



REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

CEDC DIGITAL SERVICE SQUAD – THUNDER BAY AND REGION

Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC)
P.O Box 800
Suite 701, 34 Cumberland St. N.
Thunder Bay, ON, Canada
P7C 5K4

ISSUED: **Wednesday, September 30, 2020**

CLOSING DATE: **until filled (6 vacancies)**

Introduction:

The Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission is an arms length community development corporation, led by an independent board with core funding from the City of Thunder Bay that has a mandate to work on formal proposals and projects that will contribute to economic development.

Within the CEDC is the Thunder Bay & District Entrepreneur Centre which provides business counselling services to new and existing small businesses.

The Digital Main Street program is an initiative developed by the Toronto Association of Business Improvement Areas and funded by provincial and federal governments to help businesses across the province of Ontario. OBIAA has provided a portion of that funding to the Entrepreneur Centre to develop a Squad Service team to cover the region of Atikokan to Greenstone tasked to help small, main street businesses directly with support on the training program and application for the Transformation Grant.

Purpose:

The Thunder Bay & District Entrepreneur Centre (The Centre) part of the Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC), is seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from (up to) six people to build a Digital Services Squad providing guidance and coaching to main street businesses with the Digital Main Street program.

If you are a digital media expert or enthusiast and have considered starting your own business or growing your clients as a freelancer, this is a unique opportunity to expand your skills, build your roster, and launch your career.

Digital Service Squad Members (DSM's) have a passion for helping others succeed. Your tech skills and one-on-one assistance will be vital to ensuring clients realize their visions, increase their profile and revenue, and ultimately grow their businesses. As a Squad Team Member, your goal will be to teach specific concepts, steps, and tools to local businesses, building their confidence and abilities to use these skills on their own in the long-run.

You should have experience in, or thorough knowledge of a range of digital tools and platforms, including a selection of, but not limited to: Hootsuite, Shopify, Etsy, QuickBooks, Square, PayPal, point of sale systems, inventory management systems, YouTube, customer relationship management systems, WordPress, Microsoft Office Suite.

Also, it is essential that you are a strong communicator. You should be comfortable meeting with clients one-on-one or in small groups (albeit, the communication throughout the project will be virtual

only, no in-person meetings), describing tech concepts or tools in a clear and relatable way, respectfully sharing your advice and opinions, recommending next steps or “homework”, and following up to check on their progress and offer further guidance. Squad Team Members will need to be organized, comfortable taking initiative, and have strong research skills and a genuine passion for digital technologies.

There will also be a large emphasis on reporting on these meetings and ensuring all communications are logged and reported appropriately to capture metrics for the funding reports.

The Centre will receive and review EOI submissions and may enter into direct negotiations with parties that it feel best align with its Digital Main Street program

Background

Digital Main Street is a grant program of the Ontario Business Improvement Area Association, made possible by the Toronto Area Business Improvement Association and the Government of Ontario. The Entrepreneur Centre has been allocated funds to launch a Digital Service Squad locally through this program, and are working in collaboration with the communities from Atikokan to Greenstone, and then in coordination of the teams for communities west. For details on Digital Main Street, visit <https://digitalmainstreet.ca/>

Activities to be Undertaken

DSM's will provide consultation, guidance, and support to independent businesses within the Entrepreneur Centre's catchment area, specifically in the communities of Atikokan, Thunder Bay, Red Rock, Schreiber, Terrace Bay, Marathon, Greenstone.

- Outreach and on-boarding

Support recruitment of businesses to sign-up with the Digital Service Squad through proactively connecting with eligible businesses. Support for introductions will be provided by the Centre and various community partners in the area (i.e. BIAs, Community Futures Development, etc...)

- Advisory and coaching services

Organize and lead meetings with business clients, held virtually. You will have the flexibility to book advisory and coaching sessions according to your own schedule, and at times that are convenient for the business clients. Invoice for services rendered would be approved at \$23/hr, maximum of 25 hours per week for the term of this agreement.

- Implementation support

Provide advice, guidance, and initial operational support to businesses as they learn and launch new digital tools and practices. This may include assistance with registering for accounts, downloading resources, planning staff training, developing visual or branding assets, transferring previous files and documents, or developing schedules for publishing, reviews, or analysis.

- Reporting and engagement

Squad members will be responsible for tracking their coaching sessions and client meetings, and invoicing the Centre for their hourly services. Notable milestones or hurdles will be shared with the Program Coordinator and other Squad members.

Training

All Service Squad Leads will participate in paid training with Digital Main Street. This is available digitally and will provide Slack channels to stay in contact with other members throughout the province.

All Squad Members will also receive direct guidance from the Centre in growing your own business practise or consultancy firm. This may include direction on registering your business, invoicing, preparing for and filing taxes, budgeting and operations, generating revenue, building your client pipeline, and managing documentation.

Insurance Requirements

Successful applicants shall, within ten (10) calendar days of notice of award, at its own expense, obtain and maintain until the termination of the contract, and provide the CEDC with evidence of:

Comprehensive general liability insurance on an occurrence basis for an amount not less than Two Million (\$2,000,000) dollars and shall include the CEDC as an additional insured with respect to the CEDC operations, acts and omissions relating to its obligations under this Agreement, such policy to include non-owned automobile liability, personal injury, broad form property damage, contractual liability, owners' and contractors' protective, products and completed operations, contingent employers liability, cross liability and severability of interest clauses.

Automobile liability insurance for an amount not less than Two Million (\$2,000,000) dollars on forms meeting statutory requirements covering all vehicles used in any manner in connection with the performance of the terms of this Agreement.

The policies shown above will not be cancelled or permitted to lapse unless the insurer notifies the CEDC in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of cancellation or expiry. The CEDC reserves the right to request such higher limits of insurance or other types of policies appropriate to the work as the CEDC may reasonably require.

The successful Proponent shall not commence work until such time as evidence of insurance has been filed with and approved by the CEDC. The successful Firm shall further provide that evidence of the continuance of said insurance is filed at each policy renewal date for the duration of the contract.

Invoicing

Invoices should be submitted on a monthly basis to The Centre, with the final submission by December 31, 2020.

Interested? - Submission Requirements

This EOI is a non-binding invitation to submit a proposal. The Centre and CEDC shall not be liable for any expenses incurred, including the expenses associated with the cost of preparing responses to this EOI. The parties shall bear their own costs associated with or incurred through this EOI process.

Interested individuals are invited submit short responses, including but not limited to the following:

1. Short resume including your experience, education, and area(s) of expertise
 - Note that professional, volunteer, formal, or informal experience/education will all be considered valuable
2. Hyperlinks to 3 samples of your work (please do not include as attachments)
3. 2-5 minute video introducing yourself, sharing how you have developed your skillset, what makes you passionate about helping businesses/clients grow, and why this opportunity could be game-changing for you.
4. Signed Submittal Form

Preference will be given to recent graduates. Knowledge of the named communities or individuals living within will be considered an asset. The Centre may enter into negotiations and review with selected candidates. The Centre's Digital Service Squad will conclude in December 31, 2020, and all final invoices must be submitted at this time.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Centre will review EOI submissions and may choose to enter into negotiations with one or more parties at its sole discretion. The Centre may also decide to cancel this process in its entirety for any reason.

QUESTIONS AND INQUIRIES

All communications concerning this Request for Expressions of Interest shall be sent to:

Ryan Moore – Development Officer, CEDC
ryan.moore@thunderbay.ca

SUBMISSIONS

Please submit your EOI submission to: ryan.moore@thunderbay.ca with the subject: EOI Submission: **Digital Service Squad Member**.

(This is NOT a Request for Proposal)

FAXED OR MAILED SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION

PRINT LEGAL NAME OF FIRM

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY

POSTAL CODE

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON (PRINT)

PHONE NUMBER

E-MAIL ADDRESS

SIGNATURE OF AUTHORIZED OFFICIAL

PRINT NAME

DATE