REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Business Case and Feasibility Study (Contracted Services)

Time-bound engagement: November 2026 to April 2027

Key Information

RFP Reference Number	WSB-WC-2026-BC-001
Date of Issue	November 25th, 2026
Closing Date/Time	4:00 PM (Pacific), December 7th, 2026
Number of Contracts	One (1) — individual consultant or consulting team
Department	W̱SÁNEĆ College
Engagement Type	Independent contractor / fixed-term consulting services
Eligibility	Open — individual consultants and firms
Submit documents to	Kendra Underwood kunderwood@wsanecschoolboard.ca

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 About W̱SÁNEĆ College

W̱SÁNEĆ College is a post-secondary institution established by the W̱SÁNEĆ School Board to serve the educational needs of the four W̱SÁNEĆ Nations: Tsartlip (W̱JOŁEŁP), Pauquachin (BOḰEĆEN), Tsawout (SȾÁUTW̱), and Tseycum (W̱SÍ,K̲EM). W̱SÁNEĆ College is located on the Saanich Peninsula on the traditional territories of the W̱SÁNEĆ peoples on Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

1.2 Governance and Relationship to the W̱SÁNEĆ School Board

W̱SÁNEĆ College operates under the authority of the W̱SÁNEĆ School Board, which is governed by representatives of the four W̱SÁNEĆ Nations. The School Board is responsible for the delivery of education programs and services across the W̱SÁNEĆ community, from early learning through post-secondary education. W̱SÁNEĆ College serves as the School Board's post-secondary service provider, offering certificate, diploma, and degree programs in

partnership with Camosun College and the University of Victoria, and is grounded in W̱SÁNEĆ culture, language, and ways of knowing.

1.3 Community Served

The four W̱SÁNEĆ Nations are Coast Salish peoples whose territory encompasses the Saanich Peninsula, the surrounding waters, and the Gulf and San Juan Islands. W̱SÁNEĆ College exists to advance the educational aspirations of primarily W̱SÁNEĆ community members, and also local First Nations, Indigenous, and non-Indigenous students, to support the revitalization and transmission of SENĆOŦEN language, cultural knowledge, and self-determined governance.

2. Letter of Invitation

The W̱SÁNEĆ School Board, on behalf of W̱SÁNEĆ College, invites qualified consultants and firms to submit proposals to lead a time-bound business case and feasibility study for W̱SÁNEĆ College. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued in accordance with the W̱SÁNEĆ School Board Capital Projects, Tendering, and Service Contracts Policy (Section 260.8).

We are preparing W̱SÁNEĆ College for its next stage of growth. This study will tell us which programs we can grow, what that growth requires in students, staff, space, and cost, and what structures the College needs to plan for growth as a post-secondary institution.

The consultant will lead the feasibility study and business case, with the College Director and Associate Director steering. We will use the business case to support lobbying and advocacy efforts locally, regionally and provincially. The engagement is contracted services; it is not an employment position and does not confer employee status or benefits.



3. Statement of Work Required

The successful proponent will deliver the following scope of work, steered by the College Director and Associate Director:

3.1 Review Comparable Models

- Review comparable models, including IAHLA member institutes and other Indigenous-controlled post-secondary institutions, for governance, funding, and relationship to a parent body.
- Identify the options and lessons most relevant to W̱SÁNEĆ College and its relationship to the W̱SÁNEĆ School Board.
- Name where the College differs from the Board's other three Schools in HR, qualifications, faculty roles, workload, and organizational structure.

3.2 Document Current Parameters

- Document the College's current parameters: funding sources (including tuition collection and the amount charged), enrolment, staffing, space, governance limits, and financial flow through the W̱SB.
- Work with College leadership, the Registrar, the Board finance team, and HR to gather and confirm this information.

3.3 Evaluate Potential Programs and Build Growth Scenarios

- Evaluate current and potential programs against community demand and learner pathways; fit with W̱SÁNEĆ values, SENĆOŦEN language revitalization, and land-based learning (ÁLEṈENEƇ); partnership and credential pathways; cost and revenue; and eligibility for provincial core funding, tuition waivers, and student loans.
- Build growth scenarios covering programs, students, staff, space, and cost.
- Identify what year-round operation requires: staffing, leave, and scheduling built for a post-secondary calendar, not the K-12 year.

3.4 Financial Structure and Business Case

- Assess financial structure options for the College operating as a 'business' inside a larger organization.
- Prepare a plain-language business case suitable for lobbying and advocacy at the local, regional and provincial levels.
- Meet with the Director and Associate Director at least every two weeks, brief the Exec team, and present findings to the Board.

4. Required Qualifications

Proponents must demonstrate the following minimum qualifications:

- Demonstrated experience preparing business cases and feasibility studies for post-secondary institutions, First Nations, or public-sector organizations.

- Familiarity with IAHLA (Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association) and the First Nations-controlled post-secondary landscape in British Columbia, including FNESC and provincial funding for Indigenous institutes.
- Knowledge of Community-based programming and partnerships among Public Post-secondary institutions and First Nations or First Nation-mandated institutions
- Experience in financial analysis and modelling, including enrolment, staffing, space, cost, and revenue scenarios.
- Experience working with First Nations governments or organizations in a way that respects community governance, protocol, and self-determination.
- Ability to deliver on fixed timelines, with clear, plain-language reporting.

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience working with W̱SÁNEĆ communities or other Coast Salish Nations.
- Knowledge of post-secondary program approval, accreditation, and partnership models in British Columbia.
- Experience with Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills funding and reporting.
- An Indigenous-owned or Indigenous-led firm, or team members with lived experience in Indigenous post-secondary education.

Proponent Preference

Preference may be given to qualified proponents that are W̱SÁNEĆ-owned or -led, followed by those that are owned or led by other Indigenous people.

5. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a Selection Committee based on the proponent's qualifications, fit with our College, proposal quality, and a clear, attainable timeline. Shortlisted proponents may be invited to an interview. The proponent who best meets the evaluation criteria shall be recommended to receive the contract, subject to W̱SÁNEĆ School Board approval.

6. Deliverables and Timeline

This is a time-bound engagement. The successful proponent will deliver the following:

Phase 1: Foundations

- Project start and kickoff with the Director and Associate Director: December 2026.
- Financial structure options (draft): mid to late December, 2026.
- Comparable models review: early January, 2027.
- Current parameters documented: mid January, 2027.

Phase 2: Growth Scenarios and Full Report

- Program evaluation and growth scenarios: March 31, 2027.
- Final business case and feasibility report, with presentations to the Exec team and Board: April, 2027.

Proposals must show how the proponent will meet these dates. Any change to the timeline requires written agreement with the College.

7. Submission Requirements

Only proposals containing the following will be considered:

- Cover letter and proposal describing the proponent's understanding of the scope and their approach and methodology.
- A detailed work plan and schedule showing how the proponent will meet each deliverable date in Section 6.
- Résumé or Curriculum Vitae for the proponent and each team member, with their roles and time allocation.
- Three (3) references from comparable engagements, ideally including a First Nation or Indigenous organization (please provide telephone numbers and email addresses).
- A fee proposal as described in Section 10.
- An example of a previous business case or feasibility study redacted as needed.
- A statement confirming the proponent has no conflict of interest, or describing any potential conflict.

8. General Provisions

- All proposal documents will be treated confidentially until they are reviewed by the Selection Committee.
- The W̱SÁNEĆ School Board reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals.
- The W̱SÁNEĆ School Board reserves the right to hire outside professionals to assist in the evaluation process.
- Copies of all proposals and records of the evaluation process will be kept on file.
- The W̱SÁNEĆ School Board reserves the right to negotiate the terms of the final contract with the successful proponent(s).

9. Proposed Fee

Proponents should submit a fixed fee or not-to-exceed amount for the full scope of services described in this RFP, broken down by deliverable, with hourly or daily rates for any additional work and expected expenses. The anticipated budget for this engagement is $40,000 (CAD).

Proposals above the anticipated budget will still be evaluated on their merits; however, proponents should clearly articulate the additional value that justifies the investment. The School Board reserves the right to negotiate final contract terms, including fees, with the preferred proponent and is under no obligation to award a contract at any specific dollar value.

9. Contact Information

For questions or clarifications regarding this RFP, please contact:
Kendra Underwood

Director
WSÁNEĆ College
W̱SÁNEĆ School Board
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