



Request for Proposals

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## **Understanding the Needs of Urban Inuit Women A Focus on Child Wellbeing**

Issuing Office:

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**Deadline for submissions: December 4, 2020**

## **Statement of Work**

### **Title**

Understanding the Needs of Urban Inuit Women: A Focus on Child Wellbeing

### **Introduction**

As the national voice for Inuit women in Canada, Pauktuutit fosters greater awareness of the needs of Inuit women, advocates for equality and social improvements, and encourages Inuit women's full participation in the community, regional and national life of Canada. One component of advocating for the social, cultural, political and economic betterment of Inuit women, their families and communities is to ensure that the necessary policy tools are developed and applied in a manner that reflects the realities and needs of Inuit women. This is particularly true for Inuit women living out of Inuit Nunangat for advancing the needs of Inuit children who are not residents and may not be beneficiaries of Inuit Nunangat.

Early learning and childcare in Canada was fragile before the pandemic hit because it is market-based, fragmented, and chronically under-funded. It is even worse for Inuit mothers living out of Inuit Nunangat.

In the last three years several changes and reforms to child welfare legislation, early childhood, learning programs, and support initiatives were initiated. These changes were implemented to improve options and outcomes for Inuit mothers and their children across Canada.

Unfortunately, the intended changes have not translated to positive outcomes for Inuit women living out of Inuit Nunangat. We are hearing from mothers in crisis. Their needs have not been considered, nor are they being included in new reform measures because they are living out of Inuit Nunangat.

Inuit Early Learning and child wellness programs have proven to be the best possible start to life for Inuit children. Inuit children and families wish to be healthy, happy, and safe. They want to have the opportunity to learn and speak Inuktut. Families want their children to grow up prepared to live a harmonious life rooted in Inuit ways of knowing and be equipped to participate in the broader Canadian society. Many Inuit families living outside of Inuit Nunangat face

challenges related to social and cultural isolation, lack of access to culturally appropriate programs and services, and suffer high levels of mental distress.

This project will identify and explore options in Inuit Early Learning and child wellness programs that support the early learning and childcare (ELCC) needs of Inuit living outside of Inuit Nunangat

Child wellbeing was a key finding and recommendation in our previous UPIP report and continues to be a gap area. This research will specifically investigate key areas that have had federal involvement to determine if, in fact, they have had positive impacts for Inuit families living outside of Inuit Nunangat.

- UPIP—Inuit allocations and flow
- IELCC (Childcare)
- C-92 (Child welfare)
- CFI (Child First Initiative)
- MMIWG (National Action plan)
- C-81 (Accessibility)
- C-91 (Indigenous Languages Act)
- Federal supports for cultural programs

This research project will collect and analyze feedback from diverse lived experiences of the growing Inuit women population in urban centres, and will provide an evidence-based assessment of the programs, services and supports required for them to build the good lives in urban centres

This research will build upon existing qualitative research to address barriers to the development of sustainable livelihoods, free from violence, homelessness, job precarity and poverty. The research will also explore the barriers experienced in accessing funding, including;

- Issues experienced by Inuit women outside of Inuit Nunangat
- Community capacity for proposal development and implementation
- A lack of Inuit data

The research is critical to understanding how the needs of Inuit women in urban centres have evolved and the impacts of prior initiatives as stated below.

This research will build upon Pauktuutit's previous work to collect evidence on the needs and challenges of Inuit women and their access to programs. Pauktuutit's 2016-17 *Urban Aboriginal Strategy Project Understanding the Needs of Urban Inuit Women*, created the initial research and baseline of needs of Inuit women across Canada and living outside Inuit Nunangat. A 2015-16 UAS project titled *Engaging Inuit Women in the Canadian Economy*, explored the needs, challenges and priorities of Inuit women across Inuit Nunangat from which it developed clear and realistic recommendations.

It is important that Inuit women be able to influence policies and programs in order to meet their children's needs. They require equitable access to programs and services not only to help improve their lives but also to enjoy a quality of life comparable with other Canadian women.

### **Goals of the Project**

The initial goals of the project have shifted with the onset of COVID-19. Several vulnerabilities have quickly become apparent for Inuit women and children living outside Inuit Nunangat. The pandemic has deepened pre-existing gendered inequalities and exposed vulnerabilities in social, political, and economic systems which compound one another. For example, the lack of available and affordable childcare, makes earning a livelihood difficult for Inuit women. Children not attending school because of COVID-19 require full-time attention, while home confinement exacerbates family tensions. The loss of income creates additional stress in an already difficult reality for Inuit women.

The objective of this project is to develop evidenced-based research and data around the specific needs of Inuit women in urban centres as they relate to children's wellbeing.

### **Scope**

This is an open call to individuals, firms, or organizations to explore viable options for Inuit families and their children.

While working within the restrictions of the pandemic and using safe practices, the research will identify gaps, increase understanding and guide the development of substantive equity by identifying the funding barriers faced by Inuit in urban centres.

The research outcomes will inform recommendations regarding equitable access to programs, supports, and funding for Inuit women. It will also produce gender and Inuit-specific data regarding child care and child early learning, and subsequently suggest funding mechanisms for Inuit children to participate.

The research will provide a better understanding of the current capacity and supports available to Inuit women across the country in addition to serving as an advocating tool for a more equitable representation of Inuit women and their children provincially and nationally.

### **Deliverables**

1. A literature review of new research, studies and evidence around the experiences, needs and challenges of Inuit, particularly Inuit women, in the urban context.
2. The literature review will identify existing research, studies and data on the experience of Inuit women in the urban context.
3. The literature will be used to inform the interview questions to be developed, including themes or areas of discussion to emphasize, with a specific focus on child wellbeing literature and legislations since 2017.
4. Qualitative research summaries of findings for each of the seven urban centres engaged through virtual engagements and interviews. Community-based organizations—will include the Edmonton Inuit Society, the Manitoba Inuit Association, Tungasuvvingat Inuit and Inuqatiigit, Inuit of Toronto Urban Katimavvik, Saturviit and Ivirtivik in Montreal, Atilihai of Halifax and Inuit of St. John's.
5. A review of existing funding sources (provincial and federal) intended to support child wellbeing, including exclusionary criteria or other barriers that may be faced by Inuit in urban centres outside of Nunangat. This review will be formulated by province and territory and will include barriers that exacerbate the ability to access existing funding sources.
6. A final report summarizing the five previous deliverables, including key recommendations from the research findings. By examining the needs of Inuit women in urban centres, the final report will validate what further supports are needed to address the barriers to

developing sustainable livelihoods free from violence, homelessness, unemployment and poverty for Inuit women and their children living out of Inuit Nunangat.

It is important for applicants to demonstrate an understanding of Inuit culture, the traditional and evolving nuances of Inuit women's roles, in addition to the indicators unique to Inuit women. It is important that indicators ensure equitable consideration of all Inuit women.

Applicants must also have extensive experience working with Inuit and Inuit led organizations. They must possess effective communication skills and methodology and have the proven expertise to produce culturally relevant work.

### **Timeline**

The duration of the contract will be from December 14, 2020 to March 31, 2021.

- Bids accepted until Dec 4, 2020;
- Contract begins Dec 14, 2020;
- Contract ends March 31, 2021.

### **Pauktuutit's Roles and Responsibilities**

The primary contact at Pauktuutit for this project is Christine Lund, Senior policy advisor, Social and Economic Development (clund@pauktuutit.ca). Pauktuutit commits to providing the information and materials necessary to complete the work and will respond to requests for information promptly.

Pauktuutit will provide all applicants with a final decision within five business days following the submission deadline.

### **Confidentiality, Privacy and Copyright**

The successful applicant shall not disclose to any party any confidential information gained or resulting from activities undertaken under this project, nor shall the applicant disclose any information concerning Pauktuutit or their affairs while working on this project.

Pauktuutit and the successful applicant will agree to acknowledge and accord appropriate credit for each other's contribution to this project, including any products developed and disseminated

as a result. Both parties will agree on how credit is attributed, depending on the nature and degree of each organization's contribution.

Pauktuutit retains ownership of all materials and intellectual property created, designed, or produced because of activities undertaken by the successful applicant when awarded this project.

The successful applicant will generate original work for this project.

### **Proposal Instructions**

- Applicants must submit their company name, and confirm their incorporation, references, and/or portfolio,
- Submit by email to [clund@pauktuutit.ca](mailto:clund@pauktuutit.ca),
- All submissions must be in Word or PDF format, and
- Estimates/budgets must remain firm until March 31, 2021.

No payment will be made for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal in response to this RFP;

- No costs incurred before receipt of a signed contract can be charged to the proposed contract,
- Travel that may be required will be separate from this scope of work budget and will be paid for by Pauktuutit, and,
- Pauktuutit reserves the right not to award a contract because of this RFP.

### **Budget**

The proposal must include:

- A detailed budget not to exceed \$34,500 including HST and demonstrates the objectives and deliverables for the project can be met,
- Indicate the billing rate,
- List any other expenses that might be applicable, and,
- The total bid MUST include 13% HST tax.

### **Rights of the Organization**

Pauktuutit reserves the right to:

- Enter negotiations with one or more bidders on any or all aspects of this proposal;

- Accept any proposal in whole or in part;
- Cancel and/or re-issue this requirement at any time;
- Award one or more contracts; and
- verify any or all information provided by the bidder regarding this requirement.

**Contact Information**

Please direct the application to:

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