



## Request for Proposals

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Midwifery Forum: Improving Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Care Service across Inuit Nunangat.

### Issuing Office:

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## **Statement of Work**

**Title:** Midwifery Forum: Improving Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Care Service across Inuit Nunangat.

### **Background and Objectives:**

Pauktuutit is the national non-profit organization representing all Inuit women in Canada. Our mandate is to foster a greater awareness of the needs of Inuit women, and to encourage their participation in community, regional and national concerns in relation to health and wellbeing, social, cultural, and economic development.

The need for access to midwifery services in Inuit communities is a crucial finding in the recent engagement sessions held by Pauktuutit in support of the Federal Government's commitment to co-develop Distinctions-Based Health legislation. Due to a lack of access to maternal care services, Inuit women who do NOT have high-risk pregnancies are forced to leave their home communities to give birth. This practice of unnecessary medical evacuation is challenging and dangerous for expectant mothers and their young families. Travelling south or to a regional hospital removes women from their support network at a critical and vulnerable time for their mental and physical health. Furthermore, pregnant mothers often have no choice but to leave their young children behind for extended periods of time, leaving them vulnerable to sexual and/or physical abuse and food insecurity.

Inuit women are not only deprived of sexual and reproductive health rights and traditional methods of care, but also the ability to speak in their first language of Inuktitut. The inability to speak Inuktitut undermines effective communication between a health care provider and an Inuk patient. Consequently, consent required of health care providers before performing medical procedures on a patient is dangerously compromised. This is a contributing factor to anti-Indigenous racism that Inuit women experience in Canada's health care systems.

During Pauktuutit's engagement sessions on the proposed Distinctions-Based Health legislation, participants reported isolation and stress triggered by traumatic birthing experiences in health care centres in the south have led and contributed to mental health struggles among Inuit women before and after labour and delivery. Inuit traditional midwifery knowledge and practices must be integrated into health care service delivery in Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nunavut, and The Northwest Territories where Inuit predominantly live.

Further, Inuit women's sexual and reproductive health is compromised by regulatory limitations that are neither trauma-informed nor culturally appropriate for Inuit. To address these inequities, Pauktuutit is committed to working with partners to develop a **National Inuit Midwifery Framework** that will serve as a roadmap toward the re-integration of midwifery services and education/training programs across Inuit Nunangat. The first step in our journey to achieve concrete progress on this goal begins with a congregation of stakeholders in Winter 2023 for a **National Inuit Midwifery Forum**.

### **Inuit Midwifery National Forum (virtual) Winter 2023**

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is to hire a consultant with subject matter expertise who will work closely with Pauktuutit to plan, coordinate, and manage various aspects of the two-day National Inuit Midwifery Forum. Knowledge of Indigenous midwifery services and health systems in Canada's North are vital, in addition to a strong understanding of Inuit culture.

The Forum will take place virtually to mitigate any risks the COVID-19 pandemic may present. Pauktuutit has tentatively scheduled the Forum for February 2023 - a specific date will be confirmed when all partners have been identified. This Forum will be an important opportunity to gather valuable information, entrench necessary partnerships and identify strategic pathways to develop a multi-year plan for the acceleration, integration, and implementation of midwifery services across Inuit Nunangat. More formally, the four key outcomes for the National Midwifery Forum will be:

- 1) To promote collaboration and "team buy-in" required to achieve systemic change in the delivery of health care services for expectant mothers and their babies in remote communities across Inuit Nunangat.
- 2) Research and data collection to inform the development of the National Midwifery Framework toward the re-integration of midwifery services and education in Inuit Nunangat.
- 3) Formation of Inuit Midwifery Working Group to oversee the development of a National Midwifery Framework.
- 4) Communications strategy to promote the initiative among stakeholders, media, Inuit, and Canadians.

50-75 Representatives from the following stakeholder groups will be invited to attend the National Forum:

- Inuit Midwives;
- Elders and Youth;

- F/P/T and Inuit governments;
- Land Claims Organizations;
- Health executives / administrators;
- Healthcare providers;
- Educators;
- Inuit regional women's organizations; and
- Inuit with lived experiences of the challenges associated with sexual and reproductive health care and services.

Critical to progress will be the establishment of an Inuit Midwifery Working Group born out of the National Forum to advance incremental progress toward the systemic change of culturally informed midwifery services and education available to Inuit women in their communities. The model Pauktuutit is proposing is similar to the National Framework developed by the Canadian Nurses Association to successfully integrate the role of nurse practitioners in healthcare setting across Canada.

### **Scope of Work:**

As the successful consultant, you will be expected to perform the following duties:

#### **Pre-Forum Research (NOV 2022-JAN 2023)**

- Literature review on existing Inuit and Indigenous midwifery knowledge.
- Environmental scan to identify options for creating sustainable midwifery training and education programs.
- Identify key stakeholders and lead partnership development with Provincial/Territorial health service delivery agents in all four Inuit regions.
- Identify any legislative/regulatory barriers to restoring midwifery and birth to Inuit communities in Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nunavut, and The Northwest Territories.
- Data collection associated with medical evacuation due to childbirth across Inuit communities in Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nunavut, and The Northwest Territories.

#### **Forum Planning (DEC 2022 – FEB 2023)**

- Assist with the preparation of forum documents (agenda, research documents, presentations, etc.)
- Assist with the development of a comprehensive stakeholder/participant list including decision makers, and midwives.
- Develop communications plan for pre- and post-forum activities.
- Participate in project meetings via video and teleconferences as required.
- Provide regular progress updates and recommendations as required.

### **Forum Delivery (FEB 2023)**

- Lead/facilitate conversations and deliver presentations as required during the two-day forum.
- Collect participant feedback and information.
- Assist in minute taking where required.

### **Post-Forum Activities (MAR – SEP 2023)**

- Drafting a “what we heard” report from the National Forum, which will inform the development of the National Inuit Midwifery Framework.
- Follow up with stakeholders on Forum action items.
- Assist in formalizing the National Inuit Midwifery working group intended to oversee the development of the Framework.
- Develop a Terms of Reference and inaugural meeting agenda for the National Inuit Midwifery working group.
- Develop a Powerpoint presentation on Midwifery challenges, successes, etc. for Pauktuutit staff to promote this initiative across Canada.

### **The proposals shall be assessed according to the following criteria:**

1. Cost breakdown.
2. Ability to demonstrate empathy and sensitivity towards the subject matter.
3. Consideration of the reality of the North /experience in the north.
4. Cultural safety and competency.
5. Project milestone and deliverable schedule.
6. Originality.
7. Feasibility.
8. Pertinence.
9. Proposed approach and methodology to deliver the scope of work; and
10. A work plan with anticipated project milestone deliverables.

### **Timeline**

The duration of the contract will be from November 2022 to September 2023.

- bids accepted until October 28, 2022
- contract begins November 2022
- completion of deliverables as outlined in contract.

### **Pauktuutit’s Roles and Responsibilities**

The primary contact at Pauktuutit for this project is Shylah Elliott, Senior Policy and Research Advisor, ([selliott@pauktuutit.ca](mailto:selliott@pauktuutit.ca)). Pauktuutit commits to provide the information and materials necessary to complete the work and will respond to requests for information in a timely fashion. Pauktuutit will provide a decision within three business days.

## **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 where such information is obtained through this project.

Pauktuutit and the successful applicant will agree to acknowledge and accord appropriate credit for each other's contribution in this project, including any products developed and disseminated as a result publicly and mutually. Both parties will come to an agreement on how credit is attributed, depending on the nature and degree of each organization's contribution.

It is understood that 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.

It is understood that 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 [selliott@pauktuutit.ca](mailto:selliott@pauktuutit.ca)
- Word format or PDF.
- 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.
- Pauktuutit reserves the right not to award a contract because of this RFP.

## **Budget**

The proposal must demonstrate the following:

- Expertise and experience of the project team who will be assigned to deliver the work (this may be included in the form of CVs).
- Indicate the billing rate.
- List any other expenses that might be applicable; and
- Total bid must include applicable federal and provincial tax rates.

## **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.
- Verify any or all information provided by the bidder with respect to this requirement.

**Contact Information**

Please direct the application to:

Shylah Elliott

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada

520 – 1 Nicholas St. Ottawa, ON K1N 7B7

[selliott@pauktuutit.ca](mailto:selliott@pauktuutit.ca)