



Request for Proposals (RFP)  
for  
**Government and Public Relations Consultants**

Issued:

December 1, 2025

Application Deadline:

January 15, 2026

Please submit electronic  
proposals to:

Erin Hill  
Chief Development Officer



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### 1 Background

Child Development Institute (CDI) is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced government and public relations consultants to support CDI in securing transformative funding from multiple levels of government and strengthening our public profile as the organization expands services within Ontario and nationally. While we welcome proposals from firms specializing in either area, our preference is to engage a single partner with integrated expertise in both government relations and public relations.

CDI seeks to raise \$20 million in additional funding to serve 50,000 children and youth across Canada over the next five years. We believe that significantly enhancing our provincial and federal government partnerships, alongside a strong and proactive public relations strategy, will be vital to achieving this level of sustainable social impact.

This RFP has been initiated as a standard procurement procedure to meet the requirements of the Government of Ontario's Broader Public Sector Accountability Act and its associated directives, and in accordance with CDI's Procurement Policy.

### 2 Organizational Overview

The **Child Development Institute (CDI)** is a Canadian charity that has brought hope and built brighter futures for at-risk children and their families since 1909. CDI provides direct services to communities in Toronto and has scaled the delivery of its signature evidence-based programs across Canada and internationally through a growing network of affiliates. Built on a legacy of 115 years of helping children and families, CDI is an accredited mental health agency and childcare provider that offers evidence-based programs across three primary service streams:

- Child and Youth Mental Health Services
- Early Years and Child Care Services
- Family Violence Services

We are proud to be accredited through the Canadian Centre for Accreditation, a third-party organization that accredits Canadian social service and health care providers based on accepted practices that promote ongoing quality improvement and responsive, effective community services.

CDI works with each child and family's unique strengths, needs and challenges, helping clients to uncover their abilities, giving them tools to succeed, and supporting them in overcoming significant challenges.

CDI's [Child and Youth Mental Health Services](#) provide a range of programs including targeted prevention, counselling and therapy, intensive in-home and milieu treatment



programs to help children and youth struggling with social-emotional and behavioural issues, along with supporting their families. Specialty programs include:

- SNAP® (Stop Now and Plan), CDI's award-winning cognitive-behavioural model, equips children exhibiting behaviour issues with effective emotional regulation, self-control and problem-solving skills. This year, SNAP celebrates its 40th anniversary, a milestone that reflects its long-standing impact and continued relevance for children and families across Canada and globally.
- Learning Disabilities and Mental Health (LDMH) consists of family-centred, evidence-informed clinical services for children and youth ages 8-18 with mental health issues and a diagnosed learning disability. Services include child/youth groups, parenting groups, individual and family therapy. Services also include therapeutic recreation programs.
- Our Community Education program provides training and public education, intensive in-home counselling and school-based Day Treatment programs, targeted prevention and early intervention school-based groups, Family and Community counselling for children 0 – 6 and their families, specialized parenting groups, individual and family counselling, and counselling to address child and adolescent abuse and trauma.

CDI's [Early Years and Child Care Services](#) program includes four Early Learning Centres (childcare centres) and the Parkdale-High Park EarlyON Child and Family Centre. The program provides young children with a healthy start in a child-focused, play-based early learning environment.

CDI's [Gender-Based Violence Services](#) offer group and shelter-based programs to help women and children who have experienced family violence or other trauma. Individual and family counselling, parenting support, family reconnection and healing services, and links to community supports are available. This year, Mothers in Mind, a cornerstone program supporting mothers and young children who have experienced interpersonal violence, is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

We are a highly collaborative organization, sharing our research, knowledge and expertise through partnerships and collaborations, training, consultation, and publications. Thanks to our organization's uniquely robust research capacity and proven track record of innovation, CDI is a trusted thought leader in children and youth services, with specialized experience in mental health, child care and addressing family violence.

For more information about CDI, please visit [www.childdevelop.ca](http://www.childdevelop.ca).



### 3 Scope of Services

**Objective:** Accelerating CDI's national expansion through securing transformative funding and strengthening our public profile.

The selected firm will be expected to perform the following services and achieve deliverables within a **12-month time span**:

#### **Government Relations: Cultivating and Managing Relationships with Public Sector Decision-Makers and Influencers**

CDI is entering a critical period of growth and expansion. As we work toward serving 50,000 children and youth nationally, government investment will be essential to sustaining and scaling our impact. We are seeking strengthened provincial and federal partnerships to support the national expansion of SNAP, along with funding for a broader range of CDI programs across child and youth mental health, early childhood development and family violence. The selected firm will play a key role in helping CDI deepen relationships with public sector partners, identify new opportunities for government support, and position CDI as a trusted, high-impact organization worthy of strategic investment.

#### **Strategy and Engagement**

- Develop a comprehensive strategy to engage provincial and federal government officials who can influence funding for child and youth mental health initiatives, particularly within ministries such as Health, Education and Justice.
- Identify, cultivate and schedule meetings with key decision-makers and stakeholders overseeing budgets and funding streams relevant to CDI including those aligned with SNAP's national scale-up and other program areas.
- Support CDI with meetings, presentations, and follow-up communications with government decision-makers.
- Strengthen CDI's relationships within the senior bureaucracy and political sphere, expanding our network of champions and advocates across government.

#### **Research and Analysis**

- Conduct research on existing provincial and federal funding streams that support child and youth mental health programs, early childhood services and family violence prevention.
- Analyze gaps, trends and opportunities to secure new or expanded government funding for SNAP's national rollout and other CDI program priorities.



- Monitor political, fiscal and legislative developments that may create openings for strategic engagement or new public sector investment.

### **Public Relations: Elevating CDI's Profile and Advancing Strategic Communications**

CDI has served children and families for more than a century, yet its profile remains relatively low outside of specific sectors. To achieve our long-term funding and expansion goals, CDI must significantly strengthen its presence and visibility in Toronto and across Canada. The selected firm will be expected to design and execute a proactive PR strategy that raises CDI's public standing, deepens awareness of our evidence-based programs and impact, and supports our ability to attract new government, philanthropic and corporate investment.

#### **Communications Strategy and Reputation Building**

- Develop a comprehensive public relations strategy aimed at elevating CDI's reputation as a national leader in child and youth mental health, early childhood services and family violence prevention.
- Position CDI as a high-impact, evidence-driven organization with a proven track record, capable of serving significantly more children and families with the right investment.
- Identify opportunities to expand CDI's visibility with media, sector leaders, decision-makers, influencers and priority public audiences in Toronto and across Canada.
- Strengthen CDI's voice and narrative through strategic storytelling that highlights both our century-long legacy and our modern innovation.
- Leverage milestone anniversaries (SNAP's 40th and Mothers in Mind's 20<sup>th</sup>) as anchor moments for media opportunities, public storytelling and thought leadership.

#### **Media Relations and Content Development**

- Build and manage relationships with relevant media outlets at local, provincial and national levels.
- Develop compelling, press-ready content that drives stronger name recognition and highlights CDI's impact, research and expertise.
- Prepare spokespeople with messaging, media training and strategic counsel.
- Create anniversary-related content, including impact stories, op-eds, earned media pitches, expert commentary, to spotlight CDI's leadership and program successes.
- Develop rapid-response messaging, media statements and public communications as needed.



### Public Awareness and Brand Visibility

- Identify opportunities for CDI to participate in public conversations related to child and youth mental health, early childhood development, and family violence.
- Secure consistent media presence by positioning CDI experts as go-to voices in the field.
- Recommend strategies to increase CDI's visibility at sector events, national roundtables, conferences and community-facing platforms.

### Integrated Communications Support

- Develop unified messaging across government relations, fund development, program communications and public engagement.
- Ensure consistent, cohesive narratives that support CDI's growth strategy and funding priorities.
- Provide coaching to CDI representatives in advance of high-stakes government or media engagements.

## 4 Deliverables

Interested consultants should provide a proposal that includes the following:

- **Company Overview:** Provide an overview of your company, including its history, size, and experience in government and public relations for non-profit clients.
- **Scope of Services:** Provide a detailed scope of services that your company will provide, including any additional services that you offer.
- **Approach:** Provide a detailed outline of your approach to conducting the Scope of Services outlined in this RFP.
- **Team:** Provide information on the team that will be working on our account, including their qualifications and **concrete prior examples of assisting Canadian charities to secure transformative funding.**
- **Pricing:** Provide a detailed pricing structure that outlines the costs associated with your services and payment provisions.
- **References:** Provide at least three references from clients for whom you have provided government and public relations support to in the past.



## 5 Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Company experience and expertise in government and public relations, specifically with supporting non-profit organizations to secure public sector investment.
- Overview of strategy to accelerate CDI's national expansion through securing transformative funding and strengthening our public profile.
- A clear outline of how the firm plans to achieve the project objectives.
- Quality and thoughtfulness of the proposed approach.
- Estimated costs and timeline of deliverables.
- Current professional liability insurance.
- Quality of references provided, including references for projects of similar scope and size completed with the past 1-3 years.
- Qualifications and experience of the proposed team.

## 6 Submission

Proposal should address evaluation criteria listed. Submissions that do not meet the evaluation criteria will be disqualified. To be fair to all applicants, late submissions and phone calls or emails to discuss application status after submission will not be accepted.

## 7 Terms and Conditions

### 7.1 Delivery of Response to Request for Proposals

Please send an electronic copy via email to [CEOassistant@childdevelop.ca](mailto:CEOassistant@childdevelop.ca) by **January 15, 2026 at 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)**.

### 7.2 Proposal Time Limit

Each bidding organization shall commit that the proposal is valid and accurate for one (1) year from the closing date of January 15, 2026.

### 7.3 Selection Process

CDI will review all applications but reserves the right to accept or reject any proposals. The award of an organization will be based on a review of proposals against all evaluation criteria and will not necessarily be awarded based on the lowest price offered but rather the overall assessment of value for money.

Each applicant will be provided with fair access to information, as requested by email or in writing (see Key Dates). Additional written materials, to ascertain the qualification or suitability of an applicant may be requested.

### 7.4 Inquiries

Applicants should contact Erin Hill, Chief Development Officer ([ceoassistant@childdevelop.ca](mailto:ceoassistant@childdevelop.ca)), if there are any questions or concerns.





### 7.5 Conflict of Interest

Applicants responding to the RFP must not have any personal or business interests that would present an actual, potential, or apparent conflict of interest with the performance of the contract to be awarded. Should the potential perception of a conflict of interest exist, this must be explicitly declared in writing as soon as knowledge of such a conflict may arise.

### 7.6 Distribution of the Invitation for Proposals

This invitation has been released by:

- Publication on CDI's website and social media sites.
- By invitation to consultants who may be qualified or suitable based on CDI's knowledge and experience.

### 7.7 External Factors

CDI reserves the right to withdraw this RFP or terminate the resulting contract within the terms of the contract without penalty.

### 7.8 RFP Challenge and Recourse Mechanisms

- The parties agree to maintain open and honest communication about the Work throughout and after the performance of the contract.
- The parties agree to consult and co-operate with each other in the furtherance of the contract and promptly notify the other party or parties and attempt to resolve problems or differences that may arise.
- If the parties cannot resolve a dispute through consultation and cooperation, the parties agree to consult a neutral third party offering alternative dispute resolution services to attempt to address the dispute.

### 7.9 RFP Debriefings

- Applicants may request a debriefing of the results during the bid solicitation process. Applicants should make the request to the Contracting Authority within 15 working days from receipt of the results of the bid solicitation process. The debriefing may be in writing, by telephone or in person.
- Unsuccessful applicants may request a debriefing within 60 calendar days following the date of the contract award notification. The request should be submitted to the defined Contract Authority. The Contract Authority will respond to the vendor and arrange an applicant debriefing within 10 business days of receiving the request.



### 7.10 Information Disclosure

Any confidential information supplied to CDI may be disclosed by the in-scope agencies where it is obliged to do so under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), by an order of a court or tribunal or otherwise required at law.

## 8 Key Dates and Contact Information

RFP Issue Date	December 1, 2025
Deadline for electronic proposal submissions	January 15, 2026, by 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)
Evaluation	January 15 – February 6, 2026
Selection	February 9, 2026
Contact	Erin Hill, Chief Development Officer <a href="mailto:ceoassistant@childdevelop.ca">ceoassistant@childdevelop.ca</a>