

# **Request for Proposals**

## **Student Demographic Survey and Study Initiative**

Career Colleges Ontario  
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## **Introduction**

Career Colleges Ontario (CCO) desires to engage a research firm to develop and administer a Student Demographic Survey and Study of the population of students currently enrolled in Ontario's registered career colleges. The intent of the project is to better understand the characteristics of students at Ontario's Private Career Colleges (PCCs).

This document is CCO's formal Request for Proposals (RFP) for bidders interested in conducting a student demographic survey and study and providing CCO with a written report on the findings resulting from the study.

This document is being circulated to researchers and research firms that potentially have the experience and expertise to complete the required tasks outlined in this RFP.

CCO hereby invites the individuals or organizations that have received this RFP to submit proposals detailing the methodology and work plan that they would use to carry out the survey and produce a student demographic report of the private career college sector in Ontario and how it compares to the demographics of students attending Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology in accordance with the details outlined in this RFP document.

## **Project Background**

Currently, there are approximately 400 private postsecondary institutions operating roughly 600 campus locations in Ontario known as private career colleges. These private career colleges offer vocational programs of study to more than 92,000 students annually.

It is known that the private career college sector (PCC sector) offers approximately 4,500 programs of study in Ontario.

Private career colleges (PCCs) have been regulated by the Ontario Government for several decades under the applicable Act and Regulations of the time. On September 18, 2006, the Private Career Colleges Act, 2005, and supporting Regulations were proclaimed. The purpose of the Private Career Colleges Act was to strengthen protection for students and enhance the quality of programming at career colleges.

It is believed by CCO that the PCC sector currently trains a population of postsecondary students that differs significantly in many ways from the student population that attends Ontario's publicly funded colleges of applied arts and technology.

The CCO Board of Directors has recommended that the association recruit a researcher to conduct a study that would quantify the career college sector's student population according to a variety of their personal characteristics—such as age, gender, educational

background, previous work experience, ethnic background, etc.—and, where possible, compare the results to those of the student population at CAATs.

Given the anticipated increase in demand for postsecondary education that will be required to service the increasing number of high school graduates and laid off workers , combined with the increasing need to train or retrain aboriginal people, disabled persons, injured workers, newcomers to Canada, international students, and workers for the emerging green job sector, CCO has a desire to quantify the percentage of career college students who come from a variety of cultural, economic, social, educational and employment backgrounds.

It is CCO’s contention that a better understanding of the role that the career college sector plays in the training and re-training of a diverse group of learners will better inform government’s understanding of the value of the sector and the development of regulations and policies that will allow career college students to acquire the skills and knowledge required to meet labour market demands.

The solution design and development work is to be conducted by a contracted firm or individual (hereinafter referred to as “the researcher”) to be selected by CCO’s Public Affairs Committee (hereinafter referred to as the “committee”).

## **Project Objectives**

The prime objective of this project is to produce a student demographic report that focuses on the role and contribution of the private career college sector, which can subsequently be used by CCO to educate elected decision makers, bureaucratic policy makers, regulators, the media, vocational counselors, and the general public about the scope and value of the PCC sector. The secondary objective is to quantify how the career college student population differs from the student population at CAATs.

In line with the objectives of the project, it is CCO’s expectation that the researcher will design and conduct a research project and student survey that will provide CCO with effective statistical and student demographic data that will allow CCO to promote the role and contribution of the PCC sector. It is also expected that the researcher will gather existing information about the student demographics at CAATs in order to make comparisons and identify significant differences between the two student populations. The final report will include statistical data on the career college sector’s student population including, but not limited to, the following list of characteristics:

- Gender
- Age

- Home postal code
- Previous educational attainment
- Work experience
- Reason for choosing a career college
- Funding source for the current career college program
- Family income level
- Social assistance recipient status
- Student's country of origin
- Parent's country of origin
- Student's first language
- Aboriginal status
- Disability status
- Visible minority status
- Marital status
- Number of dependent children
- Program of study
- Previous postsecondary programs of study
- Length of program of study

Along with a full description of the research and survey methodologies proposed by bidders, CCO is open to suggestions and recommendations for enhancements to the work described in this RFP.

## **Deliverables and Schedule**

It is anticipated that the contract for the project will be awarded during the week of December 5, 2016, and that the researcher shall meet with the committee within one week of the award to finalize the work plan and timelines.

The researcher shall be responsible for conducting all aspects of the required research, producing a draft of the final report, and delivering a final report to CCO.

The researcher shall meet with the committee on an on-going basis throughout the project to provide progress reports and seek input on various technical aspects of gathering the data required to produce the report.

CCO and the committee shall promote the participation of as many career colleges as possible in order to gather the required data. This will include CCO member institutions and non-member institutions.

CCO will provide the researcher with a draft list of proposed questions to be included in the survey of private career college students.

The researcher will propose to the committee appropriate revisions, additions and deletions to the list of survey questions for consideration and approval.

The researcher will be responsible for building and making the survey tool available to the private career colleges for distribution to their students.

The researcher will be responsible for gathering and compiling the survey data and generating the resulting statistical information pertaining to the demographics of the private career college student population.

The researcher will ensure that a draft of the final report is delivered to CCO by April 14, 2017, or an alternate date agreed to by the researcher and the committee.

The committee shall provide feedback to the researcher on the draft of the final report within two weeks of receipt (i.e. by April 28, 2017 or an alternate date agreed to by the committee and the researcher).

The researcher will deliver a final report to the committee within two weeks of receiving the feedback from the committee in respect to the researcher's draft of the final report (i.e. by May 12, 2017 or an alternate date agreed to by the committee and the researcher)

The researcher will be required to make a presentation to the general membership of CCO at the annual general meeting of the association, which will be held in Niagara-on-the-Lake on June 14, 2017.

## **Reporting Relationships**

The researcher shall, when necessary, consult the committee for clarification of duties, guidance in establishing priorities and carrying out activities, and approval of all submissions required under this Request for Proposals.

The researcher shall meet with the committee regularly throughout the duration of the project to provide progress reports and seek the committee's input.

The researcher should bring any day-to-day operational matters and matters related to the administration of the contract agreement to the attention of either the CEO or the Executive Director of CCO for guidance and direction, as required.

The committee will provide some direction to the researcher as to the key individuals to approach for relevant information. However, proposals by the researcher to obtain data and information beyond the elements suggested in this Request for Proposals, or as an alternative, would be welcome.

## **Researcher's Responsibilities**

The researcher is responsible for all requirements set out by this Request for Proposals and is expected to conduct work sufficient in scope and effort to produce a solution that meets, at minimum, the requirements previously specified in this RFP.

## **Proprietary Rights**

Exclusive proprietary rights for the draft and final reports resulting from the study conducted as part of this project shall be deemed to rest with Career Colleges Ontario.

## **Financial Responsibilities**

The amount of the contract is intended to cover all expenditures incurred by the researcher in undertaking necessary and approved activities associated with the requirements set out in this Request for Proposals. The total amount claimed by the researcher may not exceed the value of the bid submitted by the researcher in response to this Request for Proposals.

Should the chosen researcher elect to subcontract portions of the required undertakings to another party, payment of expenses so incurred will be the responsibility of the researcher. Such payments, if approved in principle in advance by the Committee as reasonable and appropriate relative to the objectives of the study, may be considered expenses incurred by the researcher and eligible for reimbursement under the specific terms of the contract.

## **Selection Criteria**

The committee will consider the following criteria in evaluating proposals to undertake this project:

- Is the proposal consistent with the project objectives?
- Does the proposal meet or exceed requirements set out in the Request for Proposals?
- If alternative methods or areas of research are proposed, are they considered sound and advantageous?
- Is the level of effort to be expended consistent with the Request for Proposals (number and level of person days assigned, etc.)?
- Is the reporting plan, (feedback process to the committee, etc.) appropriate and feasible?
- The total value of the bid, although it must be noted that it will not necessarily be the lowest bid that wins the contract.

Additional criteria may include demonstration of the following:

- Familiarity with the postsecondary education system in Ontario, generally, and with the PCC sector, specifically.

- Demonstration of sound research and survey administration and analytical methodology and capacity

## **Process for Submitting a Proposal**

It must be noted that CCO will not assume any financial liability in respect to the costs incurred by bidders in the preparation of their bids in relation to this Request for Proposals. The full cost of the preparation and submission of any bid is the responsibility of the bidder.

In response to this Request for Proposals, bidders are requested to provide a proposed work plan that outlines their recommended approaches to all segments of the work including but not limited to:

- The finalization of student survey questions
- The development of the student survey tool(s)
- The gathering of student demographic data relating to the PCC sector in Ontario
- The gathering of existing comparable student demographic data relating to Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology
- The analysis of the data gathered
- The preparation of both a draft of the final report and a final report

In addition, submissions should outline the sequence and timelines for each stage of the development along with an estimate of the number of person days expected to be allocated to the various segments of the work.

Bids must include the total amount that the bidder would charge to fully complete all of the work set out in this proposal, accompanied with a proposed schedule of payments.

Bids are requested to be of 10 pages or less in length (please use font size of 10 pt. or larger for legibility).

Bidders are requested to submit their proposal electronically in MS Word or PDF format on or before 4:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, on Wednesday, November 23, 2016, to:

Paul Kitchen  
Executive Director  
CCO

[paulkitchen@careercollegesontario.ca](mailto:paulkitchen@careercollegesontario.ca)

All queries about the Request for Proposals should be directed by email to the address above by 12:00 noon on Wednesday, November 9, 2016. All queries will be responded to by



email and shared with all firms that received this RFP. Based on the nature of the queries and at its sole discretion, the committee may or may not decide to hold a teleconference call with all potential bidders to address the queries received. Such a call would be scheduled at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, November 16, 2016.

The committee will meet during the week of November 28, 2016, to review all submissions and make its recommendation to the Executive Committee of CCO during the week of December 5, 2016.