REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

How the Changing Nature of Work Will Impact the Concept of Careers and the Role and Identity of Career Developers

October 2022

Deadlines

Requests for Proposals Released: October 19, 2022

Intent to Submit: November 23, 2022

(Submit name and contact info to riz@ceric.ca)

Proposal Deadline: December 21, 2022

Award of Contract: March 31, 2023

Project Initiation: May 1, 2023

1. Introduction

For many years, we have been seeing social, cultural, technological and macro-economic factors that have impacted and in fact challenged the notions of work, how work is organized, who/what does the work and how we value the work done. Layered around these have been global phenomena such as climate change that have threaded both innovation and restructuring, redefining what the future of work can and will be. Technological advancements (e.g. Artificial Intelligence) are also re-shaping at a fast pace the way people perceive the roles of career development practitioners and the way these services are delivered. The global pandemic in 2020 brought to light the incredible dislocation of labour and the need to re-evaluate options and build new skills to course correct quickly.

The pandemic, and indeed the major disruptions that came before, brought to the fore the importance of having an effective labour market entry and re-entry system. Canada lacks both a national framework for this system and the heavy lifting is often done by career and employment practitioners from myriad sub- sectors (from post-secondary to community) which lack a stable and unified identity. It is these practitioners who have to counsel and advise their clients and students on how to navigate school-to-work transitions and entry/re-entry issues as ideas of what a career is and how workplaces are being transformed on a daily basis. Understanding the relationship between work, career and the career developer will

be important to understanding how career developers can best support peoples in Canada not only through the disruption caused by this pandemic but future disruptions as well.

CERIC is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) to undertake research about the changing role and identity of career developers as defined or shaped by the external forces of the changing nature of work and the evolving definition of what a career is.

The purpose is to identify factors that define and conversely limit identity making of career developers, the roles they see themselves playing through this identity and through the interplay of macro socio-economic external factors. We are interested in understanding how these factors and changes are going to drive the evolution of role and identity of the career development field as well as the skillsets and competencies they will need to navigate these changes. Additionally, CERIC has a special interest in understanding the value placed on and demand for the work of career professionals in Canada through this RFP.

Background

CERIC is a national charitable organization that advances education and research in career counselling and career development. CERIC collaborates with a multi-sectoral group of career development communities, including individuals working in K-12, post-secondary, non-profit, government and corporate sectors as well as independently.

CERIC recognizes that the role of career developers is changing as the future of work and workplaces change – most recently through the pandemic. CERIC also recognizes that there will be many disruptions, large and small, that will challenge the current thinking about what the role and identity is of someone who provides career services in Canada. Understanding how disruptions redefine identity and then roles, which levers are more pronounced, and understanding the interplay between fluid notions of work, what a career is and how career developers see themselves supporting others are necessary to understanding the future-ready skills career developers need to navigate further disruptions moving forward, where and how to get these skills and at what pace.

CERIC anticipates this research will embody CERIC's "big tent" approach to determining who provides career development in Canada (for example, career and employment practitioners, inclusive of some immigrant-serving professionals, school

counsellors, organizational development specialists or HR specialists). Although the history and evolution of the field of career development is well documented,(e.g. Van Norman et al chapter in Career Development Practice in Canada: Perspectives, Principles, and Professionalism as well as the development recently of The Career Development Professional Competency Framework) and an appreciation of such history provides rich context for the present-day realities of the field and those who work within it, the specific purpose of the RFP is future-focused around the changes to roles and services within the provision of career development in Canada.

CERIC has directed past projects that may help to inform a response to this RFP. Every four years, CERIC has conducted a Survey of Career Service Professionals, most recently in 2019, that could provide a starting point around demographics, education and experience of professionals in the field. This voluntary survey draws on those in CERIC's database and those of related supporting organizations, though with some sectors underrepresented. Additionally, CERIC has developed a set of Guiding Principles of Career Development that may be helpful in contextualizing the core elements of career development as it is seen today. In the summer of 2022, CERIC also initiated a market research initiative, Scoping the Canadian Career Development Landscape. While currently in progress, this project and its deliverables may be helpful in better understanding the breadth and diversity of who delivers career development and where within Canada and could be beneficial to the current initiative. Coordination between projects would be seen as beneficial to both projects' deliverables.

CERIC's interest in this project is three-fold:

- To develop an understanding of the macro factors that are redefining the changing workplace and career paths
    - A summary of existing work on how technology, social change and global issues are changing the workplace and career paths
    - Evolving definitions of the workplace and value of work
    - The impact of these factors on the changes to the concept of careers in the future, how traditional on-ramps into careers are being challenged or displaced by new notions of learning required to launch into new careers
- To understand the role and identity of career developers
    - An understanding of the barriers and facilitators to forming an identity as career developers

- An understanding of the current and future experience of career developers in their roles and how anticipated changes in the work environment will influence them
- Comparison between the past, current and future understandings of the role and identities
- Assessment of the professional development needs of career developers and factors that limit access to learning and skills development required for the coming world of work
- To understand what services clients/students need and how career services need to adapt to meet these changing needs, how they may need to be delivered, and what skills may be needed to deliver these services in the ways clients need them delivered
  - A summary of evolving service modes and methods
  - An understanding of emergent competencies required by future-ready career developers
  - An assessment of gaps in skills required by career development professionals to meet the future needs of their clients

3. Purpose/Intent

The purpose of this RFP is to invite interested researchers to submit a detailed proposal that will enable CERIC to select the research/consulting team that it determines is best suited to complete the project according to the enclosed criteria.

4. Scope of Work

Each proposal will include details of the methodology to be used:

- Methodology for determining how macro factors are redefining the changing workplace and career paths, including:
  - Whether research design will be exploratory or descriptive or a combination thereof
  - How the parameters of macro factors will be defined
  - How a baseline definition of a "career" is determined
  - Use of secondary research (published data sources) as well as primary research (surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.)

- Approach for developing an understanding of what services clients/students will need and how career services need to adapt to meet these changing needs, how they may need to be delivered, and what skills may be needed to deliver these services in the way clients need them delivered
- Approach to identifying current inventory of career developer skills and those required in the future
- Methodology to create an understanding of the current experience of career developers in their roles and how anticipated changes might impact on them
- Approach to assessing the professional development needs of career developers and factors that limit access to learning and skills development
- Strategies for creating visual and short-form content for the data that can be part of knowledge dissemination and incorporated into communications with stakeholders

The scope of work for this project includes:

- Refinement and application of the methodology, approaches and strategies outlined above to collect the data and perform the analysis required to answer the following research questions:
  - How is the concept of careers changing and what factors will have the most impact?
  - What career development services will clients want/need in the future?
  - How might changing modalities (e.g. AI/live/virtually/hybrid) impact on career development service delivery in the future?
  - How do career practitioners perceive their work in the future to be different compared to what it is now?
  - Based on the areas of inquiry above, are there any key career development competencies which may change in importance in the future?
- Data and analysis to be presented in the form of the deliverables outlined below

5. Target Audience

The primary target audience for this research are career developers. Additionally, government policy-makers considering policies, programs and funding for this sector would make use of this research.

6. Deliverables

- A documented literature search on how social, technological and macro-economic factors are changing the workplace, the nature of careers and career paths
- An accessible, public facing report of (50 - 100 pages) responding to the research questions including executive summary and appendices completed by May 2024. The report should include:
  - A summary of the literature search
  - Dataset presentations and analysis, including key recommendations for the sector, policy-makers and for CERIC's own advocacy efforts
  - Graphically oriented content, i.e., a visual mapping or representation of key information
  - A set of recommendations on key changes required to career developer training at a national level
  - Recommendations for further detailed study or development of resources
- A brief accessible summary for CDPs in a format best suited to the audience to action recommendations noted in the report
- A brief accessible summary for policy-makers in a format best suited to the audience to action recommendations noted in the report
- Knowledge dissemination through: a webinar for the field, presentations at 3 relevant conferences; and a session at Cannexus24 and/or Cannexus25
- A set of recommendations and focus points for CERIC advocacy

CERIC will own all copyrights to the deliverables. CERIC will own all copyrights to the deliverables.

7. Budget and Duration

The range of funding available to conduct the research and provide the deliverables above is $80K - $100K. This amount is exclusive of taxes.

Travel

Travel and registration costs to attend and present at an in-person Cannexus conference are to be included in the financial proposal.

Duration

Timelines will be negotiated with the successful applicant. Ideally, the research, in the English or French language, copy-edited professionally designed report, and presentation of findings can be completed in 10-12 months.

8. Eligibility Requirements

This RFP is open to all researchers, consultants or contractors residing in Canada.

The successful candidate will have a strong knowledge of exploratory and descriptive research methods and preferably professional identity development. Previous exposure and understanding of the career development field in Canada would be of benefit.

Applicants are requested to submit an electronic copy (in Microsoft Word or PDF format) of their proposal which is no longer than 30 pages by the deadline above. Your proposal should convey the following:

- Your understanding of the scope of work and approach in answering the research questions;
- Your positionality statement;
- The proposed approach including methodology (that is inclusive of diverse perspectives and language);

- Your level of ethical awareness and capacity related to the subject matter and how you will treat any ethical issues which might arise from this project given your methodology;
- A work plan and timelines, identifying the level of effort required in relation to milestone/target dates;
- A detailed budget;
- If you are submitting on behalf of a team of researchers, the capacity of the team, which outlines the experience as well as delineates the roles and responsibilities of the team members as well as their ability to capture views of equity-deserving groups; and,
- Possible challenges and opportunities anticipated in undertaking this work.

In addition to the 30 pages, the following elements are mandatory:

- An overview of your relevant experience;
- Your current curriculum vitae/resume; and,
- A list of three references that can be contacted to discuss your relevant experience.

9. Inquiries

All inquiries, proposal submissions and other communications are to be directed to:

Riz Ibrahim, Executive Director
CERIC
Foundation House
2 St Clair Avenue East, Suite 300, Toronto, Ontario, M4T 2T5
Email: riz@ceric.ca
Tel: 416.929.2510 x 131

CERIC reserves the right not to move forward with this project.

RATED CRITERIA

Proponents are asked to include in the proposal the information that is requested in each of the areas listed in this section. Please limit the information provided to what is specifically requested in this RFP.

A. Understanding the Requirements – Total Points = 15

Each proponent should include a 1-2-page summary of their understanding of the scope of work specified in this RFP. This content should be expressed in the proponent's own words and not simply recite the requirements specified in this document.

B. Proposed Approach – Total Points = 30

Each proponent should describe the approach and/or process proposed to address the scope of work and deliverables requirements of this RFP (See Sections 4 and 6). The proposal should outline the proponent's approach to the following:

a) Project management
b) Market research
c) Report design strategy
d) Stakeholder engagement
e) Collaboration
f) Budget allocation
g) Risk mitigation associated with: project scope; stakeholder resistance; ethical considerations that may arise; treatment of data and confidentiality; compliance with appropriate privacy legislation; and, turnover of internal and/or consultant personnel.

The proposal should include any notable methodologies, innovative solutions, tools and techniques, and

the proponent's respective suitability to this project. Each proponent should also provide a high-level work plan that reflects the proposed approach/process and demonstrates your ability to meet the schedule requirements for this project, including any applicable milestones.

C. Demonstrated Expertise – Total Points = 20

Each proponent should provide the following in its proposal:

a) A description of the services the proponent has previously delivered and/or is currently delivering demonstrating the proponent's experience, with an emphasis on experience relevant to sections 4 and 6 – Scope of Work and Deliverables;
b) Describe any similarities or differences from this project.
c) Demonstrated ability to take an intersectional approach that embraces an individual's lived experience, social location or identity, and competencies related to EDI and Reconciliation to reflect views of equity-deserving groups

D. Proponent References – Total Points = 10

Each proponent is requested to provide three references for any work done by themselves in the past three years that is similar in nature, complexity, and size to the requirements specified in this RFP.

a) Provide the name of each project reference, along with his/her phone number and email address.
b) Identify the size of the projects, the extent of involvement, and results achieved.

Our review teams will only evaluate three references. If more than this number are provided by the proponent, only the first three (3) listed in the proposal will be evaluated.

E. Knowledge Dissemination – Total Points = 10

Each proponent should provide the following in its proposal:

a) Experience with conducting webinars and live presentations (with links if possible), with a brief description of the scope, reach and impact
b) Examples of reports or other written passages (via links)

F. Evaluation – Total Points = 10

Each proponent should provide the following in its proposal:

a) Experience with conducting project monitoring and evaluation

b) Examples of evaluation reports or other written summary passages (via links)

G. Added Value – Total Points = 5

"Added value" is the realization of additional benefits beyond the inherent worth of the requested goods or services. Describe the aspect(s) of your proposal that would result in added value for this project as related to this RFP.