

Fondation
canadienne pour
la recherche
en chiropratique



Canadian
Chiropractic
Research
Foundation

Canadian Chiropractic Research Foundation

Request for Tender: 2023-RFT-01

Systematic Review

Closing Date: January 23, 2024 at 11:59 pm Eastern Time



T (416) 585-7902 TF 1(877) 222-9303
184 Front St. East, Suite 200 Toronto, ON M5A 4N3
info@chiroresearch.ca
CanadianChiropracticResearchFoundation.ca

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SECTION 1 – OVERVIEW

1.1 Definitions

The following definitions apply to this document:

Applicant(s):	An individual, group of individuals or an organization that submits, or intends to submit, a proposal in response to this document.
CCRF:	Canadian Chiropractic Research Foundation
Early Career Researcher:	A researcher within five years from the date of their first research-related appointment.
EDI:	An acronym for “Equity, Diversity and Inclusion”. For a definition, please see this link https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/edi-eng.aspx#2 from the Canada Research Coordinating Committee, Government of Canada.
Literature:	Academic writing demonstrating professional knowledge and understanding on a specific topic that may contribute to evidence-based practice.
MSK:	Musculoskeletal
Must/Should:	A mandatory requirement that, if not met, may result in rejection of a proposal.
Project:	The systematic review of literature undertaken within the scope of this Request for Tender.
Research Impact:	Societal, health and economic improvements resulting from the publication of effective peer-reviewed research.
RFT:	Request for Tender, including any and all addenda. Used interchangeably with “document”.
Services:	Work associated with the Project.

1.2 Summary of Requirements

Applicant must meet the criteria listed below and possess the necessary knowledge, skills and experience to complete the project.

- Lead researcher possesses a PhD
- Lead researcher is a Canadian citizen, as described in the Citizenship Act
- Research team must include (a) international and (b) inter-professional members
- Submissions must be complete, received by the Closing Date and include all required appendices and attachments
- Submissions to be signed by (a) the Applicant or (b) an authorized representative of Applicant or, if the Applicant is an organization or corporation, (c) signed by an authorized signing officer
- A confirmation the Applicant, its employees, officers, associates and/or approved subcontractors do not and will not have any conflict of interest (actual or potential)

1.3 Summary of Preferences

Applicant may benefit by considering the following preferred, but not mandatory, criteria:

- Research team's inclusion of Early Career Researchers (provide qualification information)
- Research team's commitment to EDI best practices in research team selection and engagement

1.4 About CCRF

CCRF is a registered Canadian charity committed to the perpetual funding of research that improves MSK health and related areas of wellbeing. Studies that deliver Research Impact are of particular importance.

The foundation is organized along four main functional areas, represented by our (1) Governance & Management, (2) Fundraising, (3) Partnership and (4) Investment Committees. The Research Committee is responsible for evaluating all RFT proposals with final decisions approved by the CCRF board.

CCRF appreciates the funding it receives from individuals, partners and associations. However, our foundation maintains an arm's length relationship with all funders and CCRF is the sole decision-maker regarding grant or project awards.

1.5 RFT Invitation

CCRF is encouraging prospective Applicants to submit proposals to complete all services related to this project.

For this RFT, CCRF plans to contract with one provider. The agreement between the successful Applicant and CCRF will be based on final project delivery on or before September 30, 2024; however, CCRF has the sole discretion to extend the delivery date. Should specific needs be identified or conditions change during the course of the project, then an extension agreement may be provided by CCRF in cooperation with the successful Applicant.

If you are interested in providing this service for CCRF, please submit your completed proposal before the Closing Date. Please review this document for complete instructions and an explanation of the process.

1.6 RFT Purpose

The purpose of this Project is to conduct an exhaustive systematic review of literature (applicant will need to define the parameters within which their search will be conducted, including language restrictions, if any) to ascertain if there is an association between cervical spinal manipulation and ischemic stroke. Furthermore, if it is determined such an association exists, does the evidence support that the association is causal?

1.7 RFT Scope

The following project delivery elements is a guide for Applicants. However, Applicants may recommend modifications, deletions or additions based on their background, knowledge and experience.

- Identification and evaluation of existing related registry reviews and protocols
- Definition of inclusion/exclusion criteria
- Conduct comprehensive searches across all appropriate databases
- Screen and select studies for inclusion using appropriate screening methodologies
- Enter and extract data using appropriate software tools
- Assess the risk of bias using appropriate software tools, which can be adapted as required
- Present search strategies, method and results that can be replicated and updated in the future
- Provide recommendations including ideas for future research
- Ensure the following questions are answered as comprehensively as possible:
 - Is there an association between cervical spinal manipulation and ischemic stroke?
 - If there is an association, does the evidence support that the association is causal?
- Ensure results are submitted for publication in a recognized, open-source, peer-reviewed journal

SECTION 2 – GUIDANCE

2.1 Instructions

Submissions will include all information as specified in this document. Applicants are not required to return any section(s) of this document in the proposal. Applicants are solely responsible for the delivery of their proposal in the manner and time prescribed.

All proposals must be received in their entirety by the Closing Date. Proposals, or any portion of a proposal, received after the Closing Date will not be opened or considered. Submitted proposals shall remain open for acceptance and are irrevocable for a period of 90 days after the Closing Date.

2.2 Provisions

This RFT and associated documentation is proprietary information, and must not be used other than for the submission of proposals. CCRF information obtained by participation in any aspect of this RFT is confidential and shall not be disclosed without prior written CCRF authorization.

CCRF strives to ensure the accuracy of all RFTs issued, however, this does not guarantee or warrant accuracy. Nothing in this invitation is intended to relieve Applicants from forming their own opinions and conclusion with respect to matters addressed in any CCRF issued RFT.

Proposal errors or omissions are the Applicant's responsibility. Submitted proposals may be amended prior to the Closing Date by submitting a completely new proposal and requesting that the previous submission be withdrawn. Proposals improperly signed, conditional, incomplete, illegible or irregular may be declared ineligible.

Proposals submitted become the property of CCRF. By submitting, Applicant hereby grants CCRF a license to distribute, copy, print or translate the proposal for the sole purposes of administering this RFT. Any attempt to limit CCRF's right in this area may result in rejection of the proposal.

The financial value of a contract resulting from this RFT will be publicly released as part of the award notification process.

By submitting a proposal, each Applicant irrevocably waives any claim, action or proceeding against CCRF, including, without limitation, any judicial review or injunction application, or against CCRF's employees, volunteers, advisors or other representatives for damages, expenses or costs including costs of proposal preparation, loss of profits, loss of opportunity or any consequential loss for any reason including: any actual or alleged unfairness on the part of CCRF at any stage of the procurement process; if CCRF does not award or execute a contract; or if CCRF is subsequently determined to have accepted a non-compliant proposal or otherwise breached or fundamentally breached the terms of this procurement.

By submitting a proposal, the Applicant agrees to any required disclosure of the information supplied, subject to the provisions of law applicable to a Canadian charitable organization. CCRF shall not be liable to any Applicant for any claim, either direct or indirect, whether for costs, expenses, losses or damages, or loss of anticipated income or profits, or for any other matter whatsoever incurred by the Applicant as a result of disclosure pursuant to any applicable privacy act(s) or other associated legislation.

A successful Applicant must declare any conflict of interest with any contractual obligations under the agreement. If, at the sole and absolute discretion of CCRF, the Applicant, its employees, officers, associates and/or approved subcontractors is found by CCRF to be in an actual or perceived conflict of interest, either during the RFT or after award of the contract, CCRF may, in addition to other remedies available at law or in equity, disqualify the proposal submitted by the Applicant or terminate the agreement.

Subcontracting to any organization or individual whose current or past corporate, institutional or other interests may, in CCRF's opinion, give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest in connection with this RFT will not be permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, any firm or individual involved in the preparation of this RFT.

2.3 Questions and Information Requests

Questions should be provided (a) in writing by email to info@chiroresearch.ca, (b) be received by CCRF before **January 9, 2024 at 11:59 pm Eastern Time** and (c) reference the specific RFT section and (d) include Applicant's contact information.

If CCRF considers an answer to the question may assist in the preparation of proposals by all applicants, CCRF will post an addendum on the CCRF website which will become part of the RFT. CCRF may not answer a question if CCRF considers the information requested is not required, or where the answer to the questions posed may be found in the RFT.

CCRF may at their discretion, request additional data, discussions, presentations or on-site visits in support of the proposal, all without obligation to provide other RFT recipients with similar information or notice of such communication. Additionally, CCRF reserves the rights to implement appropriate due diligence processes to confirm or clarify any information provided, or to collect more evidence of managerial, financial or technical abilities.

2.4 Acceptance

CCRF reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, any or all proposals. CCRF reserves the right to waive any irregularities or non-compliance where such factors are not of a material nature, as determined by CCRF in its sole and absolute discretion.

CCRF, in its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, to select a proposal that is not the highest score bid, and to refuse any proposal that does not meet the information or timing requirements of this RFT.

CCRF, in its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to cancel this RFT without award. CCRF is not bound to award a contract to any Applicant. The awarding of the contract(s), if any, shall be at CCRF's sole discretion.

If CCRF does not receive compliant and acceptable proposals in response to the RFT, CCRF reserves the right to enter into negotiations with one or more of the Applicants, or with any other party it deems appropriate, in order to complete the aims of this project.

A proposal may not be eligible for acceptance if current or past corporate, organizational, or other interests of the Applicant or the Applicant's key personnel may, in CCRF's sole opinion, give rise to a conflict of interest.

CCRF reserves the right to disqualify any Applicant if the Applicant or the Applicant's personnel have either breached an agreement and/or failed to provide satisfactory service and/or deliveries under any prior agreement with CCRF, in the sole opinion of CCRF.

The Applicant or their organization or institution, may be required to demonstrate financial stability, or otherwise clarify capability to satisfy the RFT requirements. CCRF reserves the right to reject a proposal from any Applicant it believes incapable of providing the necessary labour, materials, tools, equipment, financing or other resources to perform under the requirements of this RFT.

2.5 Contract

CCRF shall not be obligated to any Applicant until a written agreement has been duly executed related to an approved proposal. Any awards made pursuant to this RFT process are subject to the execution of a written agreement which is acceptable to CCRF.

To be eligible to provide services to CCRF, the successful Applicant shall execute a written agreement with CCRF, within a time limit established by CCRF, to perform the services (see Section 5).

2.6 Closing and Delivery

RFT closing date is:

January 23, 2024 at 11:59 pm Eastern Time

Applicants are required to deliver and ensure proposals are received at: info@chiroresearch.ca. Fax proposals will not be accepted.

Claims made by the Applicant in the proposal will constitute contractual warranties, Any provision in the proposal may, in CCRF’s sole discretion, be included as a provision of the agreement between CCRF and the successful Applicant. In the case of conflict between the written agreement between CCRF and the successful Applicant and the RFT and proposal, the terms of the written agreement shall prevail.

2.7 Time Frame

The following timeline outline the estimated schedule for this RFT process. Note: the timing and the sequence of events resulting from this document may vary.

DESCRIPTION	DATE
RFT Issue Date	October 16, 2023
Deadline for Questions	January 9, 2024
Proposals to be receive by:	January 23, 2024 at 11:59 pm Eastern time
Presentation of proposals (if required)	February 26-March 1, 2024
Estimated Date of Award	March 14, 2024

2.8 General

The successful Applicant is required to accept CCRF’s grant disbursement requirements. This RFT, all proposals, and any agreements will be construed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Province of Ontario, Canada.

2.9 IP and Branding

No Applicant shall use CCRF’s logo or make references to this RFT in any advertising copy or other promotional materials or messages without CCRF’s prior written consent.

SECTION 3 – FORMAT

The following information is provided to assist Applicants with providing appropriate response information:

File:	Single PDF document
Cover Letter:	Identify the RFT description. Provide your name and organizations name (as applicable), address, telephone number and email address. Identify the lead Applicant and or representative responsible for your proposal.
Table of Contents	List all topics and associated pages for easy reference
Profile & Background:	If representing an organization, provide a brief introduction and an overview of your organization's or department's background and profile.
Conflict of Interest:	Each proposal must include a confirmation that the Applicant, its employees, officer, associates and/or approved subcontractors do not and will not have any conflict of interest (actual or potential) in submitting its proposal, or, if selected, in providing services under the agreement. If applicable, Applicant must declare in its proposal any situation that may be a conflict of interest or, if selected, with the contractual obligations of the Applicant as supplier under the agreement.
Privacy/Confidentiality:	Provide policies, practices and tools for protecting privacy, confidentiality and security of information.
Response:	The Applicant must provide a clear and concise description indicating an understanding of the service, their role in the service, and an overview of how the Applicant will undertake the project.
Team:	Provide a summary of the professional team members and the resources available to execute the required work. Identify the number, availability, and roles of individuals intended to be assigned to perform the services and describe how they meet the required criteria and, as appropriate, preferred criteria, as outlined in Section 1.
Resumes:	Provide a resume of not more than three pages outlining education and work experience for each team member who will be involved.
Addition Value Elements:	Provide any additional information that would enhance your and/or you team's ability to provide the service. This may include affiliations, resource, specialized personnel or services.
Previous Experience:	Describe your organization's experience related to the RFT request. Provide references that CCRF may contact as part of the assessment process (optional).
Timeline and Budget:	Outline major milestones and provide a projected completion date along with an itemized budget.

SECTION 4 – ASSESSMENT

4.1 Evaluation

Accepted proposals will be evaluated by CCRF's Research Committee, who will be guided by the PRISMA 2020 expanded checklist (see http://prisma-statement.org/documents/PRISMA_2020_expanded_checklist.pdf). Research Committee recommendations will be made to the CCRF board, who have final decision-making authority.

The intent is to enter into an agreement with the Applicant that is assessed to be most qualified and capable of fulfilling the terms of the RFT in a timely manner.

The Research Committee may require clarification from Applicants to assist in making its evaluation. If required, such clarification is projected to take place via email correspondence.

4.2 Presentations

Subsequent to evaluating the proposals, CCRF may select Applicants to meet with the Research Committee and/or Executive Director. The meeting may include both an online presentation by the Applicant and/or a question and answer session to clarify the Applicant's proposal. A period of one week will be given to prepare for the presentation. Applicant will be responsible for all expenses incurred in preparing and delivering the presentation.

4.3 Results Notice

CCRF will notify both the successful and unsuccessful Applicants in writing. Unsuccessful Applicants may be notified following the award to the successful Applicant. If the selected Applicant becomes unable or unwilling to complete the agreement, or becomes unable to provide the required services, CCRF at its sole discretion may enter into negotiations with one or more of the other Applicants, or with any other party in order to obtain the service.

SECTION 5 – AGREEMENT

5.1 Template

CCRF will provide the successful Applicant with a standardized agreement outlining services, scope of work, general terms and conditions, confidentiality requirements, payment schedule and reporting requirements. The agreement will be signed by authorized representatives of CCRF and the Applicant and where necessary, their institution.

5.2 Alternative Clauses

Requests by Applicant for alternatives clauses related to the above template will be considered on a case-by-case basis. However, some provisions addressing legal, IP or regulatory matters may not be considered for amendment.