



*Accelerating the **Business of Technology.***

Request for Proposals

ATIGS
ICT RFP for the Provision of
Consulting Services

Date: September 28, 2017
Version 3.0

Introduction

The Government of Canada and the four provincial governments in Atlantic Canada have developed a new Atlantic Trade and Investment Growth Strategy (ATIGS) that is designed to support the region's long term growth by increasing the global competitiveness of the region and its firms.

Under the ATIGS, the provincial and federal governments are committed to unprecedented collaboration and coordination to develop and implement joint trade and investment initiatives that are coordinated, firm-focused, and build on the region's sector capabilities and capacity.

Opportunities for export growth continue to emerge for Atlantic companies in areas such as knowledge-based, value-added and resource sectors. Under ATIGS, Atlantic Sector Export Teams have been created to focus on export plan development and implementation activities to help Atlantic businesses seize and maximize export growth opportunities.

Consisting of government and sector stakeholders, the Teams will be tasked with developing and implementing long-term, evidence-based sector export development plans that contribute to the achievement of ATIGS targets.

Mandate (ATIGS)

- Expand business activities between Atlantic Canada and international markets, and strategically market the region as a whole by displaying the best Atlantic Canada has to offer the world to attract new investments

Objective (ATIGS)

- Increase the Atlantic exporter base
- Increase the value of Atlantic exports
- Increase the number of Atlantic exporters diversifying into global markets
- Increase foreign direct investment in Atlantic Canada

Background

The ICT sector in Atlantic Canada is comprised of approximately 1,100 companies. Almost half of the ITC companies provide products and services related to enterprise software solutions. Telecommunications, big data and analytics, digital media, video

gaming and educational technology are also important subsector of the ICT industry in Atlantic Canada.

While most ICT businesses are small, some of the region's businesses have had success in terms of being purchased or amalgamated with other larger players engaged in social media, IT security, apps, etc.

The newly formed ICT Atlantic Sector Export Team met in Halifax in June 2017. The Team is comprised of representatives from NATI, ACOA, the 4 Atlantic Canadian Provinces, Global Affairs Canada, Venn, TechImpact and Digital NS. During the face to face meeting, members discussed the development of an Atlantic Sector Export Strategy/Plan for the ICT industry, and the gathering of information on the industry in Atlantic Canada.

Since that meeting, information from each province's ICT industries was gathered and more is expected to be collected in the coming months. The Team has already collected information on the number of companies in Atlantic Canada, the number of companies in each sub-sectors, the total number of employees, the estimated total sales, the percentage of companies exporting outside of Canada, the current export markets, and some markets of interest. Other information on company preparedness was gathered. Some companies have indicated that market preparedness was a significant impediment to growing export sales. Companies have also indicated the need for pre market entry information on IP protection, visa requirements for cross border work, taxation and regulatory requirements. They also request information on how to optimally penetrate international jurisdictions, sales training including pitch, opening/closing sales deals; in market intelligence, etc

During the June 2017 meeting in Halifax, the Team expressed the need to identify key markets that offer significant opportunities for the key vertical subsectors within the ICT sector. Team members, market specialists and industry in their effort to be hyper-focused, will identify 3 high-value markets of interest for export.

STATEMENT OF WORK AND DELIVERABLES

The Team recommends that a consultant be retained to assist with the following:

1. Obtain a minimum of 50 completed surveys by webinar, provincial ICT roundtable meetings, skype, email or by other means of ICT founders/executives across the Atlantic Canadian provinces (with reasonable representation from each of the four provinces) to discuss the following:
 - Effectiveness of existing export programs;
 - Effectiveness of existing trade missions;
 - HR challenges;

- Sales challenges;
 - Exit opportunities;
 - Effectiveness of seed, angel and venture capital in Atlantic Canada;
 - Identify new and alternative initiatives to assist ICT firms in Atlantic Canada achieve greater exports; (need to identify real value we can provide to firms)
 - Validate where ICT firms in Atlantic Canada feel the top 3 geographic markets exist globally;
 - Validate what ICT firms in Atlantic Canada perceive the top sector vertical are (i.e. digital media, gaming, data security, fin tech. etc.) and what markets are best aligned with these verticals. ,
2. Identify leading technological /innovative markets in ICT and subsequent primary subsectors, and identify key activities these jurisdictions have undertaken to increase their economic success via accelerated scale, and enhanced international sales.
 3. Articulate how these markets became recognized global leaders in driving economic success. Map out key tactics, success metrics, events and activities, best practices, and identify disruptive and innovative approaches in these markets. At a high level, compare and contrast our Atlantic tactics, activities and best practices against these successful regions so as to provide a “gap analysis”. The research should also contain a scan of the trade commission services and how to best expose Atlantic Canadian companies to these service offerings in key jurisdictions.
 4. Prepare and present a market development strategy and a 3 year action plan with key deliverables and success metrics for the Atlantic Canada ICT sector team. This includes gathering of data from existing ecosystems such as Startup Accelerators, and Gateway Support programs, the existing pool of Atlantic Canadian exporters, and ICT clusters. This plan should identify strategies for working with potential and existing exporters and identify strategies to further develop ICT clusters within the region. The overall strategy will provide guidance and recommendations in terms of target objectives and various market development strategies to undertake in order to meet our overall goal of doubling exports in the Atlantic region.

TIME LINE

Action	Delivery Date	Responsibility
Closing date for RFP	October 12 th	Committee
Selection of consultant	October 16 th	Committee
Complete company surveys	November 17	Consultant
Identify leading markets	December 1	Consultant

and map out tactics, etc. (#2 & 3)		
Complete draft plan	December 15	Consultant
Complete Final Report	December 29	Consultant

SELECTION CRITERIA

The successful candidate will be determined based upon the following:

- The extent of knowledge and experience in relation to the proposed work;
- An understanding of the scope and objectives of the proposal;
- Proposed approach, work plan and schedule; and
- Cost*.

* Determination of best value may not result in the lowest cost being accepted.

BUDGET

Payment will be made upon the consultant submitting electronic invoices with supporting documentation in a form satisfactory to NATI.

Payment schedule as follows:

- 33.3% upon signing of contract;
- 33.3% upon submission of the draft of the final report; and
- 33.3% holdback paid upon satisfactory completion of the project. Failure to meet any of the conditions outlined in the contract will result in adjustment to final payment/holdback;
- Payment of invoices will take place in **Canadian Dollars** within thirty (30) days of receipt.

EVALUATION FACTORS

1) Project Management

This area includes professional qualifications and experience of key personnel assigned to this project, track record, and experience in business development.

2) Project Team

This area includes professional qualifications of key project members, their experience and network of contacts within the technology sector.

3) Comprehension

This area includes understanding of the scope and objectives of the proposal, the approach proposed, the work plan and schedule, identification of potential problems and recommendation of possible solutions, etc.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

- Proposals must include a company prospectus, services offered and details on the qualifications of the firm, including previous experience in similar type work, sector knowledge and network of contacts;
- Proposals must include details on the background and experience of qualified personnel relating to the project management and project team;
- Proposals should include names of former clients and associates for whom similar or relevant work has been performed presented as references, as well as a description of the work completed.

NATI is not obliged to accept the proposal with the lowest price or any other proposal for this project. NATI reserves the right, upon 10 days written notice, to terminate these services and the work contemplated in this proposal, at any time.

INQUIRIES, Via Email

Attention: Ron Taylor, CEO
NATI – NL Association of Technology Industries
Email: Ron@nati.net

No payments will be made for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal in response to this request.

Please submit one copy of your Proposal clearly marked:

ATIGS, ICT RFP for the Provision of Consulting Services

Must be received (email or fax) no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon) NST on Friday, October 12, 2017.

Evaluation Criteria

EVALUATION OVERVIEW/CONSULTANT SELECTION METHODOLOGY

Evaluation Procedures

Proposals will be assessed based on the criteria specified.

The clauses of this section of the RFP are categorized as “Mandatory” or “Rated” Requirements. Mandatory items are identified specifically with the word “MANDATORY”.

- a) **To be considered responsive, a bid must meet all the mandatory requirements of this solicitation. Bids not meeting all mandatory requirements of this solicitation will be given no further consideration.**
- b) The bids meeting all the mandatory requirements of this solicitation will be subject to a point rating evaluation, as follows:

To be considered responsive, a bid must obtain the required minimum of 60 percent of the points for each of the criteria categories, which are subject to point rating, specified in this solicitation document. The technical rating is performed on a scale of 100 points. Bids not obtaining the required minimum percent for each category of technical criteria which are subject to point rating will be given no further consideration.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

1. Bidder **MUST** submit a company profile with their proposal, including résumés and roles of all personnel who will be participating in the project.
2. Bidder **MUST** provide a list of similar work projects undertaken in the past three years (3) and substantiate that the firm has gained technology development and commercialization experience through these projects, as well as any international marketing and competitive market analysis experience.
3. Bidder **MUST** demonstrate a minimum of three (3) years’ experience working with companies, universities or other associations in the areas of technology.

RATED REQUIREMENTS (Maximum 100 points, Minimum 60 points)

Criteria	Value	Score
Significant knowledge of the technology sector in Atlantic Canada Note: Must score at least 15/20	20	
Understanding of international market business practices, and culture learned through direct business experience – and how the Atlantic market can benefit.	20	
Demonstrated network of contacts within the technology sector in Atlantic Canada Note: Must score at least 15/20	20	
Quality of Proposal		
Demonstrated understanding of the Project, its objectives and metrics for evaluation	10	
Completeness and suitability of approach	15	
Experience and knowledge of provincial and federal funding programs for business in Atlantic Canada	5	
Layout, organization and readability of proposal	5	
Cost **(in Canadian Dollars)	5	
TOTAL	100	