

Request for Proposal (RFP)

External Audit Services



NAK'AZDLI WHUT'EN
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Preface

Nak'azdli Whut'en invites proposals from experienced and qualified firms to provide external audit services essential to our community's financial accountability and transparency. This Request for Proposal (RFP) details the requirements and expectations for potential auditors, highlighting our commitment to selecting a partner who upholds the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.

Our goal is to ensure a fair and inclusive selection process that identifies the most capable service provider to meet our community's unique needs. This RFP represents the first step in building a collaborative relationship, with final agreement terms to be established in a subsequent engagement contract.

1. Introduction

Nak'azdli Whut'en (the "Band") seeks proposals from qualified and experienced audit firms to deliver comprehensive financial statement audits, tax compliance services, and related financial oversight for the fiscal years 2025 to 2027. Based on demonstrated performance and mutual agreement, the engagement may be extended for an additional two years.

We are seeking a firm with proven expertise in public sector audits, with a strong preference for experience working with First Nations organizations. The selected firm must maintain independence and ensure no conflicts of interest to safeguard the integrity of the audit process.

2. Organization Overview

Nak'azdli Whut'en is situated in Fort St. James, BC, on the picturesque shores of Stuart Lake. Governed by a Chief and seven Councillors, our progressive community serves approximately 2,000 members and employs over 130 full-time staff. The Band operates multiple enterprises, including:

- Nak'azdli Development Corporation
- Carrier Food & Fuel Ltd.
- Sana'aih Market
- Several joint ventures and partnerships.

The Band adheres to Public Sector Accounting Standards (PSAB) and manages a variety of funds, including operating, capital, trust, and social housing funds. Financial operations are supported by Adagio, Paydirt, and ADP software.

3. Scope of Work

The Auditor will be responsible for the following tasks:

- Conduct comprehensive annual financial statement audits in compliance with Canadian Auditing Standards (CAS).
- Prepare all required supplementary schedules, including those related to government funding and salaries.
- Audit business enterprises and not-for-profit entities owned by Nak'azdli Whut'en.
- File annual corporate income tax returns and not-for-profit organization (NPO) information returns.
- Provide detailed management letters addressing internal control observations and offering actionable recommendations.
- Attend meetings with the Finance/Audit Committee to present audit findings and discuss key observations.
- Prepare and finalize Consolidated Financial Statements, ensuring compliance with applicable accounting standards.

Additional services may include specialized studies, consulting engagements, or other tasks as mutually agreed upon between the Band and the Auditor.

4. Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include:

- **Cover Letter:** Overview of the firm, authorized representatives, and acknowledgment of the scope of services.
 - **Firm Profile:** Detailed description of the firm's experience with First Nations and public sector engagements.
 - **Team Qualifications:** Resumes and qualifications of key personnel.
 - **Audit Plan:** A detailed timeline, use of technology, and staff involvement in the audit process.
 - **Fee Schedule:** A clear breakdown of fees for three fiscal years and any additional services.
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5. Insurance and Indemnification

The successful firm must maintain:

- Professional liability insurance with a minimum coverage of \$5 million.

- General liability insurance with a minimum coverage of \$5 million, listing Nak'azdli Whut'en as an additional insured.
 - Confirmation of coverage must be provided within 10 days of the contract award.
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6. Submission Instructions

All proposals must be submitted no later than **January 31, 2025**, at 3:00 p.m. (local time) to:

Attn: Angela Clause, Chief Operating Officer
Nak'azdli Whut'en Administration Office
120 Highway 27, P.O. Box 1329
Fort St. James, BC V0J 1P0

Proposals received after the specified deadline will not be considered. Submissions must be sealed and clearly labeled "RFP External Audit Services" to ensure proper handling. Late or improperly labeled proposals will be disqualified from the evaluation process.

7. General Information

- Nak'azdli Whut'en reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or negotiate terms with the selected firm.
 - All submissions become the property of Nak'azdli Whut'en.
 - Direct communication with Council members is strictly prohibited during the proposal process.
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8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- **Understanding of Engagement:** Demonstrated understanding of the scope and ability to provide valuable recommendations.
 - **Experience:** Proven expertise in First Nations and public sector audits.
 - **Team Expertise:** Qualifications and experience of the proposed audit team.
 - **Audit Approach:** Clear methodology, use of technology, and efficient processes.
 - **Additional Services:** Ability to offer a broad range of consulting and advisory services.
 - **Fee Structure:** Transparency and competitiveness of proposed fees.
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