

Supporting Cooperation Canada's Strategic Influence and Cross-Sector Engagement Request for Proposals

Request for proposals issued: 13 August 2026

Proposal submission deadline: 4 September 2026

Anticipated contract period: 1 October 2026 to 31 December 2027

Maximum available budget: 110,000 CAD total for the anticipated contract period

1. Organization Overview

Cooperation Canada is the national independent voice for international cooperation. As a coalition representing over 100 Canadian civil society organizations, we convene, coordinate and collaborate with members and partners in Canada and internationally to advance policies and programs for a fairer, safer and more sustainable world.

Cooperation Canada undertakes policy analysis, sector coordination, government and parliamentary engagement, public advocacy and strategic communications to strengthen Canadian leadership on international cooperation.

2. Context and Intended Outcome

Canada's international role and approach to international cooperation are being shaped in an increasingly complex political and global environment. Its response to the fracture in the global world order must be grounded in a coherent foreign policy whose pillars are adequately resourced and work in complementary ways while leveraging their individual comparative advantages.

International cooperation is no longer discussed only within traditional aid policy spaces. It is increasingly connected to broader debates concerning Canada's economic resilience, trade relationships, diplomacy, national and global security, democratic governance and influence in the world.

Political decisions and public discourse are also influenced by individuals and institutions from business, defence and security, diplomacy, philanthropy, media and broader public policy networks. These actors can help connect international cooperation to other Canadian priorities and reach audiences that may not traditionally engage with the international cooperation sector.

Cooperation Canada is therefore seeking to expand its access to influential policy spaces, strengthen relationships beyond its traditional networks and test new approaches to building support for Canadian leadership on international development cooperation.

This assignment will contribute primarily to **expanded strategic influence and engagement in Canadian policy spaces, and where relevant and where there is capacity, global policy spaces as a secondary objective**. Cooperation Canada aims to strengthen its leadership and influence in the arenas where Canada's international role and the future of international cooperation are being shaped.

3. Purpose and Objectives

Cooperation Canada is seeking a government relations or public affairs firm to propose and support a strategic approach to expanding Cooperation Canada's influence and engagement in national and, where relevant, global policy spaces.

The successful proponent will be expected to present a clear and compelling vision for how it would support Cooperation Canada to:

- strengthen Cooperation Canada's **relationships and influence**, with a particular focus on political, business and security actors, and others beyond the international development sector;
- design and support **select partnerships, convenings and engagement opportunities** that connect international cooperation with priorities and perspectives across sectors;
- generate **practical learning and recommendations** to inform Cooperation Canada's longer-term influence and engagement strategy.

The proposed approach should be selective, politically informed, relationship-driven and focused on opportunities with a strong likelihood of advancing Cooperation Canada's objectives. While Cooperation Canada will continue to invest in its parliamentary and government engagement, this is an updated approach aimed at demonstrating the relevance of international cooperation in relation to Canada's global position, security, and prosperity.

4. Scope and Expected Results

Proponents are invited to propose the strategy, relationships, partnerships, activities and methods they believe would be most effective in achieving the objectives of this assignment while generating the greatest strategic value within the available time and resources.

By the end of the assignment, Cooperation Canada expects to have made progress toward:

- improved access to priority national and, where relevant, global policy spaces;
- stronger relationships and influence with political, business and security actors;
- greater engagement with credible individuals and institutions beyond the international cooperation sector;
- increased consideration and uptake of Cooperation Canada's perspectives by political and policy actors;
- practical learning and recommendations to guide Cooperation Canada's longer-term influence and engagement strategy.

Cooperation Canada recognizes that influence and relationship-building are not always immediately measurable. Proponents should propose a credible approach to assessing tangible results and evidence of progress toward longer-term influence.

5. Deliverables and Working Arrangements

Proponents should recommend the deliverables they believe are necessary to achieve the objectives and expected results of the assignment. At a minimum, Cooperation Canada anticipates:

- an inception process and agreed strategic work plan;
- ongoing strategic advice and implementation;
- regular updates on progress, emerging opportunities, risks and recommended next steps;
- a final assessment of results, learning and recommendations.

The final work plan and deliverables will be agreed with the selected proponent during the inception phase.

The successful proponent will work primarily with Cooperation Canada's Director of Policy and Advocacy and will engage with Policy and Advocacy, Communications and senior leadership colleagues as required.

The selected proponent will be expected to work collaboratively with Cooperation Canada, maintain appropriate confidentiality and discretion, respect the organization's non-partisan and charitable status, and ensure that Cooperation Canada retains institutional ownership of relationships, information and products developed through the assignment.

All external outreach, public engagement and significant strategic decisions will remain subject to Cooperation Canada's approval. The selected proponent will not speak publicly on behalf of Cooperation Canada unless specifically authorized.

Engagement may be required in both official languages. The selected proponent may also be required to attend meetings or events in Ottawa or elsewhere in Canada.

6. Budget

Proponents should recommend an appropriate sequencing of activities, deliverables and milestones over the contract period.

The maximum budget available for this consultancy is 110,000 CAD total for the anticipated contract period, excluding applicable taxes. Additional budgets may be available to support participation and/or curation of strategic engagement in select partnerships, events and convenings.

Proponents should provide:

- a total proposed budget;
- the proposed fee structure;
- the rates and anticipated level of effort of personnel assigned to the work;
- any proposed subcontracting or partnership costs;
- anticipated travel, event or third-party costs; and
- any assumptions or expenses not included in the proposed fee.

Travel, event and significant third-party costs should be presented separately and will require prior approval from Cooperation Canada.

Proposals exceeding the maximum available budget may not be considered.

7. Required Qualifications and Experience

Proponents should demonstrate:

- experience developing and implementing government relations, public affairs, strategic influence, stakeholder engagement or cross-sector partnership strategies;
- a strong understanding of the Canadian political, government and public policy environment;
- established relationships or demonstrated access within political, business, security and related policy communities;
- experience building sustained relationships with influential individuals and institutions and identifying high-value policy opportunities;
- experience designing targeted partnerships, convenings or engagement activities;
- strong political judgement, discretion, writing, briefing and project-management skills;
- experience working with civil society, charitable or non-profit organizations;
- a solid understanding of international development cooperation, foreign policy, humanitarian action, global security or related international issues;
- a firm understanding of the legal and non-partisan operating requirements of Canadian charities;
- the ability to work in English and support bilingual engagement where required; and
- demonstrated availability and capacity to deliver the assignment within the required period.

8. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should be concise and include:

A. Understanding and Strategic Vision

The proponent's understanding of the assignment and vision for how Cooperation Canada can expand its influence and engagement in priority policy spaces.

This should identify where the proponent sees the greatest opportunities and how the proposed approach would strengthen Cooperation Canada's influence beyond its traditional networks.

B. Proposed Approach and Work Plan

The strategy, activities and methods recommended to achieve the objectives and expected results of the assignment. This section should include:

- the rationale for the proposed approach;
- how relationships and opportunities would be identified and prioritized;
- proposed activities, deliverables, milestones and sequencing;
- the proposed approach to assessing progress and learning.

C. Relevant Experience, Networks and Team

Examples of comparable assignments, including the proponent's role and the results achieved.

Proponents should also describe:

- the political, business, security and broader policy communities in which they have relevant relationships, experience or demonstrated access;
- the names, roles and qualifications of personnel assigned to the work; and
- the availability and anticipated contribution of each team member.

D. Risks and Conflicts of Interest

An identification of key political, reputational, ethical or implementation risks and how these would be managed. Proponents should also disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest relevant to the assignment.

E. Budget - A detailed budget consistent with Section 6.

F. References - Contact information for two relevant professional references.

G. Inclusive and Responsible Procurement - The information requested in Section 10.

9. Selection Criteria

Proposals will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight
Quality of the vision, relevance and feasibility of the proposed approach	40%
Relevant experience, relationships and demonstrated access of the firm and proposed team	30%
Cost and overall value for money	20%
Inclusion, accessibility, environmental responsibility and fair labour practices	10%
Total	100%

Cooperation Canada may invite shortlisted proponents to participate in an interview or presentation before making a final selection.

10. Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Responsible Procurement

Cooperation Canada is committed to justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility and anti-racism. Cooperation Canada is a signatory to the Anti-Racist Cooperation Framework.

We seek to provide equitable opportunities for vendors of different sizes and backgrounds, including Black, Indigenous and racialized vendors, as well as vendors owned or led by members of other equity-seeking groups.

Through a cover letter, separate information note or section of the proposal, proponents are invited to provide information concerning:

- Please let us know if your organization is BIPOC-owned or managed by other equity-seeking groups (LGBTQ+, differently abled, etc.)
- Tell us how your organization is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Tell us about your experience improving accessibility in government relations work.

Disclosure of personal identity information is voluntary. Proponents will not be penalized for choosing not to provide this information.

11. Intellectual Property, Confidentiality and Conflicts of Interest

All strategies, stakeholder information, briefing products, reports and other deliverables produced under the contract will become the property of Cooperation Canada, unless otherwise agreed in writing. The successful proponent will be required to protect confidential and sensitive information obtained through the assignment. Stakeholder and relationship information must be handled in accordance with applicable privacy requirements and Cooperation Canada policies.

Proponents must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest, including current or recent work for:

- political parties, candidates or elected officials;
- federal government departments or political offices;
- foreign governments;
- private-sector entities;
- defence or security organizations; or
- other organizations whose interests may intersect with this assignment.

The existence of other clients will not automatically disqualify a proponent. Cooperation Canada will determine whether any identified conflicts can be appropriately managed.

12. Submission Process

Proposals should be submitted electronically to: **Paul Farran**, Director of Policy and Advocacy - pfarran@cooperation.ca

The email subject line should read: **Proposal: Strategic Influence and Cross-Sector Engagement**

Cooperation Canada may share responses to material questions with all prospective proponents to support a fair and transparent process.

Cooperation Canada reserves the right to:

- request clarification or additional information;
- invite selected proponents to an interview or presentation;
- negotiate the scope, work plan, deliverables and budget with the preferred proponent;
- select all or part of a proposal;
- decide not to award a contract;
- reject any or all proposals; or
- amend or cancel this request for proposals at any time.

Only proponents selected for further consideration will be contacted.