



1. Invitation

United Way Greater Toronto (UWGT) invites Indigenous-led research consultants with experience in the community, non-profit and health sectors to:

- Conduct a jurisdictional scan of existing British Columbia and Ontario feasibility studies related to Indigenous-led Healing Lodges and related models that provide both cultural and clinical support for mental wellbeing and substance dependency. The report should include:
 - Healing Lodge or related models that provide clinical and cultural support and their defining characteristics.
 - Develop a matrix that identifies the broad categories of exploration to analyze Healing Lodges or related models in consultation with the UWGT team.
 - Key features and recommendations of existing feasibility studies, including community needs for Healing Lodges or related models in an urban Indigenous context, financial, environmental, location and design, partnership structures and community engagement considerations.
 - Summarize overall findings and highlight unique features, successes or approaches; population specific findings should be noted and summarized separately including unique needs.
- Lead interviews and community engagement activities in consultation with the UWGT team, to gather feedback from First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples—prioritizing potential service users on local needs and aspirations for a Healing Lodge or related models in an Urban Indigenous context across Peel Region and/or York Region that provide both cultural and clinical support.
- Write a comprehensive report on the findings.

The report will inform recommendations on actionable next steps in the development of an Indigenous Healing Lodge or related models to meet the cultural and clinical needs of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples across the GTA, focusing on areas of greatest needs in an Urban Indigenous context. The aim is to enable safe, therapeutic responses that honour the talents, culture, holistic healing traditions and intersecting identities of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples.

2. Background

Since 2017, UWGT has been working with greater intention to strengthen its relationships with Indigenous-led organizations and Indigenous communities across Peel, Toronto and York Region. The Indigenous Partnership Council (IPC), started in 2021, is led by Indigenous voices for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples, guided by Indigenous decision making, and remains accountable and transparent to the Indigenous peoples it serves across Peel, Toronto and York Region.

The IPC members are Indigenous leaders with knowledge and expertise of the Indigenous-led social services sector, as well as those representing Indigenous voices in academic, government and business sectors from across the GTA. The IPC includes an Indigenous Elder or Knowledge Keeper. The membership is inclusive of First Nations, Inuit and Métis with a maximum of 13 individuals, and strives for a balance in gender, sexual orientation, age, geographic and sectoral representation.

The IPC discussed the prevalent issues related to mental wellbeing and substance dependency among Indigenous communities, which are often compounded by poverty, housing insecurity and involvement with the justice system. In support, UWGT staff completed a review of the Our Health Counts (OHC) Toronto research project, which utilized “Two-Eyed Seeing” in assessing and improving the health of urban Indigenous peoples. Recognizing the pressing need for culturally responsive and comprehensive solutions, UWGT on behalf of the IPC are reaching out to Indigenous consultants with related research expertise to conduct a jurisdictional scan of existing feasibility studies related to healing spaces across Canada.

The outcome would be a final report with a consolidated analysis of:

- the essential elements of an Indigenous Healing Lodge or related models.
- gaps in the eco-system to help inform actionable next steps that could be taken to meet mental wellbeing informed decision-making around the development of an Indigenous Healing Space or alternative models in either York or Peel Region, including considerations around design, location(s), potential partners, funding structures and sources, etc.

3. Purpose

The purpose of the jurisdictional scan and community consultations are to:

- i. Understand the essential elements of healing spaces including financial, environmental, location and design, partnership structures and community engagement considerations.
- ii. Inform the decision-making around development of an Indigenous Healing Space and/or alternative models in Peel and/or York Region.

4. Scope of the Work

For this contract, UWGT will work with a qualified consultant(s), to develop a final report that identifies the essential elements and considerations for healing spaces. The activities will include:

- Develop a research plan, including key terms, data sources and approach to analysis/research methodologies and timelines.
- Develop a jurisdictional scan synthesizing key findings of feasibility studies and evaluation studies of healing spaces in the GTA/Ontario/Canada/North America conducted between 2000 to present, including identification of key considerations for development of a healing space in the GTA (e.g., location selection criteria, design, community engagement and consultation processes, budget, governance structures).
- Key informant interviews with community members with those engaged in the healing space development and community consultations and Indigenous Rightsholders to validate/identify gaps in preliminary findings.
- Develop a final report and executive summary with recommendations on the process and approach to guide development of a healing space in the GTA.
- Present findings to UWGT and the IPC members.

UWGT will rely on the consultant(s) to propose methods and tools to complete the deliverables of this project.

The consultant(s) will produce the following deliverables from this work:

- Research plan, including research ethics protocol and workplan
- Brief summarizing early insights from the literature review
- Brief summarizing insights from the informant interviews
- Draft final report
- Final report with executive summary and charts and visuals to present data
- Slide deck of key findings from report

5. Current Role and Relationship with Staff

The consultant(s) will report directly to Michelle MacDonald, Senior Manager, Indigenous Collaboration, and Sadora Asefaw, Executive Lead, Reconciliation and Equity. In addition, they will work collaboratively with UWGT staff, members of the IPC and related partners across Peel, Toronto and York Region. The consultant(s) will be asked to attend meetings with the project team and advisory committee (as necessary).

6. Timeline and Deliverables

| Activity | Date |
|---|---------------------------|
| RFP released | September 26, 2024 |
| Proposal submission deadline | October 31, 2024 |
| Interview candidates | Week of November 21, 2024 |
| Selection, awarding of contract and contracting | Week of December 5, 2024 |
| Meeting #1: Initial meeting with project team, presentation of approach and workplan | Week of December 16, 2024 |
| Meeting #2: Meeting with project team, presentation of initial findings | Week of February 24, 2025 |
| Meeting #3: Meeting with the project team, presentation of findings on engagement with Indigenous Peoples, service needs, best practice, and report outline | Week of April 21, 2025 |
| Meeting #4: Meeting with project team to review first draft of report for feedback and edits and address any outstanding items. | Week of June 9, 2025 |
| Meeting #6: Meeting with project team to review second draft for feedback and edits | Week of July 21, 2025 |
| Submit final report to UWGT | Week of August 25, 2025 |

7. Budget

The total budget should not exceed a maximum of \$100,000, including honoraria and taxes.

8. Consultant Qualifications and Considerations

The proposal will be assessed with the following criteria:

- First Nations, Inuit, Métis consultant or led consulting firm with lived experiences and understanding of Indigenous world views, unique histories, diverse protocols, cultures, and anti-oppressive and anti-racist values.
- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and application of a trauma informed approach and of First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples care pathways and resources to provide and sustain mental wellbeing and addictions supports.
- Deep understanding of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples governance models, social, health and cultural needs.

- Working knowledge of policy and legal issues affecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples both on and off reserve.
- Ability to analyze quantitative and qualitative data and produce a plain language written report.
- Ability to work collaboratively with UWGT staff, the Project Team, and the IPC.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Resources and ability to manage this project as necessary to meet deadlines and delivery high quality deliverables.
- Proven experience in organizing, facilitating, and evaluating community consultations.
- We value a demonstrated commitment in approaching relationships and the work with respect, kindness and tact, navigating issues as they arise with care and regard for confidentiality in all interactions.
- We are prioritizing those with demonstrated experience working across Peel and/or York Region and have existing relationships with the Rightsholders and the broader Indigenous communities across the regions.

9. Proposal Criteria

The proposal should not exceed 2500 words using 12 pt font, excluding the appendices (CV, writing samples of reports, references):

Name, Contact and Reference Information

- Name and contact information
- The lead consultant's connection and relationship to their First Nations, Inuit, Métis community across Turtle Island.
- Description of the applicant's related expertise, including experience in projects involving First Nations, Inuit, Métis Peoples, in cultural and community supports, health, mental wellbeing, or similar projects.
- Work samples: 2-3 examples of completed reports.
- Demonstrated commitment to recognizing, respecting and upholding, Indigenous self-determination, Seven Grandfathers Teaching and equity.
- Three (3) references for whom the applicant has completed relevant projects and at least one of those references should be from an Indigenous-led and serving organization and/or community.

Proposal

- Overview of the applicant's understanding of the scope and requirements of the project, and the approach that the applicant will take.
- A research plan and rationale on the proposed Indigenous methodologies including:
 - Ethics demonstrating concern and care for the wellbeing of Indigenous Peoples
 - A process for obtaining consent that is collaborative and respectful
 - An outline of the benefits for the community and the approach to mitigating against risk and harms
 - A process for resolving conflicts that may arise
 - A detailed plan on how data will be collected, managed and stored, and ownership, along with a process for data analysis that aligns with Indigenous values
- The lead consultant's connection and existing relationships with First Nations, Inuit, Métis Peoples across York and/or Peel Region.
- A work plan with timelines.
- An itemized budget corresponding to the work plan.

The consultant will be selected based on the quality of the proposal, work plan and budget, qualifications and experience, an interview, and satisfactory strong references.

10. Applicant Deadline

Please submit one (1) electronic copy of your proposal by Monday, October 31, 2024, no later than 5:00 p.m. (EST) to:

Michelle MacDonald

Senior Manager, Indigenous Collaboration
United Way Greater Toronto

Email: MiMacDonald@uwgt.org

Subject/Reference: Indigenous-led Healing Lodges and related models

All candidates can anticipate a response by November 11, 2024, regarding the status of their application

11. Questions/Inquiries

Please contact Sadora Asefaw, Executive Lead, Reconciliation and Equity at sasefaw@uwgt.org if you have any questions regarding this RFP.