



**TORONTO
LEAD AGENCY**
for infants, children and
youth mental health

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Submission due date:
July 24, 2024

Submission to be addressed to:
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PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Strides Toronto is seeking proposals from individual(s) with expertise in Anti-Human Trafficking in the areas of policy, program design, implementation, and staff training.

ABOUT STRIDES TORONTO:

Strides Toronto is a multi-service organization providing services to young people from birth to age 29 and their families in Toronto. Strides Toronto provides a range of community, residential and treatment services to improve the mental, social, and physical health of infants, children, youth, and their families. We provide individual, group and family interventions that include mental health counselling, autism services, education, outreach and referral, early intervention, day treatment and community support.

Strides Toronto is the Lead Agency for infant, child, and youth mental health in Toronto, named to that role in 2015 by the Ontario Government as one of 31 such agencies in Ontario. In this role, Strides Toronto collaborates with 23 publicly funded infant, child, and youth mental health (ICYMH) core service providers (CSPs) to design and implement system-level improvements that promote access, responsive service delivery and experience, and positive mental health outcomes for young people and families across Toronto's diverse communities. Funding for ICYMH core services in Toronto approaches \$90 million annually.

For more information: <https://stridestoronto.ca/>

VISION: Thriving children, youth, families, and communities.

MISSION: We build strength and resilience with infants, children, youth and families through equitable, accessible, client-driven services, system leadership and advocacy.

2021-2026 STRATEGIC GOALS:

- **Outreach, Visibility and Equity:** All infants, children, youth, and families have equitable access to the culturally safe services they need to thrive.
- **System Leadership and Advocacy:** Improve accessibility of services and address social determinants of health through system planning, partnerships, influencing policy and sharing our expertise.
- **Accessible Services and Connected Pathways:** Every client feels fully supported from the moment they come through the doors, and has clear, connected pathways, both inside and outside of Strides Toronto, for all the services they need, from infancy through young adulthood.
- **Empowering Learning Organization:** Everyone in the organization is engaged in ongoing quality improvement, learning and development, empowered and supported to work at their best, and feels inspired by the impact of their work.
- **Efficient, Technology-Enabled Organization:** Our robust technology, processes and infrastructure support high-quality client experiences and efficient use of resources.

AHT Program

In 2020, the government announced its intention to open new specialized treatment facilities as part of Ontario's Renewed Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy. In fall 2023, Strides Toronto was selected to operate one of these specialized treatment facilities and provide safe housing, day treatment services, trauma-informed counselling, and programming that is tailored to build the civic engagement capacity of adolescents between the ages of 12 – 17 years. The program is in its preliminary stages of development, with those selected through this process becoming part of the team that will support the creation and development of all program requirements before the facility's opening.

Purpose and Proposed Scope of Work

Strides Toronto is seeking an Anti-Human Trafficking (AHT) specialist(s) for three distinct pieces of work. The first is related to the review and development of appropriate agency policies aligned to the recently released MCCSS Quality Standards Framework. The second is a scope of work related to the development of an AHT Service and Treatment Model for a day treatment and live-in treatment program. The third relates to the creation and delivery of a customized training program for the service staff that will support the new services.

The ideal candidate will be knowledgeable about the needs of sex-trafficked youth and the risks and challenges they face. They will bring clinical education and experience and a deep understanding of the policy and training framework needed to provide appropriate support for at-risk youth in a caring and comprehensive residential treatment setting. Lived expertise is considered an asset for this work. Indigeneity, as well as personal and/or work experience with marginalized or racialized communities, is also considered an asset to support this work.

Responsibilities/Deliverables

The program recognizes that it may be difficult to find one individual who can meet all program requirements. Submissions for one or more of the following three scopes of work (see below) will be considered; consortium submissions of a group of complementary service providers will also be accepted.

Part 1: Policy Work

We envision a comprehensive and evidence-based toolkit of policies that meet all relevant legislative requirements and adheres to the new MCCSS Quality Standards Framework to ensure the AHT program and staff have the right foundation and guidance for service design and delivery. The candidate(s) will:

- Undertake a review of relevant existing Strides' policies in the context of Ontario's new MCCSS Quality Standards Framework for children and youth licensed residential services.
- Work with program leadership to amend all existing and relevant policies to ensure compliance and/or alignment to the new quality standards and licensing requirements.
- Apply an evidence-based lens to the development of any new policies required to address risks and processes associated with working with sex-trafficked youth, e.g., harm reduction policies.
- Provide additional expertise and insights into program leadership, via the Standing Advisory group, to help establish and sustain program excellence.

Part 2: AHT Service and Treatment Model

We envision a leading AHT Service and Treatment Model that will set the standard for a comprehensive and client-centered program, delivered by a cohesive interdisciplinary team, and enabled by strong, collaborative partnerships. The candidate(s) will:

- Apply deep clinical knowledge and expertise to the service model design and development.
- In consultation with the internal program team at Strides, lead the creation and/or modification of resources, processes, and procedures required to implement and operationalize the treatment facility.
- Collaborate with Strides leadership to embed the coordination of client care and staff development within the framework of an interdisciplinary team.
- Utilize expertise in the development and/or application of a relevant risk management framework to enhance program design and operational oversight once launched.
- Develop models of treatment that reflect a wide range of treatment modalities, including Trauma-Informed Care, Harm Reduction, CBT, DBT, Somatic therapies, and EMDR.
- Include in the design of the service, a mix of community-based and clinical programming that integrates the specializations of interdisciplinary staff and collaboration with internal and external system partners to design effective referral/pathways to services.
- Apply sector experience in child welfare, Gender-Based Violence, harm reduction, Indigeneity-centred services, and/or AHT services to the program design.
- Embed evidence-informed approaches for the clinical supervision of the interdisciplinary staff team into the program design.
- Design, develop, and implement the service model; collaborate on the development of an evaluation tool for this service.
- Understand and apply the principles and practices of IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility), including Anti-Racist, Anti-Oppressive Practice Principles (ARAOP) in the service design.

Part 3: Training

We envision an interdisciplinary team equipped with comprehensive training to support effective, empathic, responsive, and appropriate care and treatment for clients within a home-like environment, while also ensuring the team is well-equipped to reduce risks to clients' and staff safety at all times. The candidate(s) will:

- Utilize ADDIE (Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, Evaluate) or similar instructional design framework to deliver a comprehensive training program inclusive of the design, development, and delivery of all associated program training needs.
- Demonstrate understanding and ability to develop strong foundational staff competencies to navigate the experience of sex-trafficked youth, their biopsychosocial needs, and the unique challenges of community re-integration.
- Develop a training assessment or evaluation mechanism to ensure staff comprehension and preparedness to work in this treatment setting.
- Develop training evaluation for continual improvement and enhancement of training content.
- Deliver a complete training program in advance of the treatment setting's opening.

Timeline:

We anticipate that Part 1 will take 4 months to complete, with a potential extended contract for the advisory work. Part 2 and Part 3 will take up to 6 months to complete, with final product provided in advance of the treatment setting's opening, currently projected at the end of 2024. The work is anticipated to start in summer 2024.

Written proposals must include:

- A. A description of relevant experiences.
- B. Work plan for the project including activities, timelines and support required from the organization.^[1]
- C. Budget for the project including fees and any expenses.
- D. Curriculum Vitae for the individuals(s) who will be involved in the project.
- E. Contact information for three references able to speak to experience with similar projects. Strides Toronto reserves the right to contact references.

^[1] In planning the work, consultants are encouraged to divide the work into discreet phases, considering the fiscal year of the organization (i.e., April 1 to March 31).

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Experience and Qualifications: (20%)
 - Demonstrated understanding of Anti-Human Trafficking best practices as well as the legislative policy frameworks to support effective program delivery by organizations. [All]
 - Integration and application of IDEA principles in policy, program/service development, and staff training. [All]
 - Relevant experience making recommendations on the application of policy to ensure a sufficient level of clarity for staff, and reducing risk to the agency, while supporting and empowering youth, as applicable. [Part 1]
 - Relevant experience in policy development within the healthcare and social service sector(s), with preference for direct experience in AHT or other related high-risk programs, as applicable. [Part 1]
 - Registered with a professional regulatory body (OCSWSSW, CRPO) [Part 2]
 - AHT program and service development. [Part 2]
 - Coordination of client care within a multi-disciplinary/interdisciplinary team. [Part 2]
 - Designed, implemented, and evaluated clinically based programs. [Part 2]
 - Relevant experience and expertise developing comprehensive training programs, ensuring appropriate and documented clarity for staff that supports and empowers youth while reducing unnecessary risks to the agency, as applicable. [Part 3]
 - Relevant experience in content creation or curriculum development within the healthcare and social service sectors, with preference for direct experience in AHT or other related high-risk programs, as applicable. [Part 3]
 - Knowledge of sex trafficking resources and the child and youth mental health sector. [All]

2. Approach to planning and execution: (20%)
 - Proposed method of completing the work, including timelines, milestones, deliverables, and overall project management.
 - Demonstration of a collaborative approach that is unique, engaging, and interactive in the development of policy, program design, training modules, and training assessments.
3. Overall clarity and conciseness of proposal: (10%)
 - Demonstrated understanding of the requirements of the project
4. Costs including fees and any expenses. (40%)
5. Interviews for short-listed candidates. (10%)

In accordance with Strides Toronto’s Procurement Policy and the Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive, Strides Toronto retains the right to select an individual(s) based on the quality of the proposal, the demonstrable expertise of that consultant(s) and acceptable references. Once the decision has been made, the selected individual(s) and the other bidding consultants will be informed.

Deadline to Submit

Strides is requesting that all proposals be submitted by 5pm on Friday, July 24, 2024.

Summary of Deadlines/Timeframes

Event	Deadlines
RFP Circulated	June 26, 2024
Deadline for written questions and expressing interest to bid to be submitted by consultants to Paul Van de Laar, Vice President, Service Excellence, Strides Toronto: paul.vandelaar@stridestoronto.ca	July 6, 2024
Responses to questions circulated to bidders	July 12, 2024
Proposal due date (5 pm) sent by electronic means to Paul Van de Laar	July 24, 2024

Strides Toronto Privilege:

Strides Toronto reserves the right to proceed and to reject all or any of the proposals. The bidder assumes full liability for all costs incurred in developing the proposal for submission. If Strides Toronto accepts any of the proposals (which it is not obligated to do) the lowest or any fee will not necessarily be accepted and Strides Toronto may, as its sole discretion, consider any other factors it deems appropriate in its sole discretion in awarding the Contract. Strides Toronto may request further clarification of a proposal from the contractor. While Strides Toronto is not obligated to consider proposals which do not strictly comply with its requirements, it nevertheless reserves the right to do so, and specifically reserves the right to waive formalities as its interests may require.