

Response to RFP Questions – June 6, 2025

Overview:

The “Response to RFP Questions” provides detailed clarifications regarding the Creative Industries Hub Feasibility Study. The final project deadline is fixed at March 31, 2026, with no extensions permitted. The project budget is capped at \$90,000 CAD including GST, and must include all travel and location-related costs. The strategic implementation roadmap must outline detailed infrastructure needs, financial modeling, and sustainability strategies, though no fixed timeframes (e.g., 1-, 3-, or 10-year) are prescribed. A standalone, visually designed trend map comparing traditional and emergent creative sectors is required. The study must analyze both positive and negative economic and workforce impacts of AI. A phased approach with feedback checkpoints is encouraged. Consultants will be supported by 16 confirmed community partners and two graduate assistants (224 combined hours), with stakeholder outreach already established through these networks. The consultant will receive a stakeholder contact list and is expected to engage inclusively across Indigenous, BIPOC, youth, and rural communities. The hub is envisioned as both a physical and virtual ecosystem, prioritizing accessibility and cultural inclusion. Prior data and sector reports will be made available to support the study. The final executive presentation should be geared toward municipal and community stakeholders.

Question: Objectives, page 2 – is there a timeframe for the detailed implementation road map identifying infrastructure needs, financial modeling and sustainability strategies (short-term, mid-term, long term). Or 1 year, 3 year, 5 year, etc. Would help to understand the level of detail expected. Key Deliverables – Strategic Implementation Roadmap – similar to above. Economic impact projections for how many years? Long-term viability for how many years (10 years, 20 years?)

Response: The RFP does not specify fixed timeframes (e.g., 1-year, 3-year, or 10-year) for the Strategic Implementation Roadmap or economic impact projections. However, the following guidance is provided:

- The implementation roadmap must be detailed and include:
 - Infrastructure needs
 - Financial modeling
 - Sustainability strategies
 - Specific phases, milestones, and resource allocations
 - Funding strategies for long-term viability
- Economic impact projections are expected to support long-term sustainability, but no precise number of years (e.g., 10 or 20 years) is mandated. The emphasis is on long-term viability rather than a fixed-term forecast.

- The final report and refinements must be completed by March 31, 2026, setting the outer bound for immediate deliverables.

Question: Would you kindly be able to share the associated budget range for the project? This will help our team scope our proposal and suggested work plan appropriately.

Response: The maximum budget for this project is \$90,000 CAD including GST. Proposals must include a transparent, itemized budget that demonstrates value for money and efficient use of resources

Question: What was the inspiration that prompted Economic Development Lethbridge to focus its sector growth on film, digital media, content creators, e-sports, and game development? For example, are there any existing business cases or community assets in the region that focused your attention on these areas in particular?

Answer: In October 2023 Economic Development Lethbridge started work developing a “Creative Industries Strategy” for Lethbridge and the Southwest region – a 3 year initiative funded by the City of Lethbridge. The program has a goal of developing and attracting the Film, TV, Entertainment and Gaming industries into the region and the groundwork began right away. This included meeting with over 50 stakeholders within the local, regional, provincial and national creative ecosystems to determine needs, potential partnerships and areas of opportunity for Lethbridge. From those initial meetings as well as being included on a discovery trip to ‘Canada House at the Emmy’s’ for ‘The Last of Us’ and strategic plan was formulated and approved in February. One of the first items we did was to include some local Lethbridge and Piikani/Kainai talent in things like set visits to Billy the Kid Season 2 and the Netflix “My Life with the Walter Boys” screening in December. The ecosystem has strong post secondary institutions with Lethbridge College and its country leading AR/VR research program as well as University of Lethbridge having new media, music offerings and developing some film programming which should start in 2025. There are many great locations in the city and surrounding area and pockets of talent within music and arts organizations here. Economic Development Lethbridge looks forward to laying the groundwork for the establishing of this exciting industry over the coming years.

Question: Among the elements of the creative hub listed above, are any more of a priority or are they all equally important to explore? Are any at different stages of development (e.g., existing businesses or other regional assets in some but none in others)?

Answer: All sectors listed (film, digital media, content creators, e-sports, game development) are equally important to explore; however, there may be differing levels of maturity and existing assets among them. The consultant is expected to assess these relative stages through their research and analysis.

Question: We see this project being broken into three phases: Phase I: Research (trends, gaps, etc.) and Assessment, Phase II: Stakeholder and Community Engagement and Phase III: Creation and Delivery of the Framework, Reports, Road Map. If we produced a Phase I Summary report, could we get feedback before proceeding to Phase II?

Answer: Yes. This approach aligns well with the intent of the study. Consultants are encouraged to integrate iterative feedback to ensure responsiveness to stakeholder expectations and evolving insights throughout the project lifecycle.

Question: The RFP mentions collaborating with 16 dedicated community partners, as well as Indigenous leaders, youth, post-secondary institutions, and creative entrepreneurs. Can you please confirm who these would be?

Yes. The following 16 partners are confirmed collaborators for this project:

- **Academic Institutions:**
 - *University of Lethbridge – School of Graduate Studies and Faculty of Fine Arts*
 - *Lethbridge Polytechnic*
 - *Career Transitions*
- **Creative Sector Organizations and Private Businesses:**
 - *Alberta Post Production Association*
 - *Alberta Media Production Industries Association (AMPIA)*
 - *Output Media*
 - *Simulacrum Interactive*
 - *Mikan House*
 - *Lethbridge Game Developer Society*
- **Equity-Focused Organizations:**
 - *BIPOC Foundation*
 - *IndigiTECH Destiny*
 - *Blood Tribe Economic Development*
 - *Career Transitions (Youth)*
- **Economic Development & Regional Networks:**
 - *Economic Development Lethbridge (EDL)*
 - *Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance (ASWRA)*
 - *SouthGrow Regional Initiative*
 - *Regional Innovation Network of Southern Alberta (RINSA)*
 - *Blood Tribe Economic Development*
- **Indigenous Partner:**
 - *IndigiTECH Destiny*
 - *Blood Tribe Economic Development (BTED)*

All partners have committed in-kind contributions to the project, primarily in the form of organizational resources, meeting space (where possible), staff time, and regional insight. These commitments will support the consultant by facilitating access to:

- Key regional and cultural stakeholders
- Creative businesses and entrepreneurs

- Local Indigenous and BIPOC communities
- Municipal contacts and economic development leads

This collaboration ensures that outreach, interviews, focus groups, and regional insights are grounded in authentic community engagement.

Question: Are connections to Indigenous, BIPOC, rural, creative entrepreneurs and youth communities already established, or will this outreach need to be initiated by the consultant?

Connections are already established through existing relationships between EDL and its partner organizations, such as IndigiTECH Destiny, the BIPOC Foundation, Blood Tribe Economic Development, RINSA, Career Transitions and others. These partners have committed to providing direct support for outreach, including:

- Introductions to key community leaders
- Recruitment for focus groups
- Cultural context and community readiness insight
- Guidance on inclusive program and space design

The consultant will lead the outreach process, leveraging these networks to ensure meaningful, inclusive engagement across diverse communities in Southwest.

Question: Can you confirm our assumption, that we will be provided with a comprehensive list and contact information for all these stakeholders? If the lists are not available, please confirm that the students or the consultants will be doing this work.

Answer: Yes. A comprehensive stakeholder list and contact information will be provided to the selected consultant. This will include community leaders, creative professionals, educational contacts, and regional collaborators. We have also established a dedicated web portal for individuals and organizations interested in contributing to the feasibility study. To date, we have received 55 submissions from stakeholders who have registered their interest in participating (*number does not including our proposal partners*). In addition to this, the consultant may identify new stakeholders as needed. Two graduate student assistants will support this process by helping with outreach, communication, scheduling, and follow-ups with stakeholder groups.

Question: The RFP indicated that there are insights from the 16 community partners and from the Indigenous, BIPOC, rural, and youth communities. Are the insights available in a written formal report or another format? Or will the insight come from consultation and conversations?

Some partners have provided letters of support and project proposals which contain some contextual information. However, the majority of actionable insight will come from direct consultation and conversations during the feasibility study. This includes:

- Focus groups
- Roundtable discussions
- Community surveys
- One-on-one interviews

These will be facilitated by the consultant with support from partners and student assistants to ensure data is captured inclusively and accurately.

Question: How would you define inclusive creative industries hub? Is this a physical space or virtual space?

Answer: The Creative Industries Hub is envisioned as both a physical and virtual ecosystem. It may include:

- Co-working and studio spaces
- Editing suites and performance rooms
- Exhibition and rehearsal venues
- A digital portal for collaboration, promotion, and project matchmaking
- Virtual reality (VR) spaces and digital storytelling platforms
- Other options revealed through consultative process.

The design will be guided by inclusivity, ensuring access for Indigenous, BIPOC, rural, and underrepresented creatives. It will support both in-person and remote participants through intentional, accessible infrastructure.

Question: Are there existing reports, datasets, historical market data, or previous studies on the creative industries in Southwest Alberta that will be made available to the consultant?

Answer: Yes. The consultant will have access to relevant prior documents such as RINSA sector reports, proposals and letters of support containing baseline data from key partners. These resources will complement new research gathered through consultation and ecosystem mapping.

Question: Can you confirm if all the travel and location costs for consultants, stakeholders and students need to be included in the proposal or are these covered another way in the project?

Answer: Yes. All travel, meeting location, and related expenses must be included in the consultant's budget. The maximum budget available for this project is \$90,000 CAD including GST. Proponents should ensure the work plan and scope of activities can be delivered within this. Please note that Tecconnect (EDL business incubator) meeting space for one-on-one meetings or larger gatherings is available free of charge as space is available. As well, other partnering organizations have offered up space for meetings as in-kind contributions.

Question: What backgrounds/fields of study do the Graduate Assistants have that the consulting team can draw on for the research component?

Answer: The two Graduate Assistants are funded through the University of Lethbridge – School of Graduate Studies and include outreach and promotion of the study in the University community, facilitating interviews and round-tables discussions, and data collection and management. They

are selected to support the goals of this feasibility study, particularly in reaching youth, post-secondary communities, and underrepresented groups.

Question: How much time can the two graduate students dedicate to the project per week? Are they available for the duration of the project?

Answer: Yes. The two graduate students are available throughout the duration of the study. They will contribute a combined total of 224 hours to the project (112 hours each). Their work will be conducted under the supervision of a University of Lethbridge faculty advisor and will include:

- Outreach and promotion within the university and broader community
- Supporting the facilitation of interviews and roundtable sessions
- Assisting with data collection, note-taking, and reporting
- Input on analysis and summary documentation

In addition, all 16 project partners have committed in-kind financial contributions, not as cash, but through organizational resources. These include:

- Staff support to coordinate logistics
- Facilitation of connections to local and regional networks
- Hosting events or consultations
- Sharing internal research, reports, and tools
- Providing culturally aligned insight and community access

Question: Other than the final deadline of March 31, 2026, are there any other key milestones or interim deadlines that the consultant should plan for in the project timeline? (e.g., key decision-making points, stakeholder availability)

Answer: Other than the final project deadline of March 31, 2026, there are no fixed interim deadlines specified in the RFP. However, the consultant is expected to propose a detailed project timeline that includes key phases, milestones, stakeholder engagement points, and review periods. This timeline should account for:

- Coordination with 16 community partners and post-secondary institutions
- Seasonal and academic calendars to optimize stakeholder and student availability
- Iterative feedback loops between research, engagement, and reporting phases

Flexibility and responsiveness to partner input are essential throughout the process

Question: Trend Mapping Expectations: To confirm, are you expecting a visually designed sector trend map as a standalone deliverable? Should this compare regional capacity in both traditional and emergent creative sectors?

Answer: Yes. We are expecting a visually designed trend map as a standalone deliverable. It should compare the region's capacity to grow in both traditional creative sectors (e.g., film and video game development) and emergent areas (e.g., podcasting, content creation, AI-driven media, and e-sports). The goal is to help inform the strategic direction of the initiative. This includes mapping the

overall size of each sector, growth trends (e.g., year-over-year %), and relative viability in the Southwest Alberta context. The intent is to integrate research into a format that is both digestible and visually easy to understand for decision-makers and community.

Question: Graduate Assistant Integration: Are there defined expectations for how the graduate assistants should be deployed (e.g., engagement, data analysis)? Would you prefer we outline this in our work plan? How many graduate students do you have available and how long will they be available for? (dates, hours etc). How do you envision us interacting with them – through a contact at EDL or by bringing them de facto into our team ecosystem?

Answer: The two graduate students are available throughout the duration of the study. They will contribute a combined total of 224 hours to the project (112 hours each). Their work will be conducted under the supervision of a University of Lethbridge faculty advisor and will include:

- Outreach and promotion within the university and broader community
- Supporting the facilitation of interviews and roundtable sessions
- Assisting with data collection, note-taking, and reporting
- Input on analysis and summary documentation

The graduates should be brought de facto into your team ecosystem and given research and admin tasks to appropriately boost the team, we will be there to support and guide the process

Question: AI Industry Impact Scope: Do you want us to model potential economic or workforce impacts from Generative AI adoption in the region, beyond just listing AI-enabled tools? Are you wanting projections on both negative and positive workforce impacts, or just the areas of positive opportunity?

Answer: Yes, we are seeking analysis of both positive and negative economic and workforce impacts, as this will help inform sound decision-making. For example, the trend of smaller production companies leveraging new tools and technologies to create high-production-value content could present a valuable opportunity for an emerging region like Southwest Alberta. It lowers the barrier to entry and may accelerate the growth of local creative enterprises.

At the same time, we also anticipate potential trade-offs. For instance, there may be fewer traditional trades-based jobs (e.g., in construction, set design, or electrical work) generated directly through smaller-scale productions. These roles could become more fragmented and spread across many small crews and companies rather than centralized in large-scale productions.

Understanding these dynamics will be essential to identifying skill gaps, training needs, and long-term workforce strategies.

Question: Long-Term Financial Modeling: Are you looking for a basic pro forma or financial model showing projected operational costs and funding scenarios for the hub? Are you more looking for speculative financial models based on the various implementation pathways or potential revenue, grant, membership, or contribution sources? I.e., what is the core story you want to explore about the future financial environment – WHAT it will cost, or HOW to fund it?

Answer: We are looking for both. We want to understand what it will cost and that includes projected operational expenses, infrastructure requirements, and staffing estimates over time. In addition, we want to explore how it could be funded, with scenario-based modeling that includes potential revenue streams (e.g., memberships, rentals, training), public-sector grants, private sponsorships, and investment contributions. A sustainable financial framework is a key deliverable, and we encourage your team to include both realistic cost modeling and creative but grounded funding strategies aligned with the long-term viability goals of the

Question: Project Extension Timeline Flexibility: Is the final submission date of March 31, 2026 fixed, or is there flexibility to extend for final refinements post-delivery? (we've extended NRED grants in the past due to late project starts and the *(deleted name)* team is pretty good about accommodating this)

Answer: The final submission date of **March 31, 2026 is fixed**. While we understand other NRED projects have occasionally been granted extensions, this initiative is expected to be completed, including all final refinements, by that date. The grant agreement and reporting obligations are aligned with this fixed deadline.

Question: Preferred Emphasis in Presentation Materials: Should the executive presentation be designed with investor attraction in mind, or primarily for municipal and community stakeholder use?

Answer: The executive presentation should be designed primarily for municipal and community stakeholder use. This presentation is a foundational tool intended to summarize findings, inform local planning, and guide next steps. While the data and insights may later be adapted for investment attraction, the core purpose of the presentation is to support local understanding, collaboration/alignment, and readiness. It will serve as a building block from which future investment-facing materials can evolve.