



Request for Proposals

Mapping International Partnerships for Atlantic Canada's Blue/Green Economies

RFP Release Date: October 14, 2021
Proposal Due Date: October 28, 2021

Objective:

The objective of this project is to enhance Atlantic Canada's ability to engage strategically with key organizations in Northern Europe – e.g., industry groups, research and development institutions, innovation clusters, and investment groups.

Background:

Conversations around concepts like energy transition, net zero, decarbonization, circular economy, etc. are intensifying globally at a rapid rate. As a result of this growing interest in environmental sustainability, more attention is being paid to the protection of earth's oceans.

Oceans industries are vitally important to the Atlantic Canadian economy. These industries operate in international markets and as such need to be prepared to thrive in a world where investments and decisions are increasingly being made based on environmental performance indicators. Meanwhile, environmental technologies and expertise developed in Atlantic Canada by and for these industries are seeing opportunities for international business development and export expand.

An important enabler of sustained international business at the sector level is the development of meaningful relationships with actors in key target markets. Strong international partnerships can help create opportunities for co-innovation, joint ventures, and access to new markets. Industry associations can play an important role in creating and fostering such relationships on behalf of their members and partners. International actors in this regard can include industry groups, research and development institutions, innovation clusters, and investment groups.

As the focus on environmental sustainability with oceans industries continues to intensify, opportunities for new relationships to support the growth of Atlantic Canada's clean technology sector will emerge. However, it is understood that many such relationships already exist between Atlantic Canadian actors and international organizations. Where these relationships exist, they can be strategically leveraged. Where new opportunities are identified, new relationships can be formed.

With a focus on Northern European markets where many synergies exist with Atlantic Canada with respect to oceans industries, the objective of this project is to enhance the ability of econext and its partners to engage strategically with key international organizations. This will be achieved by gaining a better understand of the relationships that already exist between Atlantic Canadian and Northern European organizations and identify new ones that should be formed based on Atlantic Canada's cleantech strengths and opportunities.

Scope of Work

The project partners are open to proponent recommendations with respect to achieving the outlined objectives, but anticipate that the work would include the following activities:

1. *Mapping Organizational Relationships*

Through engagement with a provided list of approximately 20 stakeholders, either individually or through 3-4 workshops of small groups, the consultant will map the organizational relationships that exist between Atlantic Canada and Northern Europe.

2. *Identifying Partnership Priorities*

The consultant will work with econext and its partners to develop a priority list of clean technology subject matters from which future international business partnerships should be pursued. Priorities will be associated with key oceans industries in Atlantic Canada and areas of R&D and private sector expertise in the region. This will be achieved through stakeholder engagement; the consultant will not be required to perform primary research.

3. *Identifying and Prioritizing Partnership Opportunities*

Based on the findings of Task #2, the consultant will identify key partnership opportunities in Northern Europe (e.g., industry groups, research and development institutions, innovation clusters, and investment groups) that are aligned with the established priorities identified.

4. *Recommendations*

Based on the findings from Task #1 and Task #3, the consultant will provide recommendations to econext and its partners on how international business relationships could be strategically pursued by Atlantic Canadian actors. In some cases, this may involve leveraging existing relationships, while in others it may involve new outreach.

Deliverables and Timing

Task #1: The consultant will present their findings to econext and its partners. Feedback will be acquired to inform the subsequent tasks and the project's final report.

Task #2: The consultant will present their findings to econext and its partners. Feedback will be acquired to inform the subsequent tasks and the project's final report.

Task #3 & #4: The consultant will provide a draft report which will be reviewed by econext and its partners, who will in turn provide feedback for inclusion in a final report.

It is anticipated the project will commence on November 1, 2021 and conclude December 31, 2021.

Tasks #1 and #2 can be pursued concurrently as the engagements required are with the same stakeholder groups.

The payment schedule will be negotiated with the successful proponent.

Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Knowledge and experience in relation to the work: demonstrated ability to meet expectations based on completion of similar projects and/or quality of previous works
- Understanding of the scope and objectives of the project: demonstrated comprehension of/adherence to the RFP
- Proposed approach/workplan and schedule
- Knowledge of and experience working with or within Atlantic Canada's clean technology and/or oceans industries
- Price - value of work proposed versus identified costs

Proposal Submissions

The contracting organization for this RFP is econext. A single electronic document is sufficient. The proposal should be no longer than three (3) pages, and be concisely worded with clearly described objectives, methods, timelines, and outcomes. The proposal must acknowledge and fully accept the terms and conditions as laid out in this RFP.

The proposal should feature appendices, including (1) a brief description of the respondent's company and its relevant experience with similar projects, and (2) a description of the relevant work experience of the staff assigned to this project.

The partners are asking proponents to provide their own cost estimates for this project. Price is just one of the criteria that will be used in the evaluation of received proposals. Submissions should include detailed budgets that align with the proposed methodology, project components, and timelines.

The electronic copy of submissions should be in DOC and/or PDF format, and sent to Abbie Hodder, econext's International Business Manager, via email at abbie@econext.ca no later than **October 28, 2021**. Questions from interested applicants can be directed to the same address

Terms and Conditions

- All proposals received will be considered strictly confidential;
- The lowest cost, or any proposal, will not necessarily be accepted;
- Proposed costs must be represented in Canadian dollars;
- No payment will be made for the preparation and submission of proposals for this project;
- No fee will be made on the cost of work incurred to remedy errors or omissions for which the consultant is responsible; and
- econext reserves the right to meet with all, or any, of the applicants during the proposal evaluation stage to clarify information in the submissions and seek additional detail which may be used in the evaluation.