



REQUEST FOR TENDER FINANCIAL AUDIT SERVICES

Introduction:

Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan (Shkoday) invites audit firms to submit a bid for the provision of financial audit services. Shkoday is required by their funders to have their financial records audited by an independent third party that will result in an opinion as to the fairness of the annual financial statements of the organization. This audit is due annually to their membership and funders.

Background:

Shkoday is a community-based Indigenous organization that offers children, youth and their families a safe, comfortable place to access services. Through holistic and cultural programming, Shkoday ignites the spirit within by connecting children, youth and their families to their culture, inspiring role models, early learning educators and the community. Shkoday practices learning from the past, living for today and having hope for tomorrow by inviting Elders and Traditional Teachers to share experiences, stories and cultural teachings with the children and youth. This instills a sense of pride and knowledge of who they are and where they come from, which builds self-esteem and positive self identity.

Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan was incorporated in January 1997 and received their charitable status on April 1, 1998. Shkoday as a non-profit organization receives approximately \$1.3 M in annual funding through various funders including the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, and United Way Thunder Bay.

Shkoday operates their Aboriginal Head Start and child care programs, as a licensed Child Care Centre under the Ministry of Education, therefore has an annual inspection and follows licensing processes. Shkoday operates the administrative and finance offices in addition to the Aboriginal Head Start and Child-care Centre on the main and lower level of their location at 1610 John Street Road. Shkoday's administration for their Biwaase'aa program is located on the lower level, while a majority of the Biwaase'aa staff are located throughout the 9 schools in which the Biwaase'aa program operates.

Shkoday has a staff of approximately 40 including both full-time and part-time. This number has changed and fluctuated during Covid-19. Shkoday utilizes Sage 50 Premium Accounting System to maintain the organization's general ledger and to prepare reports for financial reporting, accounts receivable, accounts payable and invoicing. The payroll is done by an external agency (ADP) with our finance officer preparing and entering the data into their system to process and direct deposit pay into the staff person's bank account.



Scope of Services:

The scope of services includes the annual audit of the corporation and preparation of the Annual Financial Statements. The successful auditor will conduct the examination in accordance with Canadian Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Accounting Standards for Not-for-Profit Organizations (ASNPO). The auditor will prepare the audited financial statements, make recommendations based on audit findings for improving financial management systems and or controls of the organization, and will issue a Management letter, if required. The auditor's duties also include the preparation of the Shkoday's T2 Corporation Income Tax Return and NPO Information Return and any other returns as may be required in the future. The auditor also is required to advise Shkoday of any, and all changes in accounting and reporting requirements.

It is expected that the auditor will review assessment notices and advise on income tax and may provide value added services of advice on other financial related matters. The financial cycle for Shkoday fiscally begins April 1 and ends on March 31. Typically, the fieldwork takes place at in early May. Draft financial statements will be sent to the Executive Director by the end of May so that the Executive Director can arrange for a presentation to the Finance Committee during the first week of June. Final draft Audited Financial Statements are to be provided by June 10th to the Executive Director. The Annual General Meeting is typically the second or last week of June.

The auditors are required to attend two (2) meetings at Shkoday each year:

1. A finance committee meeting to discuss preliminary audit findings the first week of June
2. The Annual General Meeting in late June to present the statements and respond to questions and potentially be reappointed by the membership.

The successful auditor will also be expected to serve as a resource and be available for questions on accounting and related issues throughout the fiscal year.

PROCESS:

Distribution of this Request for Tenders will occur by January 15, 2021 and will be issued by:

- 1) notice to potential auditors and auditing firms as identified by Shkoday
- 2) publication on the following websites:
Shkoday (www.shkoday.com)

All inquiries should be submitted to: mjunnila@shkoday.com

All proposals must include:

- A cover letter signed by a signatory that is authorized by the auditing firm to engage bids and binds the firm;
- An overview of the firm: Describe your firm's experience in providing auditing services;
- Provide evidence of the firm's qualification to provide the services outlined in the scope of audit.
- Provide evidence of the firm working with Indigenous people and organizations.

Scope of Audit:

- Indicate your firm's expertise in non-profit legislation, provincial and federal funding, accounting systems and any other services you feel would be beneficial to Shkoday;
- Describe your team's experience in auditing
- Provide references from at least three (3) current comparable not-for-profit clients (of a similar size and audit scope). This should include contact person's full name, name of the company title, e-mail address, phone number and year that audit services were provided; and
- Provide information related to the size and organizational structure of your firm.

Audit Team

- Provide names of the partner/audit manager, and field staff who will be assigned to Shkoday's audit file and provide biographies; and
- Provide the firm's history regarding staff continuity at the partner and senior staff level and its experience with other clients similar in nature to Shkoday in this regard.

Audit Approach

- Describe the audit processes and techniques used by your firm; Indicate your expectations of Shkoday before, during and after the audit; and
- Propose a timeline for fieldwork and final reporting that fits within the scope and details of this RFP.

Audit Fees

- The term of engagement begins with respect to the 2021-2022 fiscal audit year (ending March 31, 2022) with an option to extend based on membership approval annually at each AGM.
- Provide proposed fee structure for estimated hours, rates and fees by each of the team members, including any assurances that can be given regarding fees in future years, and the maximum fee that would be charged over the next 3 years.
- Describe your billing rates and procedures for technical questions that may come up during the year, or whether these occasional services are covered in the proposed fee structure.
- Indicate any additional services that the firm can provide that might be beneficial to Shkoday and the fee schedule that would apply.

Terms and Conditions

- Each firm shall affirm that the tender submitted meets the stated period of irrevocability for at least 60 days from the closing date.
- In the event that more tenders are received than anticipated, Shkoday reserves the right to short list proposals.
- Preference may be given to Certified Indigenous business firm or those firms utilizing Indigenous people on this file.
- Shkoday provides notice that all information collected under this tender will remain on file at Shkoday and any confidential information supplied to the organization may be disclosed by the organization where it is obliged to do so under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) or otherwise required by law.

- Any fees related to the preparation of the RFT by the firm, including travel, food, and/or other expenses to participate in a meeting with the organization will not be reimbursed by Shkoday.
- All firms are requested to certify that the firm does not currently have any outstanding liability claims that may affect the future health of the firm. Additionally, the firm must maintain and confirm sufficient liability insurance relevant for a client of our size.
- Firms responding to this RFT must not have any personal or business interest that would present an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest with the performance of the contract to be awarded.
- This RFT will be retained according to the records retention policy of the organization as is legislated. If during the next 3-year period, another auditor is required, this tender may be reopened and the second successful proponent in this competition may be called upon to fulfill a vacancy.

Delivery of Proposal:

All tenders will be required to be delivered in both electronic and hard copy and must be received before or by 4 PM EST January 31, 2022. Proposals are to be delivered electronically to:

Marilyn Junnila, Executive Director
1610 John Street Road
Thunder Bay, Ontario P7G 1J9
mjunnila@shkoday.com

Bids received after the closing date and time will be returned unopened.