



3 Taylor Road, Bracebridge, ON P1L 1S6
1-800-835-7303
Algonquin Park, Almaguin Highlands, Loring-Restoule, Muskoka,
Parry Sound & South Algonquin
www.explorersedge.ca



Expression of Interest: Training & Curriculum Development

RTO12 is one of 13 regional tourism organizations established by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport. Known by its consumer-facing name of “Explorers’ Edge,” RTO12 represents six sub-regions in Ontario: Algonquin Park, the Almaguin Highlands, Loring-Restoule, Muskoka, west Parry Sound district, and South Algonquin. The company is an independent, not-for-profit, destination development organization that is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors.

The organization is supported by the provincial government with a \$1.1 million annual transfer payment agreement and is responsible for measurable outcomes in multiple areas: Governance, Investment Attraction, Industry Relations, Workforce Development, Product Development and Consumer Marketing.

Company Mission (from the 3-Year Regional Tourism Strategy, 2023-2026): *To steward the regional tourism industry’s recovery, rebuild and renewal by developing innovative regenerative programs to ensure long-term sustainability and success for all stakeholders.*

To review the 3-year Regenerative Strategy, [click here](#).

The Project:

In the upcoming fiscal year (April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025), RTO12 embark on significant development of a rural, work-integrated training program to develop a sustainable workforce for the regional tourism and hospitality sector. The project will include the development of transitional housing to accommodate participants. The program is intended to improve social outcomes for multiple community stakeholders, while filling critical labour gaps within the sector. This project is known informally at the “Catalyst Housing” program.

The Foundational Framework for the development of the work-integrated training and housing project in different local communities is the same, while organic development of the program may differ depending on locale-specific needs and assets. The Foundational Framework contains the following elements, which are mostly sequential:

1. Determine specific labour gaps per locale
2. Determine unemployed and underemployed populations that may be elevated through job in tourism
3. Determine existing and needed training to build a sustainable regional tourism workforce (including technology and strategic delivery methods)

4. Determine businesses that would like to participate as partners in the program (and be given housing unit access for their employees)
5. Create a highly-networked eco-system to build the training and housing
6. Plan for long-term success

Explorers' Edge is seeking a training and/or HR expert to assist in the development of training to serve potential participant segments that will also fill the critical labour gaps faced by the global tourism and hospitality sector.

The Training & Curriculum Development provider will be integral to the managing areas 2-5 of the Foundational Framework. Additional items of responsibility will include:

- Researching innovative delivery and tracking models for measuring success of all participants (tech, apps, AI, etc.)
- Making recommendations for pertinent HR policies pertaining to training
- Assisting in the development of specific training policies

Requirements:

Knowledge of the region is essential, and the winning bidder will be expected to meet with the RTO12 team on-site in the region throughout the course of any collaboration.

Knowledge of the RTO model and the provincial tourism and hospitality sector is not essential, though it will be expected over the course of the EOI process and in order for interested parties to ultimately be considered.

Timeline:

RTO12 is subject to annual funding by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport and, as such, cannot commence work on the new higher yield strategy until the next fiscal year (starts April 1, 2024).

Budget:

Also subject to annual funding, RTO12 is required to wait for final approval of the Draft 2024-2025 Business & Operational Plan by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport before committing to a budget for this program. Once the budget has been determined, interested parties will be informed.

Expectations for Future Work:

It is expected that the winning bidder will work with RTO12 staff over a 6-month probationary period to ensure a good fit between the organization and the service provider, and then potentially move to AOR status.

Next Steps:

Explorers' Edge invites interested parties to provide an Expression of Interest (EOI) to fill the role of Training & Curriculum Development provider.

Please forward by February 16, 2024 an Expression of Interest letter in PDF format via email to:

Kate Monk
VP, Strategy & Corporate Programs
RTO12/Explorers' Edge
Email: Kate@explorersedge.ca

Please indicate the following in your EOI:

- Name of Company
- Location
- Name and role of EOI respondent
- Full-service agency or principal with sub-contractors?
- Synopsis of acumen and proven success pertaining to requirements listed above
- Relevant past clients
- Rationale for submitting an EOI for this project (be specific)
- Preferred payment framework
- What you like in a client – your expectations
- Any additional insights you would like to provide

RTO12 staff will acknowledge all submissions. All submissions will be received in confidence.

If you have questions or would like further information, please email Kate@explorersedge.ca. Inquiries will not be responded to until starting the week of January 29, 2024.

Thank you very much for your interest in working with RTO12/Explorers' Edge!