



# Request For Proposals

## Exhibition Development, Design, Fabrication, and Tour

*Due date: May 12, 2023*

*Project Timeline: June 2023 – December 2026*

*Location: Canada*

### Project Overview

Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC or the client) requires the services of an experienced exhibit firm (firm or contractor) to develop, design, build, market, tour, and evaluate a fully bilingual mobile exhibition to engage Canadian audiences. Joint, multi-vendor submissions are welcome. The successful firm will be required to abide by all applicable laws in Canada and any policies or requirements of AKFC as it relates to contractors and this RFP scope.

The firm will work closely with AKFC to create an innovative and multi-sensory exhibit to reach as wide an in-person audience as possible. The exhibition should:

- Attract and engage visitors who reflect the diversity of identities and experiences found within the Canadian population.
- Inspire and educate audiences on topics in international development and on Canada's role in global citizenship.
- Mobilize audiences towards personal, meaningful global engagement.

The content of the exhibition will focus on gender equality and women's empowerment in Asia and Africa, with additional themes of health, education, climate resilience, and civil society playing an important role. Canadians' roles as global citizens will also be explored.

The exhibition should be approximately 1,000 square feet and be easily transportable and adaptable to different environments. The flexible, mobile, and modular nature of the exhibit will allow it to be displayed in many types of venues, with a goal of reaching at least 100,000 Canadian visitors in person across all regions of Canada, including rural and remote areas. An online version of the exhibition will be deployed as a promotional tool for in-person attendance, as well as provide a platform to engage with exhibition content digitally. The total budget for Phases 1-3 (development, design, fabrication, marketing, and evaluation) is CAD \$1.15 million. Once the design is in place, AKFC and the firm will work together to formulate an appropriate tour budget and plan (Phase 4).

The exhibition will also be used as the centrepiece of a range of activities to engage Canadians in global development, including workshops, events, and educational resources. It should be understood as one element within a complex and vibrant program of public offerings created by AKFC for Canadian audiences. The exhibition is part of a long-term, multi-pronged strategy to engage Canadians coast to coast to coast,



and to further individual involvement with international development, no matter their current level of engagement.

During the design phases, particular attention should be paid to how the exhibit will be easily modified to update the content over time. Environmental responsibility will be a core value during all stages of development and execution. AKFC will look to the firm to advise and lead on creating a sustainable, environmentally conscious footprint at all points of development, execution, responsible disposal, and re-use plan for physical assets.

Gender-sensitive and inclusive communications approaches will guide this project, including in both the content and format of the exhibition.

Key internal documents that will guide the firm's design approach will be shared with shortlisted candidates.

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## Terms of Reference

### 1.0 Background

Aga Khan Foundation Canada (AKFC) is an international development organization and registered charity. Committed to breaking the cycle of poverty, AKFC partners with communities, businesses, and governments across Africa and Asia to find innovative solutions to global challenges – undertaking these efforts in cooperation with the Government of Canada and Canadian institutions and individuals across the country.

AKFC invests in institutions and systems that anchor progress over the long term, with a focus on health and nutrition, education, work and enterprise, agriculture and food security, and early childhood development. All of this work promotes gender equality, an active civil society, and environmental sustainability – using approaches based in evidence and research.

AKFC is an agency of the worldwide Aga Khan Development Network, a group of development agencies with individual mandates that address the social, economic, and cultural dimensions of development.

Since 1980, AKFC has promoted inclusive development, helping millions of women and men unlock their own potential to build a better life.

#### *AKFC in Canada*

In Canada, AKFC promotes discussion and learning on global issues, raises funds, taps into Canadian expertise, and builds partnerships with Canadian institutions.

Since 1980, AKFC has launched and nationally toured several major exhibitions to engage Canadians in global topics and provide pathways to get involved. These exhibitions have played a critical role in AKFC's public engagement agenda, which also includes activities such as events and workshops, classroom resources, and digital campaigns. AKFC's public engagement programming aims to reach the public in Canada, as well as targeted activities for youth, educators, and those working in international development and related fields. This proposed exhibition will promote Canada's global engagement, as well as individual involvement in global development.

### 2.0 Phases, Key Activities and Deliverables

This assignment will be carried out in four phases.

Please include all four phases (including budget breakdown) in your proposal.

AKFC reserves the right to award separate contracts for each phase. Contracts for each subsequent phase will only be awarded on the satisfactory completion of a prior phase(s), as determined by AKFC. The budget for the first three phases (planning, development and design, fabrication) is CAD \$1.15 million. The budget for Phase IV will be determined during development. All travel for planning, design and fabrication will be undertaken at the firm's expense.



## Phase I: Planning - June 2023 to October 2023

### ***Phase I Activities***

In Phase I, the firm will:

- Hold a series of kick-off meetings with AKFC staff to define objectives, parameters, timelines, scope and scale of Phases I, II and III
- Review and analyze background documents from AKFC
- Review existing content options
- Write, receive feedback, and make changes to two drafts of the Interpretive Plan (IP)
- Write, receive feedback, and make changes to two drafts of a Visitor Experience Brief (VEB) (described below)

The Visitor Experience Brief (VEB) will identify:

- Historical and present-day context for the exhibition
- Stakeholders
- Rationale
- Nature of experience (\*may not be finalized until conceptual design)
- Outcomes for visitors

The Interpretive Plan (IP) will identify opportunities for significant visitor experiences and recommend ways to provide, encourage, sustain, and facilitate those experiences. The IP will include suggested storylines, a detailed list of current AKFC content, identification of content gaps, and suggestions for new content development. Working with AKFC staff (in-person and online), the IP will also identify:

- Learning objectives and calls to action of the exhibition
- Themes and subthemes
- Possible interpretive techniques per each exhibit section (i.e. selection of media such as text, graphics, hands-on, photos, graphics, captions, artifacts and/or props, video, interactive elements, etc. that will achieve a suitable interpretive balance), including consideration of the online version of the exhibition and any tangible or digital “takeaways” for visitors
- Possible public programming and event opportunities
- Preliminary plan for visitor foot traffic, post-visit feedback, and any other recommended data collection and analysis methods to understand how visitors interact with and learn from the exhibition
- Preliminary plan for online components
- Preliminary plan for visitors’ post-exhibition experience
- Preliminary content plan: working with key AKFC staff to identify how the story will be told in formats such as video, photography, interviews, written word, and possibly material artefacts
- Cost-sensitive approaches to remediating content over time



### ***Phase I Deliverables***

- Draft IP (V1)
- Revised IP (V2)
- Final IP (V3) to AKFC
- Draft VEB (V1)
- Revised VEB (V2)
- Final VEB (V3)

### **Phase II: Exhibition Development and Design – October 2023 to February 2024**

#### ***Phase II Activities***

In Phase II, the firm will:

- Work alongside AKFC staff to develop and guide content – in concert with schematic and detailed design. This includes wall text, digital elements, AV productions, object-based storytelling, and all other aspects of the visitor experience
- Design complete exhibition
- Provide full project management support, including content version tracking
- Implement feedback to create revised documents
- Recommend appropriate materials that will be able to withstand visitor traffic
- Lead the storyboarding for audio and video components
- Fully develop a monitoring and evaluation strategy to capture visitor foot traffic, post-visit feedback, and any other recommended data collection and analysis methods to understand how visitors interact with and learn from the exhibition
- With AKFC, identify content for focus-group testing, as well as lead a series of small-group prototyping tests for evaluation (followed by possible revisions to content)
- Complete content development and design
- Note: We expect a compressed timeline and intensive workload for this phase

#### ***Phase II Deliverables***

- 50% and 100% conceptual, schematic, and detailed design documents (see descriptions below)
- 3D renderings and shop drawings for the proper execution and installation of the exhibit. This should include accurate dimensions to scale and details of exhibition assembly and specific site requirements (electricity, internet access, etc.)
- Technical inputs for audio-visual projections and interactive components. Multimedia and online elements should be provided for an enhanced visitor experience
- Content development for all English language text, audio, and video content, guided by AKFC staff
- Submission of final design files to AKFC



- Preliminary prototyping for key built or digital elements, including monitoring and evaluation elements, to inform detailed design
- Draft marketing and tour plans

*Conceptual design should include (not limited to):*

- Concepts for interactive elements
- Experience narrative
- Communications strategy for exhibition written, audio, and audio-visual content
- Concept for monitoring and evaluation strategy to capture visitor foot traffic, post-visit feedback, and any other recommended data collection and analysis methods to understand how visitors interact with and learn from the exhibition
- Initial document (50%) prepared for in-person presentation and review
- Conceptual design (100%) submitted for approval

*Schematic design should include (not limited to):*

- Content drafts 1, 2, and 3 (final draft to be produced in detailed design)
- Storyboards for all AV
- Edit existing audio and video clips for exhibition
- Develop online content
- Develop interactive components
- Initial document (50%) prepared for in-person workshop and review
- Schematic design (100%) submitted for approval

*Detailed design should include (not limited to):*

- Final version of all text, images, audio, and AV
- Final version of online content
- Final version of interactive components
- Initial document (50%) prepared for in-person workshop and review
- Detailed design (100%) submitted for approval

### **Phase III: Fabrication – March 2024 to May 2024**

#### ***Phase III Activities***

In Phase III, the exhibition firm will:

- Provide full project management and troubleshooting support, including quality control
- Create online component
- Support development of learning tools and resources to facilitate exhibition learning outcomes (for engagement with school systems)
- Fabricate complete exhibition
- Complete production of all audio, video, and digital components



- Execute marketing and promotional plan
- Coordinate shipping and storage of exhibition parts
- Finalize marketing and touring plans

#### ***Phase III Deliverables***

- Fabrication, all elements of production and installation, final testing of tour-ready exhibition
- Finalized marketing plan and promotional material
- Support development of learning tools and resources to facilitate exhibition learning outcomes

#### **Phase IV: Tour and Remediations - June 2024 to December 2026**

In separate future contracts, the exhibition will be modified and tailored over time to remain current, provide audiences with fresh, up-to-date content, and incorporate learnings from ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the exhibition. The exhibition will allow for creativity and flexibility as new content is collected and created from Canadian-supported programming overseas.

#### ***Phase IV Deliverables***

- Modify exhibit design with new content on an as-needed basis (to be identified by AKFC)
- Conduct, market, and manage tour, including regular reporting to AKFC
- Coordinate shipping and storage of all incoming and outgoing components
- Organize, market, manage, and operationalize tour across Canada
- Refine design and hardware
- Design, fabricate, and install remediated content to exhibition
- At the end of the exhibition's lifespan, oversee the repurposing and/or disposal of assets

### 3.0 Consultant Qualifications

Significant demonstrated experience in interpretation, exhibition design, and fabrication projects, including specific experience with mobile exhibitions and displays.

The candidate(s) should bring to the assignment:

- Excellent understanding of techniques to reach and draw new audiences
- A track record of fulfilling client-driven objectives (to be assessed during reference calls)
- Strong digital engagement capabilities
- A strong record of excellence in the planning phases, with proof of intensively iterative, client-focussed planning
- Demonstrated experience (5+ years) in exhibition design and fabrication projects



- Excellent understanding of the public engagement tools and strategies, including demonstrated experience in inspiring and educating audiences through exhibitions
- Experience touring exhibitions nationally throughout Canada
- Knowledge of ways to implement an environmentally conscious approach to all phases of the project
- An understanding, based on personal or other experience, of the diversity of Canadian experiences and audiences that we hope to reach
- Demonstrated understanding of collaborative storytelling, including issues and complications when representing vulnerable communities
- A demonstrated commitment to gender-sensitive and inclusive communications approaches
- Experience with monitoring and evaluation of exhibitions, preferably leveraging digital tools
- Knowledge of the Canadian international development landscape and the Sustainable Development Goals (asset)

#### 4.0 Evaluation Criteria and Rubrik

- Understanding of project objectives – 10 points
- Portfolio design-build approach, creativity – 20 points
- Quality of interpretation (written, audio, audio-visual, or other expressive artforms) – 5 points
- Proposed budget (including total and breakdown) – 10 points
- Team organization, experience, and qualifications – 10 points
- Proposed exhibition legacy (including environmental responsibility, and concepts for the future life of content) - 5 points
- Quality of multimedia (in-person and online) projects – 10 points
- Monitoring and evaluation approaches and experience – 5 points
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate and fulfill a robust touring plan – 10 points
- Proposed timeline/ work plan – 5 points
- A demonstrated understanding of collaborative and inclusive storytelling, including issues and complications when representing vulnerable communities – 10 points

#### 5.0 Submission Instructions

##### **Proposal Package Contents**

Proposal packages should include the following, broken down in the following order (items A through F) and identified by corresponding letters:

- A. Overview: A brief overview of your proposed approach, plan, and schedule. The proposal should refer to phases of the project as outlined above. Please include:
  - a. Introduction letter (no longer than 1 page)
  - b. Name, address, and telephone number of vendor/firm
  - c. Representative name, telephone, and email





- d. Name and contact information for 3 references, for the vendor/firm's 3 most recent projects (may be the same or different from portfolio examples).
- B. Response: Three page (maximum) written response. The response should outline how your firm will approach the design and build of a mobile exhibition, including how you propose to work with our teams, and your plan for inspiring internal conversations and synthesizing multiple objectives into one cohesive visitor experience. Please identify possibilities for an environmentally responsible build and disposal plan, and potential opportunities for future (post-exhibition) leveraging of content.
- C. Individual team member profiles: Please clearly designate who is a staff member of the firm and who is externally subcontracted. For all key personnel, include credentials, education, years of experience, and past relevant experience. Please note that those individuals named to the project in the submission are expected to work on the project. The team that is proposed must be the team that conducts the work. Any additions, substitutions, or removals can only occur with application in writing and approval by AKFC. Failure to do so may result in removal of offer or termination of contract.
- D. Organizational chart
- E. Proposed timeline and budget breakdown: A detailed cost estimate, including both fees and expenses in Canadian dollars. Note: all travel for design and fabrication stages will be undertaken at the firm's expense.
- F. Portfolio samples: a total of four projects. Provide three project examples of completed design-build projects by your team of similar size, scope, and nature. At least two must be mobile exhibitions. Each design-build project example should include at least 3 images, one writing sample (could also be an audio script), a brief description of the project, timeframe to complete the project, total budget of the project, and the relevance of the project to this RFP. Provide one additional project (for a total of 4 project samples) that had significant online components, showing how the digital experience coordinated or creatively departed from the in-person experience. Maximum 16 pages total (4 pages per project).

## Submission Instructions

The proposals must be submitted and received at the email address [akfc.hr@akdn.org](mailto:akfc.hr@akdn.org), with the subject line "Exhibition Request for Proposals" by 4:00pm (EDT) on May 12, 2023. AKFC reserves the right to cancel or amend the RFP process without liability at any time. AKFC will take reasonable steps to extend proposal submission deadlines in connection with a revision to the RFP process.

- Digital submissions only, as an attachment of less than 35MB.
- Descriptive passages should be in black font on white background. The portfolio section is the only section that should contain project images (images optional in team bios). Please do not include images in other sections of the package.
- Either portrait or landscape orientation are acceptable; 8.5 by 11 sheet size



- Only digital submissions to [akfc.hr@akdn.org](mailto:akfc.hr@akdn.org) will be accepted. Timely receipt and correct direction of the proposals shall be the sole responsibility of the applicant. Late submissions will not be accepted.
- Enquiries must be submitted in writing to Kathleen Wiens, AKFC's Exhibitions Manager, at [kathleen.wiens@akdn.org](mailto:kathleen.wiens@akdn.org), no later than 10 calendar days before the closing date. Enquiries received after that time may not be answered.

We thank all applicants for their interest however only short-listed applicants will be contacted for an interview. If short-listed, key members of the proposed team must be available for a virtual interview.

Short-listed applicants will be provided additional background materials in advance and be asked to present two high-level creative concepts for the exhibition as described, and to discuss calendar of deliverables (including presenting alternatives and recommendations on the suggested timeline below). The timeline suggested by AKFC is open to negotiation, other than the end date of December 2026.

The award of any contract will be at the absolute discretion of AKFC. The selection of a recommended firm will not oblige AKFC to negotiate or execute a contract with that recommended firm.

*AKFC is committed to advancing gender equality and inclusion through our programming and operations in Canada and overseas. AKFC requires all employees and consultants to review and abide by the [AKFC Gender Equality Policy](#).*

*AKFC welcomes and encourages submissions from people with disabilities. Accommodations are available on request for consultants taking part in all aspects of the process.*

*AKFC recognizes the importance of safeguarding and is committed to ensuring it manages a wide range of risks such that beneficiaries, staff, other associates, and the organization as a whole are kept safe from harm. All employees and consultants must respect the [AKF Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy](#).*



## Appendix A: Division of Responsibilities

### **AKFC's Responsibilities**

- Foster regular communication between the firm and AKFC project team
- Responsive to the firm's questions, timely communications
- Provide any information requested by the firm, and do so in a timely manner
- Support the organization of in-person workshops
- Facilitate deliverable feedback and approvals
- Provide all necessary content files, including raw video footage, still images, and exhibit objects
- French translation and editing

### **Firm's Responsibilities**

- The firm will provide project management services for all work included in their scope of work.
- The firm will report to AKFC on an ongoing, mutually agreed upon basis.
- The firm will be responsible for tracking all assets as content develops.
- If and when a contract is awarded, the firm will meet for a 2-day in-person kick-off meeting in Ottawa, Ontario. During the kick-off, the firm and AKFC will develop and agree upon a workable timeline for workshops and deliverables.
- The firm will be responsible for developing all text, audio, and visual content. AKFC will contribute and advise on all content aspects, however the final responsibility for writing and development lies with the firm. All content is subject to AKFC approvals.
- Together, the firm and Exhibitions Manager will guide conversations to solicit ideas, solutions, and feedback.
- Working alongside AKFC's Exhibitions Manager and various AKFC staff, the firm will undertake all necessary research and work to develop an Interpretive Plan. AKFC will provide access to necessary resources and help coordinate in-person or virtual meetings as needed.
- The firm will develop three preliminary design theme options for AKFC consideration and selection.

During development of the Interpretive Plan, the firms should be prepared to work closely with a cross-functional group of AKFC staff, and is expected to be responsive and attentive to the objectives identified by multiple teams. Upon consensus, the articulated needs should be embedded in the Interpretive Plan, for development into content (and fulfill post-exhibition needs, if identified by AKFC internal teams). This will require at least two in-person ideation sessions with members of multiple teams.

The firm should be prepared to run a series of half-day, in-person workshops per major deliverable (two half-days back-to-back per workshop – for example, an afternoon session followed by a morning session). This will include presenting the 50% Interpretive Plan, 50% conceptual, and 50% schematic, and 50% detailed design files. The 100% complete planning documents can be presented virtually.

All travel for planning, design and fabrication will be undertaken at the firm's expense.