

Request for Proposal

Consulting Services — Development and Delivery of EDL's Inaugural Manufacturing Conference

Issued by:

Lethbridge Economic Development Initiative Society operating as:
Economic Development Lethbridge (EDL)

Response Deadline:

(September 29, 2026 — 4:00 p.m. MT)

1. Objective

Economic Development Lethbridge (EDL) seeks to engage a qualified consultant or firm to provide the strategic leadership, project management and stakeholder coordination required to develop and deliver EDL's inaugural Manufacturing Conference in the first half of March 2027.

The engagement covers the full project lifecycle — industry consultation and conference strategy, planning and coordination, on-site delivery, and post-event evaluation. A secondary but required outcome is a repeatable planning framework EDL can use for future conferences.

2. Background

EDL is the economic development agency for the City of Lethbridge, Alberta, and supports the region's manufacturing sector through industry engagement, business retention and expansion, workforce development and strategic partnerships.

The Manufacturing Conference is a flagship initiative that will bring together manufacturers, industry associations, educators, government and workforce partners to strengthen regional collaboration, address shared challenges and showcase the opportunities within Southern Alberta's manufacturing sector. EDL intends to deliver it in partnership with the Lethbridge Manufacturing Association (LMA), and the successful proponent will work with both organizations and with a planning committee drawn from regional partners.

EDL's intent is that the conference becomes an annual event. This engagement is therefore expected to leave behind the processes, governance and tools needed to run it again.

3. Scope of Services

The engagement runs from contract award in October 2026 to March 31, 2027.

The table below sets out what the engagement must produce and by when. It describes required outcomes, not a prescribed method. EDL expects proponents to propose their own approach, phasing and methodology, and to identify anything that would strengthen the result.

Stage	Indicative Timing	Required Outcomes and Deliverables
Industry engagement and conference strategy	October 2026	Consultation with manufacturers and key stakeholders; conference vision, objectives and themes reflecting regional priorities; agreed success measures; strategic recommendations.
Conference planning and development	November 2026	Project plan and workback schedule; conference budget; program framework; sponsorship strategy and package; communications plan; governance structure; risk register.
Project management and coordination	December 2026 – February 2027	Implementation of the plan; planning committee coordination; speaker, sponsor, vendor and partner coordination; registration planning; monthly progress reports; conference readiness plan.
Conference delivery	First half of March 2027	Successful delivery of the inaugural Manufacturing Conference, including on-site coordination, logistics, vendor and speaker management, and issue resolution.
Evaluation, close-out and framework	Second half of March 2027	Participant, sponsor and speaker feedback; evaluation against the agreed success measures; final conference report; a repeatable planning framework with tools and templates in editable formats, transferred to EDL; recommendations for future conferences.

4. Fee Inclusions and Exclusions

The professional fee covers all consulting services required to achieve the outcomes above, including strategy, industry engagement, project management, committee facilitation, sponsorship and communications coordination, on-site delivery, reporting, evaluation and framework handover, together with all travel and disbursements.

The following are conference operating expenses. EDL budgets these separately and they are not part of the professional fee, although the successful proponent will plan, source and coordinate them within the conference budget:

- Venue rental and conference operating expenses.
- Catering, audio-visual services and event production.
- Graphic design, printing and promotional materials.
- Website development and registration software.
- Paid advertising.
- Speaker honorariums, travel and accommodation.

5. Governance and Reporting

EDL will designate a primary project representative as the consultant's point of contact for approvals and decisions, and will make project decisions in a timely manner. The successful proponent will provide bi-weekly project meetings with EDL, monthly written progress updates, ongoing budget and schedule monitoring, and timely escalation of risks, issues and key decisions.

The consultant will manage their own schedule to achieve the agreed outcomes, will be available for in-person meetings in Lethbridge as required, and will be on-site for the duration of the conference. Work outside the agreed scope requires written approval from both parties before proceeding.

6. Budget

EDL has allocated a not-to-exceed budget of **\$45,000 CAD (excluding GST)** for the professional consulting services described in this RFP, inclusive of all fees, travel and disbursements. Conference operating expenses, as listed in Section 4, are budgeted separately.

Proposals must include a cost breakdown by stage, with the estimated level of effort in hours and the applicable rate or rates. EDL anticipates a fixed-fee professional services agreement with payments tied to milestones. Proposals exceeding the not-to-exceed budget may be deemed non-compliant.

7. Proposal Requirements

Proposals must be submitted as a single PDF and should not exceed ten (10) pages, excluding appendices. Proposals must include:

1. **Cover letter.** One page, signed, identifying the proponent and primary contact, and confirming ability to deliver within the stated timeline and budget.
2. **Proponent profile and understanding.** An overview of the firm or individual, and a demonstrated understanding of EDL's objectives and Southern Alberta's manufacturing sector.
3. **Proposed approach and work plan.** The proponent's own approach to achieving the outcomes in Section 3, including industry engagement methodology, sponsorship and communications approach, and a workback schedule to a conference in the first half of March 2027.
4. **Framework for future conferences.** The approach to establishing a repeatable planning model, the tools and templates to be transferred to EDL, and the plan for knowledge transfer to EDL staff.
5. **Team and capacity.** The named project lead and supporting team, with biographies or CVs as an appendix; estimated level of effort by stage; confirmation of availability between October 2026 and March 2027
6. **Fee proposal.** Total fixed fee, breakdown by stage, rate or rates, disbursements, and a proposed payment schedule.
7. **References.** Professional references from comparable engagements completed within the past five years, with contact names, titles, organizations and contact details, as an appendix.
8. **Conflict of interest declaration.** Any actual, potential or perceived conflict relating to EDL, the City of Lethbridge, the Lethbridge Manufacturing Association, or regional industry organizations.

8. Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria to ensure the selection of a qualified and capable service provider:

Criteria	Description	Weighting
Relevant Experience & Track Record	Demonstrated experience developing and delivering conferences, industry events or comparable multi-stakeholder initiatives. Experience working with manufacturers, industry associations, government and post-secondary partners will be considered an asset.	25%
Proposed Approach & Work Plan	The quality, clarity and realism of the proposed approach to achieving the required outcomes, including industry engagement methodology, sponsorship and communications approach, and the workback schedule to a March 2027 conference.	25%
Team, Capacity & Availability	Qualifications of the named project lead and team, demonstrated capacity to commit the required level of effort between October 2026 and March 2027, and availability for in-person engagement in Lethbridge and on-site delivery.	15%
Framework for Future Conferences	The strength of the proposed approach to a repeatable planning framework, the tools and templates to be transferred to EDL, and the plan for knowledge transfer to EDL staff.	15%
Budget & Value for Money	Alignment of the proposed fee and level of effort with the scope and deliverables. Value for money will be considered, but not at the expense of quality.	10%
References	The quality and relevance of references from comparable past engagements, and their ability to confirm the proponent's expertise, reliability and delivery record.	10%

Scoring Methodology

Each criterion will be scored on a scale of 1 to 10. The weighted scores will then be calculated based on the total weight for each criterion.

Additional Notes

- Proposals that do not include a fee breakdown by stage and professional references will be considered incomplete and may not proceed to scoring.
- EDL may shortlist proponents and conduct interviews before making a final selection.
- Where two proposals receive identical scores, EDL reserves the right to make the final selection based on interviews or further deliberation.
- EDL is not obligated to select the lowest-priced proposal.

9. Selection Process and Schedule

The following schedule is indicative and may be adjusted at EDL's discretion.

Milestone	Date
RFP issued	September 15, 2026
Deadline for proponent questions	September 24, 2026
Proposal submission deadline	September 29, 2026, 4:00 p.m. MT
Shortlist interviews (if required)	October 1 – 7, 2026
Notification of award	On or before October 7, 2026
Engagement commences	October 13, 2026
Inaugural Manufacturing Conference	First half of March 2027
Final report and close-out complete	March 31, 2027

10. Terms and Conditions

- Intellectual property. EDL retains ownership of all intellectual property in the work product created under this engagement, including the planning framework, templates, tools, reports and stakeholder materials, provided in editable formats.
- Confidentiality. Information provided by EDL in the course of this RFP and any resulting engagement is confidential and must not be disclosed or used for any other purpose.
- Validity. Proposals must remain valid and open for acceptance for ninety (90) days following the submission deadline.
- EDL's rights. EDL may accept or reject any or all proposals, make no award, interview shortlisted proponents, request clarification, and negotiate scope and fee with the preferred proponent.
- No commitment. This RFP is not an offer and does not commit EDL to award a contract or to reimburse any costs of preparing or submitting a proposal.
- Agreement. The successful proponent will enter into a written professional services agreement with EDL as an independent contractor, setting out scope, deliverables, fee, payment schedule and terms.

11. Submission and Enquiries

Proposals must be submitted by email as a single PDF to ben@chooselethbridge.ca with the subject line "RFP — Manufacturing Conference Consulting Services", and received no later than **4:00 p.m. MT on September 29, 2026**. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Questions must be submitted in writing by September 24, 2026. Responses to questions of general application will be shared with all known proponents within 24 hours of submission of questions.

For any questions regarding this Request for Proposal please contact:

Ben Young

Interim CEO, Economic Development Lethbridge

ben@chooselethbridge.ca