NCER is unable to negotiate an acceptable contractual agreement with the preferred supplier, then the second preferred supplier may be selected and a formal written contractual agreement will be developed. In any case, NCER, at any time and without liability, may withdraw from negotiations with any potential supplier.