

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL



CREATIVE ECONOMY INNOVATION HUB FEASIBILITY STUDY

Reference Number: 2412-001

Issued: Wednesday, December 18, 2024

Responses Due: Friday, January 17, 2025

Calgary Economic Development Ltd
Suite 2600, 237, 4th Ave. SW
Calgary, Alberta, T2P 4K3
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2. Introduction

Calgary Economic Development Ltd (CED) invites qualified firms to submit a proposal for the **Creative Economy Innovation Hub Feasibility Study** Request for Proposal (RFP). A proposal, in electronic form, together with one hardcopy must be submitted no later than **17:00 MST, Friday, January 17, 2025**. The electronic copy should be sent to the attention of the Contracting Manager by email as noted in Section 17. Late proposals will not be accepted.

3. Timelines

RFP Release	Dec. 18, 2024
Deadline for Questions	Jan. 6, 2025
Proposal Submission Date	Jan. 17, 2025
Meetings with Short-listed Vendors	Jan. 24, 2025
RFP Award Notification	Jan. 29, 2025
Anticipated Project Kick Off	Feb. 3, 2025
Interim Results Draft	Feb. 24, 2025
Draft Report Submitted to CED	Mar. 17, 2025
Final Report Submitted to CED	Mar. 31, 2025
Presentation to CED & Partners	Apr. 2025 TBD

*Proposed timelines. Vendors are welcome to propose more efficient timelines to complete the proposed work.

4. Definitions

- "CADA" means Calgary Arts Development Authority.
- "CED" means Calgary Economic Development Ltd.
- "City of Calgary" refers to the municipal government of the City of Calgary.
- "Contracting Manager" means the person identified in Section 17 of this RFP.
- "Project Lead" means the person identified in Section 17 of this RFP.
- "Request for Proposal (RFP)" means this document including attached appendices.
- "BRE" means Business Retention and Expansion.
- "IP" means Intellectual Property.
- "Proposal" means a Vendor's response to this RFP and includes all of the Vendor's attachments and presentation materials.

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"Services" means the duties, tasks, and responsibilities as described in this RFP.

"SMEs" means Subject Matter Experts.

"The Hub" refers to the Creative Economy Innovation Hub.

"Vendor" means an organization responding to this RFP.

5. Standard Form Contract

By submitting a Proposal a Vendor acknowledges it agrees that the terms and conditions of this RFP are incorporated by reference into its Proposal. If a Vendor's Proposal is accepted by CED, the Vendor will be expected to execute CED's standard contractor agreement. Vendors who are unwilling to abide by these standard terms and conditions should not submit a Proposal.

6. Vendors Questions

All questions regarding this RFP must be directed in writing to the Contracting Manager. Enquiries and responses may be recorded and may be distributed to all Vendors.

The Vendor must immediately notify the Contracting Manager in writing of any ambiguity, divergence, error, omission, oversight, or contradiction in this RFP discovered by the Vendor and request whatever clarification is required to prepare the Vendor's Proposal.

In order for CED to deal effectively with Vendor questions or concerns about any terms, conditions or requirements of this RFP, including the standard terms and conditions, such questions or concerns must be communicated in writing to the Contracting Manager in accordance with the Timeline indicated in item (1) above. Questions received after this time will be answered if, in the opinion of CED, time permits.

7. Conflict of Interest

Vendors must fully disclose, in writing, to the Contracting Manager on or before the closing date of this RFP, the circumstances of any possible conflict of interest or what could be perceived as a possible conflict of interest if the Vendor contracted with CED under this RFP. CED may reject any Proposal where, in the opinion of CED, the Vendor is or could be perceived to be in a conflict of interest.

8. Vendor Expenses

The Vendor is responsible for all costs of preparing and presenting its Proposal.

9. Pricing

All Proposals will be issued in Canadian dollars.

10. Background

Calgary Economic Development (CED) is the lead economic development agency that markets the Calgary Region's competitive advantages and pro-business climate within Canada and across the world. Through business retention, expansion, and investment

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attraction activities, and in collaboration with business, community and government, CED plays an integral role in promoting and facilitating sustainable economic growth and prosperity. The organization's efforts are focused on the following four areas:

- Business retention and expansion
- Business investment and attraction
- New business start-ups and small business development
- Research, marketing and communications

Calgary's Creative Economy

The cultural sector in Alberta is more concentrated in Calgary than elsewhere in the province. Creative industries encompass a wide array of sectors that primarily deal with the creation, production, and distribution of cultural and/or artistic goods and services. Whereas Creative Economy is the interplay between technology, intellectual property, and tourism at the economic, social, and cultural level, cultivating knowledge-based, technologically intensive creative outputs. The core Creative Economy is defined by the following creative subsectors:

- Linear media (film and television production)
- Animation and digital visual effects (VFX)
- Video games
- Esports
- Immersive media

In 2020, the direct employment supported in Calgary by creative industries is estimated at just under 15,700 people. An estimated \$2.9 billion in total revenues for the sector directly contributed to over \$1.6 billion in GDP for Calgary.¹

Calgary's Creative Economy Mission

Through the implementation of the Creative Economy Strategy, in co-stewardship with Calgary Arts Development Authority (CADA) and strategic partners, Calgary aims to attract and retain talent, incite innovation, support creative business environment and entrepreneurialism, enhance livability, and refine Calgary's brand in the creative economy.

CED's Strategic Priorities:

1. Maintain and Grow the Creative Talent Pool
2. Creating the Infrastructure
3. Investing in Intellectual Property

Calgary's Creative Economy Strategy highlights a need to further develop the available infrastructure in Calgary's Creative Economy.² Calgary businesses will benefit from cutting edge infrastructure and an environment conducive to innovation and experimentation. The goal is to create an environment where being on the leading edge is a given while also

¹ The Conference Board of Canada, [Calgary's Creative Industries: Update on the Economic Impact and Projections Going Forward](#), February 2024

² Nordicity, [A Creative Economy Strategy for Calgary](#), April 2024

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developing the city's reputation as a place where creative events and businesses thrive. To that end, the strategy recommends that CED and its partners explore both general and sector-specific infrastructure upgrades. All three strategic priority pillars would be supported by investment into a Creative Economy Innovation Hub. For intellectual property (IP) development to operate optimally, it would be housed within a dedicated creative hub facility (in which the sector-specific infrastructure could also be located).

Creative Economy Innovation Hub (“the Hub”)

The intent is to establish a centre of excellence that plays a crucial role in driving innovation, economic growth and entrepreneurship within creative economy. It will bring together regional creative, digital, design, music, production, and media industries while supporting the film and television industry with increased capacity. Creative hubs are places where technology meets creativity. Innovations in areas like digital media, virtual reality, gaming, and tech-driven art are promoted, allowing for the development of cutting-edge products and services. Any such facilities identified should accommodate the needs of creative professionals including office, design, training (consideration for Indigenous and equity deserving), standing sets and industrial studio space that will be a hub for industry activities. The infrastructure will anchor a broad base of creative economy partners which will form a functioning new economic cluster in Calgary through the following initiatives:

- **Creative Economy Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)**

The strategy calls for increased and focused efforts in creative economy business development towards the expansion of virtual production studios, animation studios, game development studios, and film and television production activities. The opportunity to access space for expansion and allow for crossover creative services businesses to collaborate is critical to a competitive pitch for creative business expansion and retention. Local creative entrepreneurs seek studio and production expansion opportunities and spaces to congregate for knowledge transfer in their expertise.

- **Strategic Alliances**

The success of this strategy will rely on strategic partnerships established between key civic partner organizations, post-secondary institutions, and key partners within the creative economy business sector on a municipal, national, and global level. Partnerships and strategic alliances on initiatives such as training, event activations in gaming and esports, immersive media exhibitions and more will require investment and commitment from multiple partners towards the success of this investment in infrastructure and the success of the overall sector strategy.

- **Programs and Activations**

With partnership support, this hub would provide a space for incubation, game/animation jams, master classes, training, esports, exhibition space for emerging and established immersive media companies and other in-person programming needed to assist in the creation of local IP. Further opportunities in partnership with Calgary's post-secondary institutions as the PSIs look to place interns and apprenticeships in settings where students can attain work integrated learning experience across the creative economy.

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Preliminary Facility Upgrades, Technical and Design Requirements

The Creative Economy Innovation Hub could accommodate digital media and entertainment arts production companies, gaming and animation studios, linear media (film and television) companies and other types of companies. This could require a commercial-grade office and production space on site. This space could accommodate both established companies and small entrepreneurial studios looking to secure a physical presence in Calgary by taking advantage of serviced-executive suite or open-floor-plan space that would allow firms to rent workstations and have access to common office equipment and amenities. The Creative Economy Innovation Hub would require a flexible open space for training, potential production, and events. Further requirements would be determined as strategic partners and programs, BRE efforts, technical needs, and business modelling are developed.

Governance

An effective Governance Model for the Creative Economy Innovation Hub will be established with strategic partners.

11. Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the Creative Economy Innovation Hub Feasibility Study is to determine the need, feasibility, potential location, business model, functional programming, governance framework to launch and sustain the Hub.

As part of this work there must be a concerted effort to breakdown the siloed nature of Calgary's existing creative economy assets. Our collective goal for the Creative Economy Innovation Hub is to create the following opportunities for Calgary, if feasible, designed and programmed right:

- Diversify our economy
- Attract, develop, and retain workforce with skills for current and future needs
- Revitalize our downtown and foster a vibrant city underpinned by a culture of innovation and collaboration
- Attract investment
- Strengthen Calgary's reputation as a creative and innovative global city

12. Objective of the Project

The Creative Economy Innovation Hub Feasibility Study will provide CED, CADA, and our collaborators with:

- Key strategic outcomes and unique definition for the Creative Economy Innovation Hub;
- A visual mapping of existing creative studios, film, arts, cultural assets across Calgary, and if relevant, adjacent to Calgary's city limits;

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- Recommendations on critical components (i.e., built environment, financial and economic structures, cultural assets, governing body) of a best-in-class Creative Economy Innovation Hub;
- Identification of gaps and needs critical for a successful Creative Economy Innovation Hub;
- Description of next steps to pilot or launch a Creative Economy Innovation Hub, recognizing that a robust business model is critical for long term viability.

13. Scope of Work

CED wants to see bold, innovative ideas and concepts for the Creative Economy Innovation Hub. We invite the vendor to develop their own methodology based on the questions raised, and below serves as a guideline on what we consider as valuable intelligence.

The study must consider the following:

SECTION I: Map of Existing Creative Economy Assets

- What is the current inventory of Creative Economy infrastructure assets in Calgary? Provide a visual map of existing assets in Calgary to help determine options for suitable locations.
- Based on findings from the updated [Building on our Momentum](#) 2017 report (pending early 2025 release), identify potential buildings or sites and assess its feasibility to locate a Creative Economy Innovation Hub.
- What is the feasibility of launching a Creative Economy Innovation Hub? Determine the potential focuses, 'challenges', or 'outcomes' for the Creative Economy Innovation Hub.
- Identify and define what could make Calgary's Creative Economy Innovation Hub unique.
- Based on analysis, identify and recommend potential sites for a Creative Economy Innovation Hub.

SECTION II: Best Practices from Leading Jurisdictions

- Provide examples of similar sites/buildings in other leading jurisdictions that have a similar creative innovation hub/space.
- Identify leading best practices that Calgary can learn from.
- Using examples from other jurisdictions, list out details (where possible), which may include, but are not limited to:
 - Purpose of asset
 - Location
 - Building size
 - Ownership
 - Digital and physical connectivity
 - Business model
 - Governance model
 - Return on investment (economic impact)
 - Equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility considerations
- Based on findings, identify any gaps that may exist for Calgary.

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SECTION III: Roadmap to Establish Calgary's Creative Economy Innovation Hub

- Provide rationale for a Creative Economy Innovation Hub in Calgary including a SWOT analysis.
- Provide options on an operating business model and rationale for how a Creative Economy Innovation Hub might be managed and funded. Include scenarios for a sustainable business plan.
- Provide recommendations to establish, program, and launch a Creative Economy Innovation Hub in Calgary. Include an action plan with potential timelines and high-level budget considerations.
- Quantify the economic impact (i.e. GDP, job creation, dollars invested, etc.,) of having a Creative Economy Innovation Hub in Calgary and the impact of not establishing it.

CED and their collaborators will entertain other suggested deliverables by Vendors.

In the Proposal response, the Vendor will provide a timeline and detailed schedule of activities and steps (i.e., approach) for the completion of this work.

The Vendor will compile the outputs above in formats suitable for presentation and usage of the data and information when establishing the Creative Economy Innovation Hub going forward. The deliverables will be used to inform CED and align groups across the city on the importance of the Creative Economy and provide a focused path forward to developing a Creative Economy Innovation Hub.

14. Deliverables

- **Interim results drafts:** Draft results will focus on key findings to date focused on Section I and II as outlined in the Scope of Work.
- **Final Deliverables:**
 - A presentation document highlighting key findings, analysis and recommendations with visuals/graphics.
 - A comprehensive report (including the visuals and graphics) as per the scope of work requirements.
 - A verbal presentation to CED, CADA and other partners, including a Q&A session.

The final deliverables may or may not be published in their final format. CED may incorporate elements of these deliverables to inform near-term developments and/or materials.

Any presentation of deliverables should be in electronic format and readable using common software and common formats such as Word, PowerPoint, Excel or PDF. Due to the importance of sharing interim insights from the research associated with this RFP, please plan for frequent touchpoints with CED.

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15. Communication Cadence

Regular touchpoints with Project Lead and Contracting Manager (both from CED) and other project team members or designated SMEs are to be expected.

- The chosen vendor should plan for **weekly touchpoints** with the Project Lead and Contracting Manager as a minimum (unless otherwise agreed upon)

16. Fees and Payment Terms

CED and their collaborators expect Vendors to price the work according to the scope outlined above and as competitively as possible. Proposals should include a breakdown of the Vendor's fees and disbursements in completing the Services.

The Vendor agrees to invoice CED monthly based on progressed completion of the Services as described in this contract. All pre-approved expenses and disbursements are to be invoiced as they are incurred together with the monthly progress billing.

17. Project Lead and Contracting Manager

For the purposes of the provisions of information surrounding this contract or the administration of the contract, the **Project Lead** is:

Calgary Economic Development Ltd.
Attention: Luke Azevedo, VP, Creative Industries, Operations & Film Commissioner
237 – 4th Avenue SW, Suite 2600
Calgary, AB T2P 3K4
Canada
Email: lazevedo@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com

For the purposes of the provisions of information surrounding this contract or the administration of the contract, the **Contracting Manager** is:

Calgary Economic Development Ltd.
Attention: Linda, Manager, Business Intelligence
237 – 4th Avenue SW, Suite 2600
Calgary, AB T2P 3K4
Canada
Email: ltruong@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com

18. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

18.1. Selection Methods

When an alternative is proposed regarding any specific requirement, it will be evaluated to ensure that the desired results will be achieved. Vendors should be aware that certain mandatory requirements have been set out in the terms of reference (scope, methodology, and deliverables) and submission information. Proposals that fail to provide these requirements may not be evaluated.

18.1.1. Vendor Response Guidelines

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The following information should be provided in each proposal and may be utilized in evaluating each proposal submitted.

18.1.2. Team Competence & Resources

Describe the capability (technical expertise) of the resources proposed to meet the requirements described in the terms of reference. The proposal shall include a summary of the firm and/or proposed project team knowledge, skills and past experience, with a description indicating how, and in what ways the proposed resources satisfies the needs and objectives identified in the RFP.

Include related experience of the firm, including the past three similar jobs that have completed with the company name, contact person and phone number that CED may contact for a reference.

18.1.3. Methodology

Clearly articulate the process and qualitative and quantitative methodology to be used, proposed work plan schedule, and timeline for deliverables in order to achieve the objectives and deliverables of the RFP. The methodology should also include consultations and timely reporting to CED.

18.1.4. Fees And Expenses

Expense information should be supplied including a breakdown of costs by major work plan tasks:

- Per diem rates
- Travel, if required
- Administration overhead
- Phone, fax, courier, printing, etc.
- Sundry and contingency overhead rates
- Software costs, data information or research
- Prices must be stated in actual dollars and cents expressed in Canadian funds.
- CED will pay the goods and services tax (GST); however, do not include GST in your proposed pricing.

CED will evaluate submissions based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Possible Points
Quality of Submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and concise • Quality of writing 	10
Team Competency, Capabilities and Background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevancy of past projects (please provide examples where possible) • Experience and knowledge of the Creative Economy and Creative Industries sector 	30

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated business and/or industry experience • Understanding of economic development 	
<p>Approach and Proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurately addresses purpose and objectives • Clearly outlines approach to each deliverable; the methodology should also include consultations and timely reporting to the Contracting Manager and Project Lead • Sound rationale for order of deliverables • Initial delivery within timelines outlined by CED • Clear timelines for project milestones and methodology for completing Scope of Work 	40
<p>Fees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees have been clearly outlined and are competitive • Breakdown of fees and disbursements 	20
Total	100

19. Submission Information

Proposals must be received **by email** before 17:00 MST, **Friday, January 17, 2025** to:

237 - 4th Avenue SW, Suite 2600
 Calgary, Alberta T2P 4K3
 Canada

Attention: Linda Truong, Manager, Business Intelligence
 Email: ltruong@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com
 Subject: RFP 2412-001 – Creative Economy Innovation Hub Feasibility Study

- Proposals received after the exact time and date noted above will not be considered by CED.
- After the closing, CED may post the identity and addresses of the vendors.
- CED may not consider any proposal that:
 - does not indicate the request for proposals title, closing date, vendors name, on the outside of the envelope containing the hardcopy proposal in response to the RFP; or
 - Is delivered to any address other than that provided above.
 - Proposals must be transmitted by e-mail as noted above. Transmitted proposals will be accepted under the following conditions:
 - The proposal is received before the submission deadline at the e-mail address provided above;
 - The vendor must deliver, during CED business hours, an original hardcopy proposal to the address stated herein immediately following the transmission of the e-mail.

20. CED Reservation of Rights and Vendor’s License Grant

CED reserves the right:

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- To not consider, or to reject, any or all proposals in whole or in part for any reason whatsoever in its sole and absolute discretion;
- To accept any proposal in whole or in part, even if it does not comply with the terms of this RFP;
- To short list vendors, and require a presentation by the vendors short-listed and/or the provision of additional information by such short-listed vendors;
- To, at any time, add, delete or modify this RFP and to have the vendors advise CED of the effect of such changes on their proposal and/or have the vendors resubmit their proposals in light of same;
- To negotiate at any time with any one or more of the vendors to the exclusion of the other vendors; and
- To not proceed, for any reason, with this RFP or the project contemplated in this RFP.

By submitting its Proposal for consideration, the Vendor will thereby be agreeing to all of the following:

- Without the further consent of the Vendor or providing any notice, CED may disclose any and all of the content of Vendor's Proposal to any or all of the other vendors or any third party, including any or all of the creative content contained in Vendor's Proposal;
- The Vendor grants and agrees to grant to CED a non-exclusive, perpetual, fully-paid up, irrevocable license to implement, use, reproduce, modify, display, distribute, transmit, prepare derivative works of and to otherwise fully exploit, without limitation, any and all of the content of Vendor's Proposal including without limitation, all of the creative content, ideas, concepts and approached as well as all copyright therein;
- Such license shall extend to any other vendor or any other third party that CED may engage to use and implement such content;
- CED shall have no obligation to provide any credit or otherwise attribute to the Vendor or anyone else any such content as may be implemented and/or used by CED;
- The Vendor represents and warrants to CED that such content is the original work of the Vendor and its use by CED as contemplated in this Section 21 will not infringe on any rights of any third party; and
- All of the rights and licenses granted herein and the exercise of all such rights and licenses by CED and the other vendors and such other third parties, as described herein, are granted and may be exercised: (i) without any obligation to account to the Vendor or to otherwise pay any consideration to the Vendor; and (ii) without having to have accepted or shortlisted Vendor's Proposal.

21. No Further Contract or Liability Arising from RFP Process

By submitting a Proposal, the Vendor agrees and acknowledges that:

- Nothing in this RFP nor the submission of the Proposal nor the review and consideration of the Proposal by CED nor will any communication between the parties in relation to the RFP or the Proposal operate to obligate any party to enter into any further business relationship with the other party and, in particular, if CED decides to engage the Vendor in connection with the subject matter of the RFP then

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such engagement may only occur pursuant to a written agreement that has been signed by both parties and, absent such written agreement, CED will have no further liability or obligation to the Vendor in connection with the subject matter of the RFP;

- The Vendor is participating in this RFP process at its sole risk and expense, and CED will not be liable to the Vendor for any costs, expenses or liabilities incurred by the Vendor in any way arising in connection with the Vendor's participation;
- CED has made no representations other than those expressly stated in this RFP;
- CED has the right to cancel this request for proposals at any time and to reissue it for any reason whatsoever or decide not to reissue it for any reason, without incurring any liability and no vendor will have any claim against CED as a consequence; and
- The Proposal and any accompanying documentation submitted by the Vendor will become the property of CED and will not be returned.

22. Appendix

The following list of sources are supplementary materials that are important for the development of the creative economy industry. Please access these sources below:

1. AEA Consulting, Update of [Building on our Momentum, June 2017](#) report (pending publication early 2025)
2. Nordicity, [A Creative Economy Strategy for Calgary](#), April 2024
3. The Conference Board of Canada, [Calgary's Creative Industries: Update on the Economic Impact and Projections Going Forward](#), February 2024
4. [CreativeCITY: Prosperity through the Creative Economy Community Engagement Summary](#), June 2023
5. [CreativeCITY: Prosperity through the Creative Economy Strategic Guidebook](#), June 2023
6. [CreativeCITY: Prosperity through the Creative Economy Ecosystem Report](#), June 2021
7. [Exploring Calgary's Creative Economy](#), October 2020