Request for Proposals: Empowerment Evaluation Consultant

<u>Pathways to Digital Access and Education Project 2.0</u>

<u>Empowerment Evaluation</u>

Burnaby Neighbourhood House is seeking a consultant to conduct an Empowerment Evaluation of the **Pathways to Digital Access and Education Project 2.0** funded by the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada from **October 2023 to March 2025**.

<u>Background</u>

Burnaby Neighbourhood House (BNH) is a non-profit organization offering a wide range of supportive programs and services that address the diverse needs of local residents. BNH continues to respond to community needs through a very successful Digital Literacy Education Program that ensures vulnerable residents have learning and access to the Digital World. Located on the traditional, unceded territories of the Coast Salish Nations, we are a volunteer driven community-funded agency with a unique focus on neighbours supporting neighbours.

<u>Location</u>

The project will take place at existing Burnaby Neighbourhood House locations in Burnaby.

<u>Project Objectives</u>

Pathways to Digital Access and Education builds on the successful and close working relationship among the Burnaby Neighbourhood House (BNH), the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University (SFU), and the University of British Columbia Learning Exchange (UBCLE). BNH currently offers digital cafes that provide just-in-time volunteer support to adults who struggle with everyday digital tasks. The project will aim to increase digital learning and internet access for underserviced groups. (This has been identified as low-income; seniors; newcomers; low literacy; indigenous, persons with disabilities). The project will respond in particular to increasing knowledge and experience around:

a) Digital skills for employment (word processing, resume writing, and applying online) tailored to people with low literacy skills in French or English, and/or speakers of languages other than English and French
b) Privacy protection and internet safety
c) Data literacy (e.g. understanding digital data) and
d) Gender discrimination and its impact on the use of technology

The Project Objectives of "Pathways to Digital Access and Education" are:

1. To update existing curricula in the following areas of digital literacy education: digital skills for employment, privacy and internet safety, and develop new curricula on data literacy as well as gender discrimination

2. To build training capacity (a train-the-trainer model) in the Burnaby Neighbourhood House to support ongoing sustainability

3. To hire trained multilingual peer digital educators to deliver workshops in the aforementioned digital literacy education areas to underserviced groups in Burnaby and New Westminster

4. To increase internet access and knowledge of computers by increasing the number of on-site BNH digital cafe sessions at the South House, the North House and at Brentwood and offering outreach sessions. To hire and train multilingual volunteers to supervise and support the on-site and outreach sessions which provide internet access and one-to-one learning support to address individualized learning needs

5. To help Canadians connect to and use the internet for important parts of their daily activities, including video calls, online shopping and general internet usage. To ensure more Canadians are connected to and use the internet safely and have the knowledge to better control the use of their personal data and interactions with businesses and marketers

6. To create a sustainable model of Digital Literacy Education by sharing resources that are developed by the project with other groups and embedding this digital education within existing literacy classes for low-income adults and language classes for newcomers

7. Engage in empowerment evaluation, a research approach that identifies strengths, challenges and opportunities in the project as it unfolds, so that stakeholders can respond in a timely way that leads to more sustainable outcomes

Evaluation Focus

The primary goal of the Pathways to Digital Education Project 2.0 is to:

- Increase internet usage and participation in the digital economy
- Reach underrepresented groups
- Increase confidence and improve skills in using digital technologies

Empowerment Evaluation (EE) will inform and measure the project's outlined deliverables and outcomes and will inform the partners' understanding of the impact of their work and the necessary responses to increase impact.

The projects will be supported to use shared measurement practices, tools and data systems to allow for genuine and evolving evaluation of impact. EE methods are adopted so that impacts and issues related to the project design, curricula, teaching strategies and outreach can be shared with project trainers and staff, especially in the pre-formative stage. This will influence refinement and experimentation of approaches within the activities provided.

EE methodologies may include surveys, interviews, focus groups, personal journals, and observation. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected.

We seek an evaluation proposal that adheres to an EE methodology for a 1.5-year period that will facilitate:

1. The creation of an evaluation framework
2. Collaboration with a partner steering committee member to identify what and how measurements will take place
3. The creation of shared tools and systems for measuring performance of the project
4. Tracking and supporting learning and progress and evaluating the effectiveness of the overall plan.

Selection Criteria

The successful consultant will demonstrate:

A. Experience working with community-based non-profit agencies
B. Project management expertise
- Ability to build strong client and stakeholder relationships based on trust, effective rapport and communication
- Experience and comfort facilitating group learning processes with diverse organizations, and/or collaborations
- Principles that articulate a commitment to best practices

C. Evaluation expertise.
- Experience with multiple evaluation methods and approaches and in particular Empowerment Evaluation
- Strong background in performance measurement
- Evidence of solid performance and reliability in past Empowerment evaluation projects
- Ability to identify themes, synthesize information, and generate insights in real-time
- Excellent writing and organizational skills

Contents of the proposal

The proposal should be concise and include the following components:

1. Experience of the consultant with similar projects
2. Experience of the consultant with similar client groups
3. Preliminary description of methodology and implementation plan:

    Please provide the following:

a) A description of the proposed methods/tools/information sources to be used to conduct the evaluation
b) A description of how each of the proposed methods/tools/information sources will achieve project objectives
c) A detailed work plan, including tasks, timelines, and responsibilities. The consultant will include, at minimum, the following tasks:

- Creation of an evaluation framework for the project
- Two meetings with the planning committee per year of the project
- Develop measurement tools, focus group questions and procedures
- Conduct focus groups and/or phone interviews with stakeholders (participants, partners, volunteers, digital educators, program staff)
- Generate five impact stories annually to showcase the project's success and highlight its positive impact on stakeholders
- Meet with Peer Digital Educators to gather feedback on workshop content, delivery, and effectiveness
- Interim reports (semi-annually) and final report

3. **Project Budget**: $18,000 for the duration of the project

Please submit a precise breakdown of the costs of activities outlined in the proposed approach and within the annual budgets including anticipated mileage and incidental expenses.

4. **Proposal Submission**

Interested consultants must submit their proposals to **literacy@burnabynh.ca** by **Oct 20, 2023**.

Proposals should include:

- Cover page with authorized representative's signature
- Detailed response addressing the RFP's objectives and requirements

We thank everyone for their interest. Only those shortlisted will be contacted