

Request for Proposals

Municipal Readiness Consultation

RFP Release Date: July 21st, 2025

Proposal Due Date: September 12th, 2025 (1:00 PM AT)

Contact:

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1.0 Introduction

The Building to Zero Exchange (BTZx), operating under [Net Zero Atlantic \(NZA\)](#), is a collaborative initiative focused on enabling net-zero buildings and deep energy retrofits in Atlantic Canada. By connecting stakeholders across industry, government, academia, Indigenous communities, and non-profit sectors, BTZx drives action toward constructing net-zero buildings and retrofitting existing ones at scale. With support from partners, including Provincial and Federal Governments as funders, BTZx is committed to building capacity and fostering partnerships for a low-carbon future in the built environment.

This Request for Proposals invites qualified consultants to undertake work for the **Municipal Readiness Consultation Project**. This project will follow-up on existing BTZx initiatives related to the adoption of the 2020 National Building Code (NBC) and National Energy Code for Buildings (NECB) and work done to increase understanding of the new energy efficiency requirements. BTZx seeks a Proponent with the expertise to conduct research, engage stakeholders, facilitate events, collect and analyze information and formulate strategic recommendations to support Nova Scotian municipalities' adoption of the 2020 NBC and NECB.

2.0 Context

In Canada, all new buildings are expected to be net-zero energy ready by 2030 as per national climate frameworks, with tiered energy codes already introduced to guide this transition.

In Nova Scotia, the [Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act \(EGCCRA\)](#) targets a 53% reduction in GHG emissions below 2005 levels by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050. These goals are driving policy and code changes, including the adoption of the 2020 National Building Code and National Energy Code for Buildings, effective April 1, 2025.

The new code uses a tiered system to gradually increase energy efficiency standards and move the industry towards net-zero construction. This approach sets the direction for industry and enables the province to incrementally adopt higher levels of performance over several years.

Adopting the new requirements laid out in the NBC and NECB will require new technologies, construction practices, training and capacity building efforts to develop a qualified workforce capable of delivering energy-efficient, net-zero ready buildings.

BTZx is working closely with municipalities, industry, government, and other stakeholders to build the resources and capacity required to successfully adopt these new codes. BTZx has several training programs underway, each focusing on different areas in the building sector. Collectively, these training programs aim to provide the knowledge base and skills necessary to further the province's climate action goals and advance code adoption, compliance and preparedness. These programs include:

- Building Officials Training – NBC Section 9.36: Energy Efficiency
- Climate Literacy for the Building Sector
- Integrated Design Process (IDP) Training
- Energy Modeller Training
- Energy Advisor Upskilling and Training

The Municipal Readiness Consultation Project will identify barriers that municipalities and Indigenous communities face in implementing the new NBC and NECB with a specific focus on increased energy efficiency requirements. BTZx and the successful Proponent will work with municipalities and Indigenous Communities to identify knowledge gaps and develop tailored training and resources. This work will involve arranging consultations and needs assessments with municipalities across Nova Scotia, identifying gaps where municipalities will require support, and delivering training modules and resources as needed based on consultation feedback.

3.0 Objective

The objective of this RFP is to secure the services of a qualified consulting team to execute Phases 1-4 of the **Municipal Readiness Consultation Project**. The Municipal Readiness Consultation Project will facilitate the adoption of the 2020 NBC and NECB in municipalities across Nova Scotia by identifying capacity and training gaps faced by municipalities and developing a strategic roadmap to address these gaps. The Project will leverage existing initiatives at BTZx to provide training and resources to municipalities where possible.

4.0 Outcomes

The selected Proponent will undertake research and engagement activities (detailed in Section 5.0 Scope of Work) to produce the following outcomes:

- Meetings with Nova Scotian municipalities represented in each Nova Scotia Building Officials Association (NSBOA) Zone. These include:
 - Town of Truro – Zone 1
 - Halifax Regional Municipality – Zone 2
 - Municipality of Digby – Zone 3
 - Municipality of Lunenburg – Zone 4
 - Cape Breton Regional Municipality – Zone 5
 - Indigenous Organizations, and other stakeholders within each Zone
- Assessment of each Zone's readiness for implementing the NBC 2020 and NECB while also documenting resource availability;
- Identify gaps within municipalities and identify opportunities to address these gaps;
- Inform the municipalities and Indigenous communities of other BTZx resources relevant to them (i.e., NBC training, Climate Literacy) to continue to train and address skill gaps;
- Coordinate BTZx resources to deliver relevant and appropriate follow-up programs and training;
- Compile a summary report identifying existing gaps, strategies and training requirements for addressing them.

5.0 Scope of Work

The project will be executed through four phases. The Proponent is expected to undertake the following work for each phase of the project, described below:

Phase 1: Prepare Municipal Consultation Content

The Proponent will work with the BTZx team to create a pre-consultation primer document, while building a comprehensive network of potential participants, including municipal staff, building officials, local contractors, Indigenous organizations, developers and other key stakeholders within each Zone. Once a comprehensive list of potential stakeholders has been generated and approved by BTZx, the Proponent will conduct virtual meetings with these stakeholders to introduce the project, generate interest and schedule Needs Assessment Consultations.

Finally, the Proponent will create a detailed presentation to present at each consultation event. The presentation should include an introduction to the project, an overview of BTZx's existing services, and discussion questions. This presentation will serve as the foundation for the Needs Assessment Consultations in Phase 2.

Phase 2: Needs Assessment Consultations

The Proponent will deliver and facilitate in-person Needs Assessment Consultations with stakeholders in each NSBOA Zone, in addition to the following Indigenous organizations:

- Confederacy of Mainland Mi'kmaq
- Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources
- Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq

Needs Assessment Consultations will assess each Zone's readiness for implementing the NBC 2020 and NECB. Each Consultation session will be approximately half a day in length. In each session, the Proponent will introduce the project, provide context around NBC 2020 and NECB requirements, introduce BTZx's available training resources and facilitate a discussion with all stakeholders present to identify existing resources, challenges and gaps, with respect to municipal capacity to meet NBC 2020 and NECB requirements. Following each session, the Proponent will summarize the findings to provide a comprehensive overview of each zone's preparedness and requirements in Phase 3.

Phase 3: Resource and Gap Analysis

Using information gathered in Phase 2, the Proponent will conduct a Resource and Gap Analysis to identify capacity and training gaps faced by municipalities and identify relevant and available training resources to address these gaps. The Proponent will identify existing BTZx resources that can address these gaps within the project's duration and highlight additional

resources that should be developed in the future. The Proponent will summarize and present these findings to the BTZx team.

Phase 4: Follow-up Workshops

Upon completing the Resource and Gap Analysis, the Proponent will arrange virtual follow-up meetings with municipal stakeholders to present results and propose any solutions that were identified during Phase 3. During this round of engagement, the Proponent will work with municipal stakeholders in each Zone to confirm their interest in the identified solutions and resources, adapt them to regional needs, and confirm dates to deliver these solutions.

The Proponent, in collaboration with BTZx staff, will deliver identified solutions that fall within the scope of the project to municipalities where these solutions have been confirmed. Upon completion of these workshops, the Proponent will summarize the workshop results and identify next steps.

Phase 5: Summary Report

Upon completing all follow-up workshops, the Proponent will create a summary report and presentation, to deliver to the BTZx team and our funders. These deliverables will summarize all stakeholders engaged with and key findings from Phases 2-4. The report and present will also propose a strategic roadmap for addressing training and capacity building gaps that were not addressed during the project.

6.0 Deliverables

The Proponent is expected to produce the following deliverables. All deliverables will be reviewed by BTZx and feedback provided to the Proponent for refinement as needed:

1. **Municipal Consultation Content:** Stakeholder invite list, presentation of current BTZx resources related to the NEC and NECB.
2. **Needs Assessment Consultations:** Facilitated half-day in-person sessions with key stakeholders in each Zone. Summaries of each session.
3. **Resource and Gap Analysis:** Report and presentation, highlighting identified training and capacity gaps and available resources and strategies to address these gaps.
4. **Follow-up Workshops with In-Scope Solutions:** Virtual consultations with stakeholders to confirm interest in available training resources, delivery of appropriate resources and training programs to municipal stakeholders.
5. **Summary Report:** Final report and presentation, summarizing the results of needs assessment consultations, resource and gap analysis, and follow-up workshops. The report and presentation will also include a roadmap outlining a strategy for addressing training and capacity gaps in the future. The proponent will also prepare a presentation of key findings to share at a conference session and BTZx-hosted webinar.

7.0 Timelines

The table below outlines the anticipated timeline for the RFP process and project deliverables. (Dates are subject to change at BTZx's discretion; any changes will be communicated to all proponents.)

Project Timelines	
Item	Date
RFP Release Date	July 21 st , 2025
Deadline for Questions to BTZx	September 3 rd , 2025 (2:00 PM AT)
RFP Closing – Proposal Submission Deadline	September 12 th , 2025 (1:00 PM AT)
Anticipated Notice of Award (Selection of Proponent)	September 18 th , 2025
Project Kick-off Meeting	October 10 th , 2025
Municipal Consultation Content	October 31 st , 2025
Needs Assessment Consultations	December 12 th , 2025
Resource and gap analysis	January 15 th , 2026
Follow-up Workshops with In-scope Solutions	March 13 th , 2026
Draft Summary Report Due	April 10 th , 2026
Summary Report Due	May 8 th , 2026

Proponents should note the tight timeline for deliverables and ensure that their team has capacity to meet the deadlines. The schedule for interim updates and draft submission can be adjusted in consultation with BTZx, but the final completion date is a firm requirement. BTZx will make every effort to facilitate timely feedback and access to stakeholders to support the Proponent in keeping the project on track.

8.0 Project Funding

Funding for the Municipal Readiness Consultation Project is **capped at a maximum of CAD \$120,000** (including HST). This budget is inclusive of all fees, expenses, and applicable travel or consultation costs to complete the scope of work. Proponents' financial proposals should not exceed this amount. BTZx will evaluate cost-effectiveness as one factor in the selection (refer to Section 12.0 Evaluation) but will not necessarily select the lowest-cost proposal. All prices should be quoted in Canadian dollars. Payment terms will be negotiated with the successful Proponent, with the expectation of progress payments tied to key deliverables (e.g., upon delivery of the draft report and final report).

9.0 Respondent Qualifications

BTZx invites proposals from consultants (firms or teams) that can demonstrate the following qualifications and experience. The successful Proponent **must have**:

- **Stakeholder Engagement & Facilitation Skills:** Demonstrated experience in conducting stakeholder consultations, workshops, or interviews, especially in the context of training and capacity building with municipalities. The team should be adept at engaging diverse stakeholders (municipal staff, Indigenous organizations, building officials, contractors, consultants, etc.), soliciting candid input, and synthesizing feedback into actionable insights.
- **Experience organizing and facilitating events with Indigenous Communities and Organizations:** demonstrated experience conducting stakeholder consultations, workshops, or interviews, specifically with Indigenous organizations. The Proponent may choose to partner with an organization or consultant that holds this experience.
- **Expertise in Building Energy Efficiency:** Strong knowledge of both NBC and NEBC requirements. Experience in building science, energy management, or sustainability is highly desirable.
- **Strategic Mapping:** Experience conducting gap analyses, needs assessments, creating training roadmaps, or implementing professional development initiatives will be viewed favorably.
- **Project Management and Research Capacity:** Proven ability to manage and deliver complex projects on time and on budget. This includes strong analytical and writing skills to produce high-quality reports. The team should have some capacity in data gathering (both qualitative and quantitative), comparative analysis, and strategic planning.

Local Knowledge: While not mandatory, familiarity with the Atlantic Canada/Nova Scotia energy efficiency landscape (policies, programs like Efficiency Nova Scotia, local training providers, etc.) will be considered an asset. Proponents from outside the region are encouraged to partner with local organizations or experts to ensure regional context is well understood.

10.0 Proposal Requirements

To be considered, proposals should be clear, concise, and include all components outlined below. Proponents are urged to organize their proposals in the following order for ease of review:

- **Understanding of the Project:** A brief executive summary or introduction demonstrating the Proponent's understanding of the project objectives and the importance of municipal consultation and capacity building. Highlight any key issues or insights the team already foresees and intends to address.
- **Approach and Methodology:** A detailed description of how the Proponent will carry out the Scope of Work (Section 5.0). This should include the methods to be used for each Phase of the project.
- **Work Plan and Schedule:** A work plan that translates the methodology into a timeline. Use a table or Gantt chart to show the timing of key tasks, milestones, interim deliverables, and meetings. Confirm the ability to meet the deadlines in Section 7.0. If proposing any adjustments to the timeline, provide rationale. Include the frequency of progress updates you will provide (e.g., bi-weekly meetings or reports) and how you will coordinate with the BTZx project manager.
- **Project Team and Qualifications:** Introduce the team members who will be involved, their roles, and their relevant experience. Provide a brief overview in the proposal (e.g., a paragraph per key individual outlining credentials and past relevant work). Full CVs or résumés can be attached as an appendix. Clearly identify the Project Manager/Lead and the main point of contact. If multiple organizations are partnering, describe the partnership structure and past collaborations if any.
- **Relevant Experience and Past Projects:** Describe up to **three (3)** projects the Proponent has completed that are similar in scope or relevance. For each example, include the client, project purpose, the Proponent's role, and outcomes achieved. Emphasize experience working with municipalities and Indigenous organizations and developing training materials for the building sector. If available, references or contact information for these projects can be provided (references may be contacted at BTZx's discretion).

- **Budget Proposal:** A detailed budget breakdown for the project. The budget should be presented by task or phase, showing the allocation of hours and fees for each team member, as well as any direct expenses. Provide daily or hourly rates for personnel and the total expected cost. The budget should align with the Work Plan and demonstrate efficient use of resources within the maximum funding (see Section 8.0). A separate line item is required for any applicable taxes (14% HST in Nova Scotia).
- **Value-Added Proposition:** A brief section highlighting any additional value your team brings to the project. This could include proprietary tools, training materials, innovative techniques, strong local partnerships, or commitments to engaging underrepresented groups in the process.
- **Appendices:** The proposal may include appendices for detailed information such as team CVs, detailed methodologies, or other supporting material. Appendices should be referenced in the main proposal as needed. Keep the main proposal content concise and focused – evaluators will review appendices for additional detail as required.

Proposal Format and Submission: Proposals should be provided as a **single PDF document**. A cover letter (signed by an authorized officer of the Proponent's organization) should be included. The cover letter must state that the information provided is accurate and that the signatory has authority to bind the Proponent. Electronic submission is required (see Section 11.0 for submission details).

Proposals must be submitted via the following upload link:

<https://netzeroatlantic.sharefile.com/r-r5df66e1b288e4ebe9897644d0d5365ec>

The main body of the proposal (excluding cover letter, title page, and appendices) should not exceed 15 pages.

Proponents should ensure that their proposal is well-organized, with clear headings corresponding to the requirements above. Clarity and brevity are valued – avoid unnecessary boilerplate. The proposal should enable the evaluation committee to easily find information relative to the evaluation criteria.

11.0 Questions and Clarifications

Prospective proponents may submit questions or seek clarification on this RFP up until the deadline specified in Section 7.0 (Deadline for Questions). All inquiries must be made in writing via email. Please direct any questions to:

Email: jcollier@netzeroatlantic.ca (Subject line: "RFP Query – Municipal Readiness Consultation")

Attention: Joe Collier, BTZx Municipal Readiness Consultation Project

BTZx will compile all questions received by the deadline and issue a response to all known prospective proponents in a timely manner (e.g., via an addendum or emailed Q&A summary). Inquiries and responses that are of general interest will be shared with all, without revealing the source of the inquiry. Proponents are encouraged to get their questions in early to ensure a response.

Frequently Asked Questions will be compiled and displayed with answers on the following webpage: <https://buildingtozero.ca/news/rfp-municipal-readiness-consultation-project>

After the question deadline, BTZx is not obligated to respond to further inquiries, and no individual responses will be provided. **Note:** Oral responses to questions will not be binding; only written clarifications issued by BTZx (e.g., via official addendum) will be considered an authoritative modification to this RFP.

12.0 Evaluation

All proposals received by the submission deadline will be evaluated by a committee appointed by BTZx. The evaluation will be based on the criteria below, which reflect the requirements outlined in this RFP. Proposals should strive to address each of these aspects clearly within their content.

The **evaluation criteria** and their relative weights are as follows:

- **Understanding of Project & Proposed Methodology (30%)** – The degree to which the Proponent demonstrates insight into the project’s objectives, challenges, and context, and the quality of the proposed approach. A strong proposal will articulate a clear methodology for each task, showing creativity, comprehensiveness, and feasibility.
- **Proponent Experience and Qualifications (25%)** – The relevant experience of the firm and project team in areas related to this project. This includes demonstrated success in similar projects (workforce development, energy training, etc.), strength of references or past results, and the qualifications of individual team members. Experience in Atlantic Canada or similar markets will be a plus.
- **Work Plan and Management (20%)** – The realism and clarity of the work plan and timeline. Proposals will be assessed on how well-organized and achievable the plan is, how risks or challenges are accounted for, and the Proponent’s project management approach. An efficient schedule that meets project deadlines will score well.
- **Budget (15%)** – Evaluation of the proposed budget in terms of completeness, appropriateness, and value. While staying within the stated funding cap, does the budget align with the work plan and appear sufficient to perform the tasks? The committee will consider cost-effectiveness (e.g., appropriate allocation of junior/senior staff time) and any value-added elements offered. Note that lowest cost will not automatically score highest; rather, a balanced and justified budget will.
- **Innovation and Value-Added (10%)** – Any additional merits that set the proposal apart, such as particularly innovative approaches, tools, or partnerships that would enhance the project outcome. This also includes the Proponent’s commitment to DEIA principles (e.g., engaging diverse stakeholders, team diversity) and local capacity building, as well as the quality of the proposal presentation (clarity, professionalism, absence of errors).

Each proposal will receive a score out of 100 based on the above weighted criteria.

Thank you for your interest in this initiative. We look forward to reviewing your proposal.