REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
Non-Profit Business Model & Governance Consultant
Issued by: **Techsploration**
Date: May 28, 2025

1. Introduction & Organizational Overview

Techsploration is a not-for-profit organization based in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. Founded in 1998, Techsploration empowers young women and gender diverse youth (grades 9–12) to explore careers in Science, Engineering, Technology, and the skilled Trades (SETT) – all fields where women remain significantly underrepresented. We provide hands-on programming, mentorship, and educational resources in collaboration with industry and community partners. Our mission is to create meaningful opportunities for youth to discover their potential and envision themselves in SETT careers. You can learn more about Techsploration at www.Techsploration.ca.

Techsploration is seeking proposals from qualified consultants with expertise in non-profit business models and governance. The consultant will help strengthen our organizational framework and governance materials so that we can effectively implement our five-year strategic plan (currently in development) and continue to achieve our mission in a sustainable manner.

2. Project Overview

The selected consultant will work closely with Techsploration's Executive Director, Board, strategic planning consultants, and relevant committees to:

1. Review and evaluate our existing business model and structure, including governance mechanisms and materials, and our "in development" five-year strategic plan.

2. Engage and consult key stakeholders (senior staff, Board members, Committee members) to understand organizational governance needs and future goals.

3. Evaluate various not-for-profit designations in Canada, including the option to pursue charitable status, and recommend the most suitable designation.

4. Develop a sustainable organizational framework, including recommendations regarding non-profit business model, organizational structure, and governance processes.

5. Assist with preparation and filing of any necessary documentation with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) or other government entities related to changes in the organization's legal or tax status.

6. Review, update, and/or create relevant governance materials such as by-laws, policies, terms of reference, and committee structures to reflect the recommended changes and ensure best practices. This work will need to be right-sized to the organization and will include plans for a 'Phase II' that would be needed if the organization grew significantly. Creating these materials will be a significant part of the project.

3. Scope of Work

The primary responsibilities of the consultant include (but are not limited to):

1. **Organizational Assessment**

   o Analyze Techsploration's existing business and governance model and related materials.

   o Connect with the strategic planning consultants and Executive Director to gain an understanding of where the five-year strategic plan is heading and to understand Techsploration's overarching objectives.

2. **Stakeholder Consultations**

   o Conduct interviews and/or focus groups with the Board, relevant committees, and staff as needed.

   o Incorporate stakeholder feedback into recommendations and action plans.

3. **Evaluation of Non-Profit Designations**

   o Research the implications of different not-for-profit designations in Canada.

   o Assess benefits, challenges, and viability of applying for charitable status.

   o Provide written analysis and recommendations on the optimal structure for Techsploration to effectively reach its long-term goals.

4. **Implementation Planning & Documentation**

   o Develop a detailed implementation plan and timeline for recommended organizational changes.

   o Draft or revise core governance documents, including (but not limited to) by-laws, policies, committee terms of reference, Board member onboarding materials and other key governance documents. This will be a significant part of the project.

   o Assist with filing or registration requirements with relevant regulatory bodies (e.g., CRA).

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5. **Governance Training & Rollout Support**

   o Provide guidance to senior staff and the Board on recommended governance best practices.

   o Assist with rollout of updated policies, organizational structures, and procedures.

4. Deliverables

- **Detailed Assessment Report**
  Written analysis of the current business model, including governance mechanisms, strengths and areas for improvement.

- **Designation Recommendation**
  A summary of findings and recommendations on the most appropriate not-for-profit designation, including the potential to apply for charitable status.

- **Implementation Plan & Timeline**
  A comprehensive roadmap for implementing changes, including key milestones, budget considerations, and required resources.

- **Revised Governance Documents**
  Updated, consolidated, deleted, or newly created governance materials, aligned with recommended structural changes and organizational needs. Specific documents needed will be determined through the project, but at a minimum this should include:

  o revision of Techsploration's by-laws,

  o revision of Board member onboarding materials / procedure,

  o revision of all Committee (5) terms of reference,

  o revision of the employee handbook,

  o creation of a financial policies and procedures manual, and

  o revision/creation of multiple policies including signing authority policy, travel policy, credit card policy, privacy & confidentiality policy, workplace health and safety policy, IT & records retention policy, and an emergency response policy.

  Note this list is not exhaustive, and more policies or documents will likely be required.

- **Filing & Documentation Support**
  Assistance with CRA or other regulatory filing if Techsploration proceeds with a change to its not-for-profit designation.

- **Final Project Report & Presentation**
  A concise final report and presentation summarizing the process, outcomes, and next steps to ensure smooth adoption of the new framework.

5. Budget

Techsploration has allocated resources within its capacity-building project budget to support this consultancy. Proposals should include a detailed cost breakdown for professional fees, anticipated expenses, and any other costs. All fees should be quoted in Canadian dollars (CAD).

6. Project Timeline

The timeline below is tentative and subject to negotiation with the successful consultant:

- **RFP Issued:** May 28, 2025
- **Proposals Due:** June 24, 2025
- **Consultant Selection & Notification:** July 11, 2025
- **Project Start:** No later than August 4, 2025
- **Anticipated Completion:** No later than Dec 13, 2025

8. Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include the following elements:

1. **Executive Summary**
   - A brief summary of how the consultant will approach the project and the anticipated outcomes.

2. **Consultant Profile**
   - Organizational or individual consultant overview, including relevant experience and qualifications.
   - Descriptions of similar projects completed, especially relating to not-for-profit governance, charitable status applications, or strategic planning.
   - Names and short bios of key personnel assigned to this project, if applicable.

3. **Proposed Methodology & Work Plan**
   - Detailed approach to fulfilling each aspect of the Scope of Work.

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  o Description of stakeholder engagement strategies (e.g., interviews, focus groups).

  o Proposed timeline with milestones.

4. **Deliverables & Project Management**

  o Outline of deliverables, including format and content.

  o Explanation of how you will manage communications and progress updates.

5. **Budget & Fee Structure**

  o Estimated total cost for the project, broken down by major tasks or phases.

  o Any additional expenses (travel, administrative, etc.) and billing schedule.

6. **References**

  o Contact information for at least two references from similar projects.

7. **Additional Information**

  o Any other relevant information that supports the proposal (e.g., sample deliverables, letters of support).

8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Relevant Experience & Qualifications (30%)**
  Demonstrated expertise in non-profit governance, strategic planning, and charitable status filings.

- **Approach & Methodology (25%)**
  Clarity and feasibility of the proposed plan, including stakeholder engagement strategies.

- **Project Management & Timeline (25%)**
  Realistic timeline and capacity to meet deadlines.

- **Cost & Value for Money (20%)**
  Alignment of project costs with the proposed scope of work and deliverables.

Techsploration reserves the right to request additional information or conduct follow-up interviews with shortlisted consultants.

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9. Submission Process & Contact Information

Please submit your proposal as a single PDF file to:

Janet Stalker
Executive Director, Techsploration
Email: Janet.Stalker@Techsploration.ca
Subject Line: **RFP – Non-Profit Business Model & Governance Consultant**

Submission Deadline: June 24, 2025.

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to the same contact.

10. Terms & Conditions

- **No Obligation to Award**
  Issuance of this RFP does not commit Techsploration to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal.

- **Confidentiality**
  All information shared in connection with this RFP is confidential and intended for the sole use of respondents for proposal development.

- **Ownership of Proposals**
  All documents, including proposals submitted, become the property of Techsploration and will not be returned.

- **Ownership of Project Deliverables**

  All documents and deliverables created by the consultants for the project will be the intellectual property of Techsploration,

- **Conflict of Interest**
  Respondents must disclose any potential conflicts of interest within their proposal.

We look forward to reviewing your proposal and thank you in advance for your interest in supporting Techsploration's continued growth and impact.