

## Request for Proposal

# Alberta Esports Strategy

Reference Number: 2107-002

**Issued: July 23, 2021**

**Responses Due: August 18, 2021 at 16:00 MST**

### **Calgary Economic Development Ltd.**

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## 2. Introduction

Calgary Economic Development Ltd. invites qualified firms to submit a Proposal for the Alberta Esports Strategy RFP #2107-002. A Proposal, in electronic form, must be submitted as outlined in Section 17. The electronic copy should be sent to the attention of the Contracting Manager by email as noted in Section 15. Late Proposals will not be accepted.

## 3. Timelines\*

|  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| RFP Release                                      | <b>July 23, 2021</b>                 |
| Deadline for Questions                           | <b>July 30, 2021</b>                 |
| Proposal Submission Date                         | <b>August 18, 2021</b>               |
| Meetings with Short-Listed Vendors (if required) | <b>August 30 – September 3, 2021</b> |
| Bid Notification Date                            | <b>September 10, 2021</b>            |
| Project kick-off                                 | <b>September 20, 2021</b>            |
| Draft Strategy                                   | <b>December 6, 2021</b>              |
| Final Strategy                                   | <b>December 17, 2021</b>             |

\*Proposed timelines. Vendors are welcome to propose more efficient timelines to complete the proposed work.

## 4. Definitions

"CED" means Calgary Economic Development Ltd.

"City of Calgary" refers to the municipal government of the City of Calgary.

"Request for Proposal or "RFP" means this document including attached appendices.

"Contracting Manager" means the person identified in Section 15 of this RFP.

"Vendor" means an organization responding to this RFP.

"Proposal" means a Vendor's response to this RFP and includes all the Vendor's attachments and presentation materials.

"Selection Committee" means the individuals that will be reviewing submitted Proposals and overseeing work on this project.

"Services" means the duties, tasks, and responsibilities of the Vendor as described in this RFP.

## 5. Standard Form Contract

By submitting a Proposal, a Vendor acknowledges it agrees that the terms and conditions of this RFP are incorporated by reference into its Proposal. If a Vendor's

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Proposal is accepted the Vendor will be expected to execute CED's standard contractor agreement. Vendors who are unwilling to abide by these standard terms and conditions should not submit a Proposal.

### **6. Vendors Questions**

All questions regarding this RFP must be directed via email to the Contracting Manager. Inquiries and responses may be recorded and distributed to all Vendors.

The Vendor must immediately notify the Contracting Manager in writing of any ambiguity, divergence, error, omission, oversight, or contradiction in this RFP is discovered by the Vendor and request whatever clarification is required to prepare the Vendor's Proposal.

In order for CED to deal effectively with Vendor questions or concerns about any terms, conditions or requirements of this RFP, including the standard terms and conditions, such questions or concerns must be communicated in writing to the Contracting Manager in accordance with the Timeline indicated in Section 3 above. Questions received after this time will be answered if, in the opinion of CED, the circumstances warrant, and time permits.

### **7. Conflict of Interest**

Vendors must fully disclose, in writing, to the Contracting Manager on or before the Proposal Submission Date of this RFP, the circumstances of any possible conflict of interest or what could be perceived as a possible conflict of interest then known to Vendor between the Vendor and CED and/or the Selection Committee. CED may reject any Proposal where, in the opinion of CED, the Vendor is or could be perceived to be in a conflict of interest.

### **8. Vendor Expenses**

The Vendor is responsible for all costs of preparing and presenting its Proposal.

### **9. Confidentiality**

All information provided by or obtained from CED in any form in connection with this RFP either before or after the issuance of this RFP, including any confidential information is the sole property of CED and must be treated as confidential; is not to be used for any purpose other than replying to this RFP and the performance of any subsequent contract; must not be disclosed without prior written authorization from CED; and must be returned by the Vendor to CED, or destroyed if held in electronic format, immediately upon the request of CED.

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### 10. Background

Esports is competitive video gaming, and its popularity is rapidly growing around the world. So far in 2021, 625 billion minutes have been watched on Twitch; an increase of 41.6% from 2020<sup>1</sup>. Total viewership of esports globally is on track to grow at 9 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) between 2019 and 2023 to 646 million in 2023 and revenues from esports is expected to reach \$1.8 billion by 2022<sup>2</sup>.

A NewZoo market analysis found approximately 21.2 million Canadians played video games in 2018<sup>3</sup>. This number, and the revenues generated from competitive video game play, will only grow.

Work is already being done in Canada to grow esports ecosystems across the country, and Alberta is no exception. Calgary Economic Development and Edmonton Global, Edmonton Screen Industries Office, and the cities' tourism organizations, Explore Edmonton and Tourism Calgary, recognize the economic powerhouse potential of esports and its ecosystem. Previous work done on this topic includes a study commissioned by Calgary Economic Development on Calgary's Video Game and Immersive Technology Strategy in 2019. Now, these organizations are working together to catalyze esports infrastructure across the province to develop a cohesive Alberta Esports Strategy.

As a burgeoning sport globally and nationally, Calgary Economic Development and its provincial partners, recognize the importance of partnering across the province to capture the economic benefits of the industry and capitalize on the already established anchor companies and broader interactive digital media and creative industries in Alberta. The Alberta Esports Strategy must leverage successes in global esports hubs, Alberta's unique characteristics, such as strengthening the existing hubs, and those emerging across the province, and the increasing uptake of esports in rural jurisdictions.

### 11. Purpose of the Project

Calgary Economic Development, Edmonton Screen Industries Office, Explore Edmonton, Edmonton Global, and Tourism Calgary (hereafter jointly referred to as 'project partners'), and with support from our provincial esports organization, Alberta Esports Association, will work with a Vendor to develop Alberta's Esports Strategy. The Esports Strategy will be used as a business development tool to attract key esports ecosystem players to Alberta to build a recognized, robust, and sustainable

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://twitchtracker.com/statistics>

<sup>2</sup> Source: [https://www.businessinsider.com/esports-ecosystem-market-report?utm\\_source=copy-link&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_content=topbar](https://www.businessinsider.com/esports-ecosystem-market-report?utm_source=copy-link&utm_medium=referral&utm_content=topbar)

<sup>3</sup> Source: <https://newzoo.com/insights/infographics/canada-games-market-2018/>

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esports ecosystem. The Strategy will also be used as an advocacy tool to create alignment across government and industry on support for esports infrastructure in Alberta and across Canada.

### 12. Objective of the Project

The project partners intend for the Alberta Esports Strategy to achieve the following objectives:

- Identify key successes and best practices in global esports hubs.
- Understand the current international and national esports hubs and their key ecosystem components.
- Understand Alberta's current esports ecosystem components including esports associations, ecosystem leaders, talent development and education providers, venues, governments, and investors and their economic impact.
- Identify Alberta's strengths in esports compared to other esports hubs and develop Alberta's value proposition in esports.
- Develop a strategy to continue to build Alberta's esports ecosystem and become a national and international leader in esports.

The Strategy will be developed for Alberta. While there should be a focus on Alberta's major urban centers – Calgary Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) and Edmonton Metropolitan Region (EMR) – it is critical for the Vendor to recognize the success of the provincial esports ecosystem is predicated on the inclusion, and support for, all jurisdictions and groups, including rural communities, Indigenous Peoples, and other BIPOC communities.

The Vendor is expected to provide a detailed approach describing how to successfully achieve the above objectives.

### 13. Deliverables

The project partners expect the Vendor to provide the following deliverables and outputs:

#### Part A: International and National Esports Landscape

1. Overview of global esports hubs including successful ecosystem development factors and best practices.
2. Description of Canada's esports landscape including economic impacts of esports nationally.
3. Identification of cities across Canada leading in esports and description of their existing ecosystem components and best practices (cities could include Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Toronto).

#### Part B: Alberta's Esports Ecosystem

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1. Description of Alberta's esports ecosystem components including esports associations, ecosystem leaders, talent development and education providers, venues, governments, and investors, and Alberta esports demographics and economic impacts, such as employment and revenue data.
2. Identification of Alberta's strengths and opportunities for improvement in esports, through comparison of Alberta's esports ecosystem against national and international esports hubs in Part A<sup>4</sup>.

### **Part C: Alberta's Opportunity to be an Esports Leader**

1. Description of Alberta's value proposition as a national and international leader in the sector.

### **Part D: Alberta Esports Strategy**

1. Development of a strategy for Alberta to become a leader in esports including the following elements:
  - a. Objectives for Alberta's esports ecosystem to become a recognized leader in esports across ecosystem components (e.g., community, tourism, economic developers, interscholastic and PSIs, industry).
  - b. Recommended next steps and initiatives to achieve the objectives categorized by ecosystem components.
  - c. Recommended metrics of success to measure achievement of objectives for Alberta's esports ecosystem.
  - d. Role of complementary ecosystem players and assets such as game developers, government, investors, and other industries such as tourism and live entertainment, event hosting, and organized sports, and education systems.

The deliverables and outputs listed above will be provided to the project partners in the following formats:

- Detailed list of current Alberta esports ecosystem assets (per Part B #1).
- Final Strategy (Microsoft Word Document and Adobe PDF): includes all information outlined in Section 13 and achieves objectives listed in Section 12.
- Presentation of Strategy (Microsoft PowerPoint): summarizes the Final Strategy.
- Two-page summary (Microsoft PowerPoint or another visual application and Adobe PDF): two-page summary, with visuals, of value proposition and key findings and insights from the Final Strategy.
- These deliverables should be provided in such a way that they could be used immediately for business development and marketing purposes. Deliverables must not require additional manipulation or edits at the conclusion of the research.

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<sup>4</sup> Vancouver Economic Commission's Esports Strategy identifies global leaders in esports. This information should be used and integrated into this strategy.

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Please note the Vendor is expected to utilize and build on all existing internal research and external commissioned studies by Calgary Economic Development, and existing publicly available resources, such as, but not limited to, Alberta Esports Association (AESAs) 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan and the Vancouver Esports Strategy commissioned by Vancouver Economic Commission. Previous work will be provided to the selected Vendor at the initiation of the project.

### 14. Fees and Payment Terms

The fees for this work should be competitively priced. The project partners will take into consideration the cost competitiveness of the bid during proposal evaluations.

Proposals must include a breakdown of the Vendor's fees and disbursements to complete each deliverable listed in Section 13 and achieve the objectives listed in Section 12. Please include the following with the breakdown of costs:

- Cost detailed per deliverable in Section 13
- Travel, if required
- Prices must be stated in actual dollars and cents expressed in Canadian funds and inclusive of all taxes except for GST, which should be itemized separately.

Please provide options for the project team to contribute to reduce project costs and be prepared to consider which aspects of the Proposal might be optional.

### 15. Contracting Manager

For the purposes of the provisions of information surrounding this contract or the administration of the contract, the Contracting Manager is:

Calgary Economic Development Ltd.  
**Attention:** Hubba Khatoon, Research and Strategy Economist  
500 Centre St S 32nd Floor  
Calgary, AB T2G 1A6  
Canada  
Telephone: 403 767-1319  
Email: [hkhatoon@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com](mailto:hkhatoon@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com)

### 16. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Vendors should be aware that certain mandatory requirements have been set out in the Evaluation Form (scope, methodology, experience, and deliverables). Proposals that fail to provide these requirements may not be evaluated. See Appendix A for the Proposal Evaluation Criteria.



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### 17. Submission Information

Proposals must be received **by email on August 18, 2021 by 16:00 MST** to:

**Email:** [hkhatoon@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com](mailto:hkhatoon@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com)

- After the Proposal Submission Date, Calgary Economic Development may post the identity and addresses of the Vendors.
- CED may elect to not consider any Proposal that:
  - Is received after the exact time and date noted above.
  - Does not indicate the Request for Proposal's title, closing date, and Vendor's name on the Proposal in response to the RFP;
  - Is delivered to an address other than that provided above;
  - Transmitted Proposals will be accepted if the Proposal is received before the submission deadline to the email address provided above.

### 18. CED Reservation of Rights

CED reserves the right:

- To not consider, or to reject, any or all Proposals in whole or in part for any reason whatsoever in its sole and absolute discretion;
- To accept any Proposal in whole or in part even if it does not comply with the terms of this RFP or is not the highest rated Proposal in accordance with the evaluation criteria;
- To short list Vendors, and require a presentation by the Vendors short-listed and/or the provision of additional information by such short-listed Vendors;
- To, at any time, add, delete or modify this RFP and to have the Vendors advise CED of the effect of such changes on their Proposal and/or have the Vendors resubmit their Proposals in light of same;
- To negotiate at any time with any one or more of the Vendors to the exclusion of the other Vendors; and
- To not proceed, for any reason, with this RFP or the project contemplated in this RFP.

### 19. Intellectual Property

Unless otherwise agreed and confirmed in writing:

- All material, including but not limited to programs, reports, notes, maps, drawings, photographs, data, forms and other records prepared, created, written or recorded by ("**IP**"): (a) the Vendor, or (b) CED or ESIO or (c) the Vendor and CED or ESIO jointly, in connection with the Services under any agreement incorporating the terms and conditions of this RFP, a Proposal, or as a deliverable under any agreement arising therefrom (an "**Agreement**"), will be the property of CED and ESIO; accordingly, the Vendor hereby assigns to CED and ESIO all rights, title and interest it may have from time to time in

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such material and all intellectual property rights therein will vest in CED and ESIO.

- During the term of the relevant Agreement, the Vendor shall have a non-exclusive, non-transferable license to use such IP of CED and ESIO or IP which is jointly created for the sole purpose of providing and completing the Services. Upon the termination or completion of a specific project or Agreement, the Vendor will promptly return such material to CED and ESIO whether completed or not. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, the Vendor may retain for archival purposes a single copy of each item of such material.
- Every invention, discovery or improvement developed by the Vendor in the course of, or in connection with, performing the Services under an Agreement where the invention, discovery or improvement has been initiated or directed or specifically requested by CED and ESIO, will be the property of CED and ESIO and, accordingly, the Vendor hereby assigns any intellectual property right to any such invention, discovery or improvement developed to CED and ESIO. The Vendor will cooperate fully in the establishment and maintenance of all intellectual property rights accruing hereunder to CED and ESIO. This provision will survive the termination of any Agreement and to the extent necessary or desirable, the Vendor will take such actions as are reasonably requested by CED and ESIO after termination of an Agreement with respect to intellectual property rights created during the term of the Agreement.
- The parties acknowledge and confirm that any intellectual property that was developed prior to the relevant Agreement, or that was developed by the Vendor independently from such Agreement with CED and ESIO, or that was developed at the sole initiative of the Vendor without any prior initiation or direction or request from CED and ESIO, will be outside the scope of this Section 16.
- If the Vendor needs access to data of CED and ESIO in order to carry out Services under an Agreement incorporating the terms and conditions of this RFP, CED and ESIO will grant a non-exclusive, non-assignable license to have access to and to use that data.

### **20. No Further Contract or Liability Arising from RFP Process**

By submitting a Proposal, the Vendor agrees and acknowledges that:

- Nothing in this RFP nor the submission of the Proposal nor the review and consideration of the Proposal by CED nor any communication between the parties in relation to the RFP or the Proposal will operate to obligate any party to enter into any further business relationship with the other party and, in particular, if CED decides to engage the Vendor in connection with any Proposal or the subject matter of the RFP then such engagement may only occur pursuant to a written agreement that has been signed by both parties and,

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absent such written agreement, CED will have no further liability or obligation to the Vendor in connection with the subject matter of the RFP;

- The Vendor is participating in this RFP process at its sole risk and expense, and CED will not be liable to the Vendor for any costs, expenses or liabilities incurred by the Vendor in any way arising in connection with the Vendor's participation;
- CED has made no representations other than those expressly stated in this RFP;
- CED has the right to cancel this RFP at any time, CED may reissue this or a similar request for Proposal at any time, for any reason whatsoever or decide not to reissue it for any reason, without incurring any liability and no Vendor will have any claim against CED as a consequence; and
- The Proposal and any accompanying documentation submitted by the Vendor will become the property of CED and will not be returned.

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## APPENDIX A – PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

### Alberta Esports Strategy: Proposal Evaluation

| Criteria   | Possible Points Awarded | Mark | Comments |
|--|-------------------------|------|----------|
| Quality of submission: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clear and concise</li> <li>2. Quality of writing</li> <li>3. Alignment to RFP requirements</li> </ol>   | 10                      |      |          |
| Team competence and resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Experience of the project team, including the following areas of knowledge and competencies:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Esports industry and ecosystem knowledge, including ecosystem leaders locally, nationally, and globally, and trends impacting the industry</li> <li>b. Familiarity and/or direct experience with esports tournaments</li> <li>c. Knowledge of traditional and collegiate sports ecosystems and players</li> <li>d. Value proposition development in the context of FDI</li> <li>e. Benchmarking</li> <li>f. Gap analyses and maturity</li> <li>g. Strategy development and goal setting</li> <li>h. Recommendations and roadmaps</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Relevancy of past projects (work from 2 – 3 projects <u>must</u> be provided; references are encouraged but not required)</li> <li>3. Demonstrate alignment with 'Calgary in the New Economy' and the 'Edmonton Economic Action Plan'.</li> </ol> | 20                      |      |          |
| Approach and deliverable content: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approach &amp; methodology (<b>30</b>):               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Creativity/innovativeness of approach</li> <li>b. Clarity of approach to meet set objectives and outcomes</li> </ol> </li> </ol>   | 50                      |      |          |

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|  |            |  |  |
|--|------------|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Ability to gather and analyze sector data in Alberta and other 'hubs' across North America, including with stakeholder engagement methods, where needed and appropriate</li> <li>d. Include list of esports ecosystem players who should be engaged for development of the strategy</li> <li>e. Leverage Alberta's existing esports ecosystems and the development of nascent ecosystems to deliver on RFP requirements</li> <li>f. Leverage esports trends in local and global markets to deliver on RFP requirements</li> <li>g. Leverage best practices for development of ecosystem to deliver on RFP requirements</li> <li>h. Ability to communicate narrative and insights from analysis</li> </ul> <p>2. Deliverable content <b>(10)</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Deliverables meet all criteria and requirements set out in the RFP</li> </ul> <p>3. Project management, including <b>(10)</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Clear and feasible schedules, work plans, and timelines</li> <li>b. Progress reporting (budget and project updates)</li> </ul> |            |  |  |
| <p>Fees (ranked separately):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fees have been clearly outlined and itemized by deliverable</li> <li>2. Breakdown of fees and hours by project resource (i.e. team member)</li> </ul>   | 20         |  |  |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>100</b> |  |  |