



Request for Proposals
CACMS Strategic Planning

Submission Deadline: April 17, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. ET

Background

The Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC), on behalf of the AFMC–Canadian Medical Association (CMA)–Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) Council (ACCC), is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to engage an external consultant to lead and facilitate the development of a comprehensive Strategic Plan for CACMS.

CACMS, co-sponsored by AFMC and CMA, is responsible for the accreditation of undergraduate medical education programs leading to the MD degree in Canada. Through a rigorous accreditation process, CACMS ensures that Canadian medical education programs meet nationally established standards that support high-quality medical education.

The environment in which CACMS operates is increasingly complex. Medical education is evolving rapidly with the expansion of distributed medical education, emphasis on equity, diversity, and inclusion, increased emphasis on fostering learning environments which best support learners, and the development of new medical schools. At the same time, international developments in accreditation governance have highlighted the importance of reaffirming the independence, integrity, and public trust associated with national accreditation systems.

CACMS does not currently have a formal strategic plan articulating its longer-term direction, priorities, and performance measures. In this context, CACMS seeks to undertake a structured and consultative strategic planning process to:

- Clarify and articulate its mission, vision, and values;
- Define 3-5 year strategic priorities;
- Establish measurable objectives and performance indicators;
- Strengthen alignment, where appropriate, with sponsor priorities while preserving independence in accreditation decision-making;
- Reinforce its leadership role within Canadian medical education.

This initiative will be overseen by the AFMC-CMA-CACMS Council (ACCC). The selected consultant will work collaboratively with a designated CACMS Strategic Planning Working Group and key interested parties to develop a forward-looking and actionable Strategic Plan.

In parallel to this strategic planning process, senior medical education deans are engaged in discussions regarding the potential streamlining of accreditation processes across the medical education continuum. Additionally, a review of CACMS governance structures is underway. These initiatives are distinct from, but complementary to, the strategic planning process. The Strategic Plan must therefore be developed with awareness of these concurrent efforts and be sufficiently adaptable to align with a potential evolution in accreditation processes and governance.

The anticipated duration of the engagement is approximately 12 months.

Scope of Work

The selected consultant will be responsible for designing and facilitating a structured, rigorous, and inclusive strategic planning process that results in a clear, actionable Strategic Plan for CACMS.

The scope of work will include, at minimum, the following phases:

1. Project Initiation and Governance

- Confirm project scope, objectives, deliverables, and success criteria.
- Establish a detailed work plan, timeline, and milestones.
- Develop an engagement and communications strategy.
- Clarify reporting structure and governance oversight (including interaction with the ACCC and CACMS Strategic Planning Working Group).
- Identify potential risks and mitigation strategies.

2. Environmental Scan and Organizational Analysis

The consultant will conduct a structured analysis of CACMS' internal and external operating environment. This will include:

- Review of CACMS' policies, procedures, and accreditation processes.
- Review of sponsor strategic priorities.
- Environmental scan of trends in medical education and accreditation and accreditation science.
- Comparative review of peer accreditation bodies, such as the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, General Medical Council, Australian Medical Council, and World Federation for Medical Education.
- Application of structured analytical frameworks.
- High-level consideration of operational sustainability, budget, and risk.

The consultant will synthesize findings into an Environmental Scan Report outlining key strategic implications.

3. Consultation with Interested Parties

The consultant will design and implement a structured consultation process that ensures meaningful engagement with interested parties relevant to CACMS' mandate.

Consultation is expected to include, but is not limited to:

- Sponsor representatives (AFMC and CMA);
- Chair of CACMS, members of CACMS, and CACMS surveyors;
- CACMS Secretariat leadership and staff;
- Leadership from Canadian faculties of medicine, including Deans, Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) Deans, Faculty Undergraduate Accreditation Leads (FUALs), and other individuals directly involved in institutional accreditation processes;
- Medical learners and medical student organizations (e.g., CFMS and FMEQ);
- Collège des médecins du Québec;
- Broader medical education community and members of the public.

The consultant will propose an engagement methodology (e.g., interviews, focus groups, surveys, facilitated workshops) that ensures:

- Representation across regions and institutional contexts;
- Inclusion of diverse and equity-informed perspectives and an anti-ableist approach;
- Bilingual accessibility (English/French).

A Consultation Summary Report will be prepared, identifying key themes, areas of alignment, areas of tension, and strategic opportunities.

4. Strategy Development

Based on the environmental scan, organizational analysis, and consultation findings, the consultant will:

- Support CACMS in collaboratively developing a mission, vision, and values statement;
- Identify 3-5 strategic priorities aligned with CACMS' mandate;
- Define clear objectives and outcomes under each priority;
- Develop measurable performance indicators and success metrics;
- Propose a Balanced Scorecard or equivalent performance framework;
- Develop a phased implementation roadmap (including sequencing, accountability considerations, and monitoring mechanisms).

The consultant will present a draft Strategic Plan to the CACMS Strategic Planning Working Group and ACCC for feedback and refinement.

5. Finalization and Communication

The consultant will:

- Revise and finalize the Strategic Plan based on feedback;
- Develop presentation materials suitable for broader dissemination;
- Provide recommendations regarding communication and launch strategy.

Deliverables will include:

- Project Charter and Work Plan
- Environmental Scan Report
- Consultation Summary Report
- Draft Strategic Plan
- Final Strategic Plan
- Implementation Roadmap
- Performance Measurement Framework
- Presentation materials

Experience & Knowledge

Proponents should demonstrate substantial experience and expertise relevant to the accreditation and higher education sectors. Given the complexity of CACMS' mandate and sponsor structure, experience working with complex organizations with national scope is essential.

Proposals should clearly describe the qualifications of the proposed team and demonstrate experience in the following areas:

Organizational and Strategic Planning Expertise

- Proven experience designing and facilitating comprehensive strategic planning processes for national or pan-Canadian organizations;
- Demonstrated ability to guide governance bodies through mission, vision, and priority-setting exercises in a manner that balances independence and sponsor alignment;
- Experience developing measurable strategic frameworks, implementation roadmaps, and performance measurement systems (e.g., Balanced Scorecard or equivalent).

Governance and Regulatory Environments

- Experience working with boards, councils, committees, or accreditation bodies;
- Understanding of governance models involving sponsor relationships or shared governance structures;
- Familiarity with regulatory, accreditation, or quality assurance environments within higher education.

Engagement and Consultation

- Demonstrated expertise in conducting structured consultations across diverse interested parties;
- Experience designing engagement strategies that ensure broad representation;
- Experience managing bilingual (English/French) consultation processes.

Sector Knowledge

- Familiarity with Canadian undergraduate medical education systems;
- Understanding of accreditation processes;
- Awareness of current issues affecting medical education.

Project Management and Capacity

- Demonstrated ability to manage multi-phase projects;
- Ability to deliver high-quality written materials suitable for governance approval and public release.

Budget & Schedule

The estimated budget range for this initiative is \$55,000–\$80,000 CAD, inclusive of professional fees and all associated costs, such as travel, translation, and taxes. Proponents are encouraged to propose a cost-effective approach that aligns with the scope and complexity of the project.

Key Phases and Timeline

Phase	Timeline (from project start)
1. Initiation & Governance	Month 1 (May 2026)
2. Environmental Scan	Months 2–4 (June 2026 – August 2026)
3. Engagement of Interested Parties	Months 3–7 (July 2026 – November 2026)
4. Draft Strategy	Months 8–9 (December 2026 – January 2027)
5. Review & Endorsement	Months 10–11 (February 2027 – March 2027)
6. Launch & Communication	Month 12 (April 2027)

Rated Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated under the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting (Points)
<p>Relevant Experience and Qualifications <i>Assess the proponent's demonstrated experience and qualifications relevant to strategic planning for complex organizations with national scope.</i></p> <p><i>Considerations: Relevant education, certifications and industry credentials; years of experience in related fields; suitable team qualifications.</i></p>	10
<p>Proposed Approach <i>Assess how well the proponent's plan addresses the project goals and delivers the expected results.</i></p> <p><i>Considerations: Clear, logical and structured methodology; direct alignment with project objectives and expected results; level of detail and feasibility in the approach.</i></p>	15
<p>Capacity to meet deliverables required <i>Consider the proponent's ability to meet all deliverables within the specified timelines and with sufficient resources.</i></p> <p><i>Considerations: Adequacy of team expertise and assigned roles; resource availability (staffing, tools, infrastructure); risk management and problem-solving capabilities.</i></p>	25
<p>Timeline <i>Review the alignment of the proposed schedule with the project deadlines and the practicality of its execution.</i></p> <p><i>Considerations: Realistic scheduling aligned with project phases; feasibility of meeting deadlines based on proposed workload; consideration of dependencies and constraints.</i></p>	10
<p>Suitability <i>Assess the overall alignment of the proponent's expertise, approach, and capacity with the unique requirements of this project.</i></p> <p><i>Considerations: Overall fit of expertise and approach to project needs; ability to adapt to project-specific challenges; understanding of the project's unique context and requirements.</i></p>	10
<p>Social Procurement <i>Assess the proponent's commitment to delivering social value through their organization or approach.</i></p> <p><i>Considerations: Whether the proponent is a social enterprise or non-profit; demonstrated outcomes such as inclusive hiring, community benefit, or reinvestment into social missions.</i></p>	10
<p>Pricing <i>Scored using relative pricing formula (lowest bid awarded full points, all other bids awarded share of points based on variance from lowest bid)</i></p>	20
Total Points	100

Submissions will be scored according to the following scale:

Point Scoring Key	Score
Unresponsive - No response is provided or the response is not relevant to the question/criterion	0
Poor - The response significantly fails to meet the standards required, contains significant shortcomings, and/or is inconsistent with expectations	1
Unsatisfactory - The response falls short of achieving the expected standard in a number of identifiable respects	2
Satisfactory - The response meets the requirement in certain material respects and provides certain information which is relevant, but is lacking or inconsistent in material respects	3
Good - The response meets the requirement in most material respects but is lacking or inconsistent in some minor respects	4
Excellent - The response meets the requirement in all material respects and is extremely likely to deliver the required output/outcome	5

Proposal Submission Instructions

Proposals should be sent to the RFP Administrator, Andrea Segal at CACMS@afmc.ca, by the deadline listed at the top of this RFP.

A rectification period of three (3) business days will follow the submission deadline, during which proponents may address non-substantive issues (e.g., missing signatures, formatting, or overlooked documents) identified by the RFP Administrator. No changes to core content or pricing will be permitted.

Requests for additional information may be directed to the above contact.

Questions or requests for clarification may be directed to the RFP Administrator. Early confirmation of intent to submit is appreciated; proponents who do so will receive any updates issued during the open period.

FAQs will be compiled and shared weekly on Fridays via this [link](#).

This request for proposals is subject to the process, terms and conditions available here: <https://www.afmc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/AFMC-RFP-Process-Terms-and-Conditions.pdf>

Elements to include in the proposal:

1. Executive Summary
 2. Organizational Experience and Qualifications
 3. Proposed Approach and Methodology
 4. Project Team and Capacity
 5. Detailed Timeline
 6. Budget
- The proposal must be submitted in English or French as a PDF and should not exceed 15 pages in length. Pages beyond this limit will be removed and not provided to the evaluation team. Hyperlinked material will not be considered
 - The budget must be presented as the final section of the proposal and should not be included or referenced within other sections.
 - Attach the completed [RFP Acknowledgement Form](#)