



College of Dental Technologists of Ontario
Ordre des Technologues Dentaires de l'Ontario

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Access to Dental Technology II Project

Communication Consultant

Client: The College of Dental Technologists of Ontario

&

Canadian Alliance of Dental Technology Regulators

Solicitation Number: ADT2 - 003

Date of Issue: December 2, 2024

Solicitation Closing Date: January 3, 2025 (5 p.m. EST)



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1. Background

1.1 Organization Overview

The Canadian Alliance of Dental Technology Regulators (CADTR) is the national membership of provincial dental technology regulators. It is composed of six provincial dental technology regulators that collectively license 2,100 professionals across Canada including:

- Nova Scotia Dental Technicians Association
- New Brunswick Dental Technicians Association
- Ordre des technologues en protheses et appareils dentaires du Quebec
- College of Dental Technologists of Ontario
- College of Dental Technologists of Alberta
- British Columbia College of Oral Health Professionals

CADTR regulators serve and protect the public by ensuring that individuals seeking registration to practice dental technology meet education and professional competence standards. A letter of support signed by CADTR members accompanies this proposal.

On behalf of its member regulators, CADTR provides credential evaluation and competency assessment services for dental technologists seeking a license to practice. This involves a review of education and experience of Canadian and international applicants to determine whether or not they are equivalent or substantially equivalent to approved dental technology programs in Canada. In addition, CADTR administers the Dental Technology Entry-to-Practice-Assessment (DTETPA) for both domestic and internationally educated professionals to determine their readiness for safe, effective and independent dental technology practice in Canada.

The College of Dental Technologists of Ontario (CDTO) has received funding from the Government of Canada, through the Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP), to administer a three-year the Access to Dental Technology (ADT) II project on behalf of CADTR.

A key component of this project and the focus of this RFP is the development of a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) pathway to licensure for internationally educated applicants. The PLAR pathway is being designed to serve a dual purpose – i.e., identify disciplines where the individual is proficient and to determine where gaps exist relative to an approved Canadian program.

The newly developed PLAR pathway will be piloted with roughly 50 eligible individuals before it is fully implemented. Once finalized, efforts to engage and inform prospective applicants and key stakeholders will be made. It is in this capacity that CDTO is seeking the expertise of a communications consultant familiar with the role of professional regulatory bodies.

1.2 Project Overview

The regulatory landscape in Canada has changed significantly in recent years. The Canadian Free Trade Agreement states that recognition of professional qualifications in one jurisdiction must be recognized by all other jurisdictions (including the internationally educated cohort) without any additional requirements. The inauguration of provincial “fairness” legislation in six provinces requires that assessment processes employed by regulators adhere to transparency, objectivity, impartiality and

fairness. International legislation, such as the Lisbon Convention, necessitates that organizations involved in evaluating and recognizing international credentials do so within a prescribed set of conditions. In late 2022, IRCC announced that Canada will welcome a historic number of 1.45 million newcomers through its economic, family, humanitarian and refugee class streams between 2023 and 2025. The collective effect of these developments as well as a significant increase in immigration necessitates that special attention be paid to the way the qualifications and skills of international applicants are assessed and recognized.

Widespread retirements in the dental technology profession are occurring and expected to accelerate. In 2019, there were 2,521 registered dental technicians/technologists in Canada; in 2023 this number has decreased to 2,129.

Currently, there are many internationally educated dental technologists that work as dental lab assistants/associates (DLAs), also known as “bench workers”. This position is generally unregulated and has a much narrower range of practice activities as compared with a registered dental technologist (RDT)¹. DLAs typically work under supervision and perform similar tasks as those who work as registered dental technologists. A 2019 study conducted as part of the Phase I project identified 2,771 of these individuals working in Canada. Many of them received their education outside of Canada and might be eligible to become licensed dental technologists. There are several benefits of encouraging these individuals to become registered:

- Public Protection: Every registered dental technologist must meet provincial standards to enter the profession as well as standards for professional conduct and practice.
- Scope of work: RDTs have a broader scope of practice and greater professional responsibility as compared to DLAs. Registering internationally educated individuals as RDTs will allow skilled individuals to perform a broader array of tasks, enhancing work opportunities, earning and professional fulfillment.
- Becoming a recognized professional: Many internationally educated individuals feel a sense of pride, achievement and accomplishment upon becoming a licensed professional in Canada.

Presently, there is no mechanism in place to fairly assess academic and previous work experience of DLAs, or reliably reintegrate them into dental technology profession. A similar challenge exists for internationally educated and trained dental technologists (IETDTs) who are or will be moving to Canada in the future. To this end, CADTR and its member regulators are looking to create a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) model for internationally educated dental technologists.

Bidders are encouraged to review CADTR’s current assessment and examination process here: <https://cadtr-acortd.com/>

1.3 Project Objectives

Project objectives, that directly tie to the Foreign Credential Recognition Program (FCRP) funding, are provided below:

- Strengthen, harmonize and expedite the registration of internationally educated dental technologists (IETDTs);

¹ Note that the College of Dental Technologists of Alberta recognizes the professional titles of both Registered Dental Technologist (RDT) and Registered Dental Technician (DT). The British Columbia College of Oral Health Professionals use the term Registered Dental Technician (RDT). Reference to RDT in this document is intended to encompass all professional titles used by CADTR member regulators.

- Address the human resources deficit/skills shortage and sustain the diversity and growth of dental technology profession in Canada;
- Support inter-provincial labour mobility;
- Provide pre-arrival support and engage in outreach and communications strategies.

2. Deliverables

Presently, all internationally educated applicants must undergo a profession-specific credential assessment (PSCA) as a means of determining eligibility to challenge a knowledge-based and performance-based exams (required by most regulators as a condition of registration). This process, developed as part of the Access to Dental Technology Project (Phase I), is only available to individuals with specific, formal education. There is no pathway to registration for those who may be qualified through non-traditional routes.

The new PLAR process will aim to enhance the fairness, objectivity and validity of assessment of internationally trained dental technology applicants and direct them to licensing, education and/or upgrading options, as needed.

CDTO and CADTR are seeking a Communications Consultant to prepare materials and resources to support the project. Specific deliverables are bulleted below:

- Develop a strategy and communication plan based on the review of internal materials, consultations with CADTR members, PLAR consultants, and CADTR website developer. It must include an inventory of required communications, targeted audiences and key messages.
- Work with the PLAR development consultants to develop communication and application materials to recruit and support individuals through the PLAR pilot phase of the project.
- Develop a pre-arrival licensure information package that can be shared with prospective applicants in the home country.
- Develop partnerships with pre-arrival services providers and other organizations to support the dissemination of pre-arrival information.
- Work with the PLAR development team to develop and refine (post-pilot) an application package.
- Prepare content and graphics suitable for the CADTR website that outline the new PLAR pathway and provide information on how to apply.

The Consultant will report to the ADT II Project Management team. Ongoing updates (written and verbal) to the project Steering Committee (SC), comprised of representatives from the CADTR membership, will be required.

3. Proposed timeframe

The follow table sets out suggested timeframes and activities for associated with the deliverables outlined above but may be adapted based on input from the successful bidder.

Timing	Activity/Deliverable
January, 2025	Initiation of contract
January, 2025	Kick-off meeting with the SC to confirm methodology, deliverables and timelines
February, 2025	Development of communications strategy and plan based on review of internal materials, consultation with CADTR members and PLAR consultants

March-April, 2025	Preparation of communications to support the pilot phase
May-July, 2025	Preparation of pre-arrival information and identification of pre-arrival partners
August-December, 2026	Develop communication materials and resources based on pilot results to support the application process and prepare content for CADTR website.
Ongoing	Updates and approvals (where required) with the CADTR SC

4. Price

Bids are not to exceed \$55,000.00 CAD (maximum bid amount), this is exclusive of all applicable taxes.

Estimated travel costs, incidentals, and other possible costs (inclusive of HST), fall outside of the maximum bid amount.

5. Assumptions

- CDTO reserves the right to:
 - refuse all proposals received;
 - enter into negotiations with Bidders on any or all aspects of their proposal;
 - accept any proposal in whole or in part without negotiations;
 - cancel and/or reissue this RFP at any time;
 - seek clarification and verify any or all information provided with respect to this RFP;
 - negotiate with the sole compliant Bidder to ensure best value to CDTO.
- The Bidder certifies that the persons proposed in its proposal will be available to commence performance of the work as required and at the time specified within or agreed to.
- As part of signing the contract, the consultant will undertake to respect the confidential nature of CDTO, CADTR and the Funding Agreement documentation and content.
- All information shall be destroyed in accordance with any instructions issued by CDTO.
- The Bidder agrees to and understands that confidential information supplied to the College may be disclosed by the College where the College is obliged to do so under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)*, by an order of a court or tribunal otherwise required at law.
- The Bidder shall notify CDTO immediately after they become aware that a breach of any provision of this contract governing the protection of personal information has occurred.
- Any intentional breach by the Bidder of any provision of this contract governing the protection of personal information constitutes a fundamental breach of contract such that the contract may be terminated by CDTO.
- No part of this project is to be subcontracted without prior permission of CDTO and CADTR.
- The Consultant will be available as prescribed in proposed timeline.
- Translations will be arranged through CDTO. The Bidder should indicate in their proposed work plan where translation services may be required.
- Any travel required to complete the described work or present findings to key stakeholders must be preauthorized.

- Travel expenses will be reimbursed at cost within the travel directive of the National Joint Council: www.njc-cnm.gc.ca, and CDTO policies.
- Reasonable expenses including travel, accommodation, meals and other expenses will be outside of the bid amount.
- Contracts, letters of agreements, Invoicing and payment terms will be in accordance with CDTO policies.
- Note that the lowest bid will not necessarily be awarded the contract.

6. Proposal requirements and deadline

6.1 Proposal Requirements

The proposal must include the following components:

1. An introductory section that describes the intended methodology and shows that the applicant clearly understands the scope and intent of the project and how to approach this type of work.
2. A brief account of any similar projects the applicant has completed in the past.
3. A general work plan and timeline.
4. Total bid price to complete deliverables (excludes travel expenses) + estimated applicable taxes (shown separately).
5. Three references from organizations for which you have completed similar work in the past five years.

6.2 Preparation of Proposals

- Proposals must address all the requirements of this RFP.
- The proposal is not to exceed eight (8) pages in length.
- All prices within the bids must be in Canadian funds and any applicable taxes are shown separately.
- The Bidder's name and return address, the solicitation number and the RFP closing date should be clearly visible on documents containing the proposal. Proposals submitted in response to this RFP will not be returned.

6.3 Proposal Deadline and Submission

Proposals are to be received no later than January 3, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. EST.

- Proposals are to be sent by email to the Project Manager, Giedre Johnson at giedrejohnson@gmail.com.
- Questions regarding the RFP are to be sent in writing to giedrejohnson@gmail.com. No questions will be answered within 48 hours of the submission deadline.
- It is the Bidder's responsibility to ensure their proposal and all associated documents are received in full and on time. It is advised that Bidders send the proposal in advance of the closing time to ensure confirmation of receipt.

7. Evaluation criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 80% Technical Merit – Work Plan, Availability, Experience, References and Qualifications
- 20% Price

The basis of selection will be the highest combined rating of technical merit and price.

8. Conflict of Interest

“Conflict of Interest” includes, but is not limited to, any situation or circumstance where:

- (a) in relation to the RFP process, the Bidder has an unfair advantage or engages in conduct, directly or indirectly, that may give it an unfair advantage, including but not limited to (i) having or having access to information in the preparation of its proposal that is confidential and not available to other Bidders; (ii) communicating with any person with a view to influencing preferred treatment in the RFP process; or (iii) engaging in conduct that compromises or could be seen to compromise the integrity of the open and competitive RFP process and render that process non-competitive and unfair; or
- (b) in relation to the performance of its contractual obligations in a Client contract, the Bidder’s other commitments, relationships or financial interests (i) could or could be seen to exercise an improper influence over the objective, unbiased and impartial exercise of its independent judgment; or (ii) could or could be seen to compromise, impair or be incompatible with the effective performance of its contractual obligations;

The Bidder must declare: (1) there was no Conflict of Interest in preparing its proposal; and (2) there is no foreseeable Conflict of Interest in performing the contractual obligations contemplated in the RFP.

Otherwise, the Bidder must declare that there is an actual or potential Conflict of Interest relating to the preparation of its proposal, and/or the Bidder foresees an actual or potential Conflict of Interest in performing the contractual obligations contemplated in the RFP.

If the Bidder declares an actual or potential Conflict of Interest, the Bidder must set out details of the actual or potential Conflict of Interest in its proposal.