

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL



LIFE SCIENCES SECTOR STUDY

Reference Number: 2506-001

Issued: Monday, June 16, 2025

Responses Due: Friday, July 11, 2025

Calgary Economic Development Ltd
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2. Introduction

Calgary Economic Development Ltd (CED) invites qualified firms to submit a proposal for the **Life Sciences Sector Study** Request for Proposal (RFP). A proposal, in electronic form to be submitted no later than **17:00 MST, Friday, July 11, 2025**. The electronic copy should be sent to the attention of the Contracting Manager by email as noted in Section 18. Late proposals will not be accepted.

3. Timelines

RFP Release	Jun. 16, 2025
Deadline for Questions	Jun. 27, 2025
Proposal Submission Date	Jul. 11, 2025
Meetings with Short-listed Vendors	Jul. 21, 2025
RFP Award Notification	Jul. 23, 2025
Anticipated Project Kick Off	Jul. 28, 2025
Interim Results Draft – Part 1	Aug. 29, 2025
Industry Partner Engagement**	Sept. 2025 TBD
Interim Results Draft – Part 2	Sept. 26, 2025
Feedback from Interim Results Presentations	Oct. 3, 2025
Draft Final Report and Presentation	Oct. 24, 2025
Feedback from Draft Final Report	Oct. 31, 2025
Final Report and Presentation Submission	Nov. 7, 2025
Presentations to CED & Select Partners	Nov. 2025 TBD

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

**Industry Partner Engagement – preference to incorporate a session/workshop with key industry partners to support study objectives with CED's support for facilitation and coordination. Vendors are invited to propose the engagement method.

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4. Definitions

"CED" means Calgary Economic Development Ltd.

"Contracting Manager" means the person identified in Section 16 of this RFP.

"Project Lead" means the person identified in Section 16 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.

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

"SMEs" means Subject Matter Experts.

"SWOT" means an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

"VC" means Venture Capital.

"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.

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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

a. About Calgary Economic Development:

Calgary Economic Development (CED) works with business, government and community partners to position Calgary as the location of choice for the purpose of attracting business investment, fostering trade and growing Calgary's workforce.

b. Our Work

Our work is rooted in positioning Calgary for long-term economic success and shared prosperity for all by delivering services and initiatives focused on growth and development across our key sectors. Examples include targeted business attraction and expansion; marketing and promotion of the region globally; global markets; and local expansion efforts.

CED's last study on the sector was conducted in 2021: Life Sciences Value Proposition & Competitiveness Study.¹

c. Why a Life Sciences Sector Study

We anticipate this research will provide insights that will inform the development of a long-term sector vision and an internal sector strategy to support investment attraction to ensure long-term economic growth and prosperity for the region.

The vendor's final product should support and/or address key questions which have prompted this study:

- What are the key competitive advantages or disadvantages that Calgary faces in attracting and retaining business in the sector and subsectors?
- Is the Calgary's current value proposition competitive, and if not, how can it be enhanced?
- What drivers, projects and initiatives can Calgary learn from to strengthen investment attraction and expansion in the sector?

d. Sector Landscape: Highlights

Life Sciences in Alberta

Alberta has an emerging life sciences sector which is responsible for nearly \$2 billion in revenue and approximately 23,000 direct, indirect and induced jobs.² Accordingly, the estimated number of establishments (i.e. companies, hospital research, university research) engaged in life sciences related activity in Alberta is approx. 1,900. Alberta's life

¹ KPMG, [Life Sciences Value Proposition & Competitiveness Study](#), 2021

² BioAlberta, [Labour Market Information \(LMI\) Study](#), 2022

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sciences industry's success is based on innovation and growth. Fundamental to this success is the significant role that R&D activities play in the industry. The industry is seeing continued increase in R&D spending, with 2022 seeing highest forecasted level of R&D spending of \$327.3 million (32% increase from 2020).³ Edmonton and Calgary are the province's major hubs for life sciences companies with global life sciences firms, such as Gilead, Novartis, Circle Cardiovascular, Northern RNA, and others.

Life Sciences in Calgary

Calgary is home to a diverse range of life sciences companies– from start-ups and scaling-up companies, to established small and medium-sized enterprises. The University of Calgary ranks as the fifth best university in Canada for sponsored research funding.⁴ Calgary has several mechanisms to support research and development (R&D), investment and industry growth.

Innovation Hubs

- Calgary has seen remarkable growth in its innovation ecosystem underpinned by sectors such as life sciences. Launched in 2020, [Biohubx](#) aims to be a one-stop-shop for life science startups, offering a range of services including wet/dry lab space, office space, and technical support to help companies commercialize. The [Life Sciences Innovation Hub](#) (LSIH) at the University of Calgary supports research-intensive startups with access to wet/dry lab space, equipment, programming, commercialization strategies, and mentorship.

Infrastructure & Assets

- Calgary has robust research infrastructure to support R&D development across the spectrum of life sciences such as:
 - Calgary is home to Canada's largest comprehensive cancer center, the [Arthur J.E. Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre](#), which focuses on precision oncology and immunotherapy.
 - The University of Calgary's [Faculty of Medicine](#) has 7 research institutes.
 - The [International Microbiome Centre](#) is a translational research centre, designed to investigate the microbiome of humans, plants, animals and the physical environment. The Centre includes the world's largest germ-free facility, real-time imaging, mass cytometry and genomics.
 - The [University Innovation Quarter](#) spans 76 acres adjacent to the University of Calgary main campus, and has an existing ecosystem of Calgary start-up companies and science, technology, and research organizations.

³ BioAlberta, [Life Sciences in Alberta - State of the Industry](#), 2023

⁴ ReSearch Infosource Inc., [Canada's Top 50 Research Universities](#), 2021

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Venture Capital (VC) Investment

- In 2024, the life sciences sector in Canada saw the second highest levels of dollars invested on record with nearly \$1.4B invested across 128 deals.⁵ This continues a multi-year growth trend with a 15.4% increase in dollars invested from 2023 to 2024. A significant level (44%) of these dollars invested in the sector was raised by Therapeutic Drugs & Biologics companies. Alberta accounts for 18% (23) of Canada's number of deals financed in the life sciences sector. Despite economic uncertainty in 2024, Calgary led the way, attracting 90 per cent of total dollars invested in VC investment in Alberta.⁶
 - In 2024 and the first quarter of 2025, the following life sciences companies collectively raised close to \$75M CAD in investment: Fluid Biomed, Orpyx, Syantra, Nimble, Willow, Xortx, Retinalogik.

Clinical Trials

- Clinical trials are a large and growing segment of the life sciences sector and are essential in keeping Calgary competitive globally and attracting clinical research for R&D development. 24% of Canadian clinical trials are conducted in Alberta⁷, and currently there are more than 1,000 active clinical trials in Calgary.⁸ Pharmaceutical, biotech, and medical device companies can leverage resources and assets in Alberta and Calgary for their R&D development.
 - The [Calgary Centre for Clinical Research](#) (CCCR) conducts trials at all phases of clinical development with high quality, cost efficient and timely clinical studies.
 - [IMPACT](#) (Integrated Management Platform to Accelerate Clinical Trials) provides end-to-end support to startups with their clinical trial and regulatory approvals to support their health-related innovations.
 - [CaRe Clinic](#), with operations in Calgary and Red Deer, works with industry partners to conduct clinical trials in Alberta.

11. Purpose of the Project

The vendor's final product will provide an analysis that addresses the key questions as referenced in Section 10c and Section 12. and will drive the future development of near-term critical work conducted by CED and the region including a sector strategy and vision for economic growth. To do this, CED seeks to deepen our understanding of Calgary's position in the life science sector, with a focus on **high potential subsectors** such as:

- Oncology
- Animal health (including biopharma, devices, diagnostics, feed, nutrition and care; applicable to both livestock and companion animals)

⁵ Canadian Venture Capital & Private Equity Association (CVCA), [Canadian Venture Capital Market Overview](#), 2024

⁶ Canadian Venture Capital & Private Equity Association (CVCA), [Canadian Venture Capital Market Overview](#), 2024

⁷ Clinical Trials Alberta, [The Alberta Advantage](#), 2022

⁸ ClinicalTrials.gov, [Active Clinical Trials in Calgary, AB](#), 2025

12. Scope of Work

CED is looking for a bold approach and innovative concepts for the **Life Sciences Sector Study**. We invite the vendor to develop their own methodology based on the questions raised.

Below serves as a guideline to ensure the final deliverables are strategic and provide an actionable product for CED:

- Profiles Calgary's current and potential position in key life sciences subsectors
- Benchmarks Calgary against peer regions
- Identifies opportunities for growth, investment and collaboration
- Provides recommendations for investment and talent attraction
- Supports the development of a sector strategy tailored to Calgary's unique strengths and ecosystem.

SECTION I: Sector Landscape

- Key drivers – What national and global shifts/drivers are forecast to have the greatest impact on the identified subsectors and Calgary's economic growth both short and long term?
- Growth potential – What are the global, national and regional growth forecasts for these subsectors?
- SWOT analysis – What are Calgary's competitive advantages and barriers in attracting, retaining and growing life sciences companies in high growth potential subsectors?

SECTION II: Subsector Insights

- Market Size & Trends – What is the current and projected market size (in CAD) for identified high growth potential subsectors like oncology and animal health? What are the key R&D and commercialization trends?
- Local Strengths – What are Calgary's current strengths and capacity in these areas (e.g., R&D, clinical trials, commercialization, manufacturing)?
- Infrastructure & Assets – What facilities, platforms, and capabilities exist locally and provincially?
- Clinical Trials – Who are the major clinical trial sponsors in Calgary and what are the most frequently studied conditions?

SECTION III: Investment & Partnership Landscape

- Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) – Which companies are investing in these subsectors and from where?
- Venture Capital Activity – What are the top VC firms investing in these areas? Include deal flow, exits, and geographic presence.
- Public-Private Partnerships – What are the most significant partnerships in Canada and key markets in these subsectors?

SECTION IV: Competitiveness & Benchmarking

- Best practices – From an economic development perspective, what lessons and best practices can Calgary learn from the fastest growing life science hubs? What initiatives have proven successful elsewhere?

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- Benchmarking – How do other clusters/hubs structure their ecosystems to support sector growth?
- Gap Analysis – What structural or strategic gaps does Calgary face compared to peer hubs/jurisdictions?

SECTION V: Opportunity Analysis

- Ecosystem opportunities – What types of companies and projects would benefit from investing in Calgary? Provide company names that demonstrate high potential.
- Clinical Trial Positioning – Understanding that Alberta wants to promote itself as a premier destination for conducting high-quality clinical trials, what makes the region competitive for hosting clinical trials? What companies can leverage this?
- Investment in the sector – Who are the top 20-30 VCs investing in life sciences companies in Canada and USA (ranked by fund size, include the number of deals, city location, and the number of exits, and the subsectors invested in)? Identify any trends over the past 5 to 10 years. What are the major commercial and M&A deals in Canada in the life sciences sector in the past 10 years?
- Cross-sector opportunities – What synergies exist between life sciences and Calgary's other key industries (i.e. technology, energy & environment, agrifood, manufacturing etc.)

SECTION VI: Thinking Ahead

- Based on findings, provide the top 5-10 actionable areas of focus for economic development. This could include: high impact activities; short, medium, and long-term goals; potential partnerships with or within industry, organizations, academic institutions; policies and strategic investment attraction initiatives to bolster sector/subsector growth

CED and their collaborators will consider 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.

13. Deliverables

- **Interim results drafts:** Draft results will focus on key findings to date focused on Section I-II (Part 1) and Section III-V (Part 2) 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.
 - Content development for a short sector outlook report, highlighting key trends and opportunities for Calgary based on the research. This document may be published by CED.
 - Verbal presentations to CED (internal) and select partners (external), including a Q&A session.

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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.

14. 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/bi-weekly touchpoints** with the Project Lead and Contracting Manager as a minimum (unless otherwise agreed upon)

15. 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.

16. 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: Lin Tang, Business Development Manager, Life Sciences
237 – 4th Avenue SW, Suite 2600
Calgary, AB T2P 3K4
Canada
Email: ltang@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 Truong, Manager, Business Intelligence
237 – 4th Avenue SW, Suite 2600
Calgary, AB T2P 3K4
Canada
Email: ltruong@calgaryeconomicdevelopment.com

17. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

17.1. Selection Methods

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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.

17.1.1. Vendor Response Guidelines

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

17.1.2. 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.

17.1.3. 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.

17.1.4. 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.

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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 Life Sciences sector• Demonstrated business and/or industry experience• Understanding of economic development	30
Approach and Proposal <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
Fees <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fees have been clearly outlined and are competitive• Breakdown of fees and disbursements	20
Total	100

18. Submission Information

Proposals must be received **by email** before 17:00 MST, **Friday, June 27th, 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 2506-001 – Life Sciences Sector 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.
- 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.

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19. CED Reservation of Rights and Vendor's License Grant

CED reserves the right:

- 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.

20. 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

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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 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.

21. Appendix

The following list of sources are relevant materials for exploration of this sector research:

1. Deloitte, [Life Sciences Outlook](#), 2025
2. Colliers Canada, [Life Sciences in Canada](#), 2024
3. Canadian Venture Capital & Private Equity Association (CVCA), [Canadian Venture Capital Market Overview](#), 2024
4. BioAlberta, [Life Sciences in Alberta - State of the Industry](#), 2023
5. BioAlberta, [Labour Market Information \(LMI\) Study](#), 2022
6. KPMG, [Life Sciences Value Proposition & Competitiveness Study](#), 2021