

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Canada
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15/01/24

Request for Proposal – Consultancy Services for Co-Curricular Experiential Learning Project

Dear [Consultant/Consultancy Firm],

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Canada (Award Canada) invites you to submit a proposal for phase one of a comprehensive, three-phase project. We seek your expertise to conduct a rapid evidence review of secondary school co-curricular and experiential learning pathways, with a focus on management, implementation, assessment, and recognition.

While this is primarily an RFP for phase one of a multi-phase initiative, we would also welcome proposals that address all three phases of this project and demonstrate your expertise to develop, implement, manage, and assess the delivery of the Award framework as a co-curricular, experiential learning pathway for public secondary schools.

1. Project Overview:

Co-curricular experiential learning occurring outside the institutional/programmatic curriculum-based structure, has often been overlooked as a meaningful area to support student learning. Award Canada, a registered charity operating for 60 years, aims to enhance co-curricular experiential learning within publicly funded secondary schools.

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award framework, rooted in education, provides a unique model for integrating experiential learning into the traditional curriculum. Our aim is to work with Education Ministries, Departments and District School Boards in Canada to better define co-curricular experiential learning and develop a working model for purposefully connecting the Award's framework to curricular learning within publicly funded secondary schools.

The co-curricular project is a three phased initiative. Phase one is a rapid evidence review of secondary, public school co-curricular, experiential learning pathways, and how they are being managed, implemented, assessed, and recognized. Phase two includes the identification, selection and preparation of between 3 and 6 public education partners who will sign on as operating partners to pilot our co-curricular initiative and phase three is project implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

2. Project Objectives:

Our primary goals for Phase 1 include:

- Understanding the impact of co-curricular learning on student engagement, achievement, and success in the **public** school system

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- Gaining perspectives from various stakeholders on co-curricular activities and assessment of learning
- Identifying conditions necessary for effective co-curricular programming
- Defining common elements across co-curricular learning definitions and accreditation standards in secondary schools

Our primary goals for Phase 2 include:

- Developing the capabilities for the integration and utilization of the Award framework into secondary school programming and addressing some of the key issues identified by public education stakeholders
- Testing the operational delivery of the Award within the public secondary school system through 3-6 operating partners

Our primary goals for Phase 3 include:

- Piloting delivery of the Award framework as a purposeful learning tool with several publicly funded secondary school partners
- Assessing how the project is evolving over time, how effectively it is being implemented/delivered, and whether there are any gaps or areas requiring modification
- Providing impact data to pilot partners and Award Canada

3. Scope of Work

Phase 1 [March –April 2024] - The rapid evidence review

- Gather and review research on secondary school-based co-curricular experiential learning
- Evaluate existing school resources as co-curricular tools
- Report on current practices, benefits, and barriers related to co-curricular tools in secondary education
- Establish key principles, definitions, and examples of co-curricular/experiential learning.
- Develop pilot research objectives / hypotheses and the positioning of the project within the education agenda
- Identify barriers to project success, potential solutions, and suitable partner organizations

Phase 2 [May - August 2024] - Pilot preparation

- Select and prepare between 3 and 6 pilot projects (with specific research objectives/areas) for launch in September 2024
- Develop initial tools, resources, training, and briefings to support the pilot projects
- Establish Pilot evaluation criteria and monitoring cycles including interim indicators of success (Dec 2024, April 2025, July 2025)
- Prepare positioning / lobbying position covering rationale, scope and intended outcomes of project
- Review the Award's existing partnership model to ensure proper fit with publicly funded school systems

Phase 3 [September 2024 – July 2025] – Implementation

- Commence pilot project communications and implementation plans
- Manage project milestone meetings, change logs and project data
- Prepare, conduct, and interpret satisfaction surveys with pilot groups
- Make any required changes to implementation tools and resources
- Publish and communicate results.

4. Award Canada's Commitment:

Award Canada will provide:

1. Project outline, including budget and financial support
2. Phased brief for the education consultant
3. Advisory/steering group made up of key stakeholders and senior management staff for regular consultation and support

5. Expectations of the education consultant during the Phase 1 Rapid evidence review:

We would expect the Education Consultant to:

1. Review draft overall project outline and project scope (ensuring evidence review is grounded)
2. Provide robust methodology
3. Conduct evidence review (linked to aim 1 above)
 - Conduct scoping searches
 - Conduct critical appraisal of the included studies using predefined criteria
 - Extract key findings from the studies
4. Compile findings in a draft report (linked to aim 1 above)
5. After discussion with key stakeholder prepare recommendations (linked to aim 2)
6. Produce a final rapid evidence review report, combining aims 1 and 2, which at a minimum includes the following sections:
 - Introduction
 - Methodology (brief overview)
 - Overview of findings / recommendations presented thematically, including any learning for the design of pilot projects
 - Limitations of the evidence and gaps in existing knowledge
 - Annex table of literature reviewed for the report

6. Proposal Submission

We are impressed by your reputation, expertise, and track record in education consultancy. Please submit your proposal by February 16, 2024, to sdewint@dukeofed.org. Proposals will be reviewed, and follow-up interviews will take place between February 19-23, 2024, with a final decision by February 29, 2024.

Your proposal should include a high-level critique of the project outline (this RFP) including any recommendations on what to do differently and a project plan with key milestones.

7. Additional proposal information

To aid in the selection of consultant please also provide the following in addition for your plan to address points in Section 5

1. Company Background and Overview
 - a. Provide a brief introduction to yourself and consultancy, including previous experience, duration and if appropriate size, and structure.
 - b. Highlight your experience in providing similar services or support in a similar industry or with comparable objectives.
2. Consultancy approach
 - a. Outline your approach and consultancy philosophy
3. Team and / or expertise
 - a. Provide an overview of your team (if applicable) that will be working on this project, including qualifications, experience, and relevant certifications.
 - b. Provide any references or testimonials from existing clients if possible.
4. Services offered
 - a. Specify the services you offer with respect to Phase 1 and for consideration in future phases
5. Timeline (in reference to Section 5)
 - a. Provide a project timeline, including key milestones
 - b. Optional: Provide project timeline for Phase 2 & 3
6. Fee Structure
 - a. Clearly outline your fee structure and any other applicable charges
 - b. Indicate any potential additional costs or expenses associated with your services
7. Terms and Conditions
 - a. Outline any applicable legal and or contractual requirements pertinent to the proposal.
 - b. Any specific terms and conditions that apply to the project.

8. Contact Information:

We look forward to receiving your proposal and appreciate your interest in contributing to our co-curricular initiative. If you have any questions or would like to further discuss any aspect of this request, please contact me at 437-290-8354. I look forward to receiving your proposal.

Sincerely,



Stephen De-Wint
Chief Executive Officer

Annex - a brief background on The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award and our work to date on the Co-curricular Project.



The story of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award (the "Award") is rooted in education and addressing the developmental needs of young people. The Award's framework was developed by educator, Kurt Hahn, and while the concept was born in the mid-1900's, its relevance in addressing some of the challenges facing today's public education system, is a driving force behind our co-curricular initiative.

The Award framework fosters learned experiences in 5 personal development areas, outside the traditional classroom, that are goal oriented. It is designed to teach youth to reflect on concrete experiences, through adult mentorship and reflection, and offers recognition and accreditation for experiential learning. We believe it is a model that supports the symbiosis between curricular and co-curricular offerings as part of a holistic learning process for young people.

From our research, we understand that public-school systems are all searching for ways to improve the holistic education experience for young people. In April of 2023, we held a round table discussion on non-formal education and the merits of experiential learning as well as the challenges that educators are facing. It became clear that formal education providers are struggling to engage learners, there is a gap between skills needed and skills taught, there is an appetite for combining education and experience, and there is a desire to recognize and validate non-formal learning.

Our discussions with Deputy Ministers of Education, several Superintendents of Education and the Council of Ontario Directors of Education reinforced the idea that a strategic repositioning of the Award, looking at how the non-formal education approach of the Award naturally extends classroom learning, could provide benefits to educators, learners, their schools, and wider communities. Developing confident, resilient, and healthy students that are prepared for the global challenges they are facing, and will continue to face, is equally as important as the academics they are learning.

The Award offers a framework for formally recognizing a student's engagement in meaningful experiences outside the classroom that result in learning. It provides an opportunity for secondary students to develop key competencies and core life skills that enrich their academic experience, their personal well-being and set them up for success beyond high school, regardless of their life path and it offers accreditation and recognition for those skills and competencies that traditional academic assessment struggles to validate.

We believe the Award framework is a viable co-curricular tool for formal education partners to address holistic student development and help them re-imagine education for the future. With a developed co-curricular package, education ministries and school boards will provide enhanced learning and recognition opportunities for their students while addressing some of the multi-faceted issues facing formal education.

In collaboration with education stakeholders our goal is to build a valued and supported model where the Award framework becomes an integral part of the learning process. We believe that formal use of the Award framework in a more aligned manner within the public education system can serve as an important contributor to program and institutional improvements within the secondary, public school system in Canada.

We envision a model where teachers use Awards sections to help engage learners and support formal learning outcomes. For example, the Adventurous Journey can be used by science, history and



geography teachers as they help their students work together in teams to prepare, plan and execute real world field studies and explorations. Service can be used to lend structure and documentation to those schools that require voluntary service to graduate, and the Skill section can be used to support vocational/skilled trades curriculums as well as music and art curriculums.

The Award's experiential learning framework of progressive levels can be used by whole grade groups or in support of different secondary pathways. For example: Grade 9 & 10 – "Shape & Support". The focus here would primarily be on the Bronze and Silver levels and be leveraged to support school transition and attainment of life skills, providing a framework for shaping decision making and choices. It would be an introduction to the habits and skills required for lifelong experiential and non-formal learning, including goal setting, record keeping, reflection, and discovery. Grade 11+ - "Realize Potential" with the focus on the Gold level and achieving full potential with more emphasis on vocational and career drivers and good decision making.