



Request for Proposal (RFP) Capital Campaign Fundraising Feasibility Study CBRM Central Library Building Project	
Issued by:	Cape Breton Regional Library Board
Issue date:	June 17, 2026
Deadline for submissions:	July 29, 2026
Contact name/title:	Lisa Mulak, Executive Director of Cape Breton Regional Library
Contact email:	lmulak@cbri.ca
Tender ID:	CBRL2026-01

1. Introduction

The Cape Breton Regional Library (CBRL) Board, in partnership with the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM), invites proposals from qualified and experienced consultants to conduct a fundraising feasibility study in support of the CBRM Central Library Building Project.

The feasibility study will provide an assessment of the factors that could influence a major fundraising campaign, and analyze and evaluate conditions to determine the potential capacity to achieve a campaign goal of \$3.2 million.

The feasibility study report will deliver the essential information needed to inform decision-making prior to launching a major fundraising initiative and position CBRL and the CBRM to proceed with an effective and ambitious capital campaign.

The successful consultant will be experienced with planning and conducting a major capital campaign feasibility study, and familiar with the local philanthropic environment. While prior experience with public libraries and/or nonprofit organizations is considered an asset, it is not a requirement.

2. Background

2.1 About Cape Breton Regional Library

Established in 1950, CBRL is a mid-sized public library system comprised of 11 branches and a borrow-by-mail program. The library's service area includes CBRM and Victoria County, with a combined population of approximately 118,679 (2025 estimate). Currently, the library's membership stands at 23,270 active users, meaning that 1 in every 5 residents holds a card. CBRL currently employs 58 full- and part-time staff. Its 2025-2026 operating budget exceeds \$2.8 million, with the Province of Nova Scotia providing approximately 71% of funding and municipalities providing 26%, while 3% comes from fundraising.

Pursuant to the Nova Scotia Libraries Act, CBRL's mission is to strengthen and inspire communities by providing quality collections, programs, and services within a welcoming, inclusive environment.

2.2 About the James McConnell Memorial Library

CBRL's current building in Sydney, the James McConnell Memorial Library, is the region's largest branch and serves as the operational and administrative headquarters for the entire library system. The branch receives nearly 100,000 visitors annually.

For more than 65 years, the McConnell Library has served as a central hub of learning, literacy, and community connection. Originally opened in 1960 and expanded in 1987 with the goal of extending the building's lifespan for another 25 years, the current building faces significant infrastructure and space limitations that constrain service provision, efficient operations, and accessibility improvements.

In response to increasing service demands and evolving models of public library service, CBRM approved a series of studies beginning in 2012 that confirmed the need for a new library facility and established estimated capital and operating costs. Consultation with community members and library stakeholders envisioned a new space that would be user-friendly, accessible, welcoming, and designed for future growth.

2.3 About the CBRM Central Library Project

The proposed new CBRM Central Library will be located in a modern, multi-story waterfront facility. The project forms part of the Edgewater development, led by Doucet Developments, on the site of the former Royal Cape Breton Yacht Club adjacent to the Holiday Inn Sydney Waterfront. The development includes a new purpose-built central library, 186 residential units, commercial space, and underground parking. Site preparation is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2026.

The library will occupy a purpose-built space within the development under a long-term lease arrangement, providing a stable and sustainable facility thoughtfully designed to meet both current demands and the evolving needs of the community. This project represents both a significant civic investment and a strategic economic development initiative. As an innovative and accessible community hub, the new library will foster lifelong learning, create opportunities for meaningful social and cultural connections, and serve as a powerful anchor for the revitalization and vibrancy of the downtown core.

3. Scope of Work

The objective of this feasibility study is to assess the readiness for a major fundraising campaign, evaluate the level of community support for the project, and validate the proposed campaign goal of \$3.2 million.

The consultant will undertake a structured engagement process and prepare a comprehensive feasibility study to assess organizational readiness and community support for the potential capital campaign, including the following:

3.1 Conduct a Situational Analysis

- Review relevant organizational documents, prior studies, policies, financial information, governance structures, and other related materials.
- Assess CBRL's current fundraising capacity, leadership engagement, organizational readiness, and operational infrastructure.

- Identify real and perceived strengths, weaknesses, risks, gaps, and opportunities relevant to launching a successful capital campaign.

3.2 Undertake an Internal Engagement and Feasibility Process

- Facilitate structured consultation sessions with key stakeholders, including library management, CBRL Board members, municipal representatives, and select community leaders.
- Gather qualitative feedback regarding organizational capabilities, potential challenges, leadership commitment, and readiness to undertake a major campaign.
- Evaluate campaign leadership potential, volunteer capacity, and internal alignment around campaign goals.

3.3 Assess Community Fundraising Capacity and Appetite

- Conduct interviews and targeted outreach to prospective donors and community stakeholders.
- Analyze the level of philanthropic capacity and willingness within the community to support a campaign of this magnitude.
- Provide an evidence-based assessment of the feasibility of achieving the proposed campaign goal.

3.4 Deliver a Feasibility Study Report

- Submit findings from the situational analysis, stakeholder consultations, and community fundraising assessment.
- Provide clear recommendations on whether CBRL should proceed with a capital campaign and, if so, under what conditions.
- Present study results to the Executive Director of CBRL, CBRM Mayor and Council, and relevant staff.

4. Proposal Submission Guidelines and Requirements

Proponents must include the following:

4.1 Company Profile

- Overview of firm, including history, size, structure, and areas of practice
- Summarize relevant experience and qualifications
- Describe the firm's key differentiators that make it particularly well-suited to undertake this project

4.2 Project Team

- Identification of project lead
- Short biographies or CVs of key personnel
- Description of any sub-consultants or partner firms to be engaged

4.3 Relevant Experience

Provide at least three (3) examples of comparable projects, including:

- Capital campaigns of similar size and scope
- Fundraising initiatives within the community-based and/or non-profit sector
- Campaigns incorporating cultural considerations, including meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities

Where applicable, please briefly describe the role your firm played in each project and the outcomes achieved.

4.4 Assumptions

Clearly state any project assumptions.

4.5 References

Provide a minimum of three (3) references for similar completed work.

4.6 Fee Schedule

- Itemized breakdown of various components
- Estimated total cost
- Identification of any additional or optional fees

All pricing must be in Canadian Dollars (CAD) and include taxes.

4.7 Page Limit

Submissions must not exceed twenty (20) pages in total length, inclusive of appendices.

4.8 Questions

Any clarifying questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Lisa Mulak, Executive Director, by email: lmulak@cbrl.ca

All inquiries must be submitted by July 8, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. (ADT). Responses will be issued via addendum and posted on the Nova Scotia Provincial Government Procurement Portal.

It is the responsibility of the proponent to ensure any questions have been received by the Executive Director by the stated deadline and to confirm whether any addenda have been issued prior to submitting their proposal.

4.9. RFP Submission

Proposals must be submitted as a signed PDF via email to:

Lisa Mulak
Executive Director, Cape Breton Regional Library
Email: lmulak@cbrl.ca
Subject Line: Capital Campaign Fundraising Feasibility Study RFP
Submission Deadline: July 29, 2026 5:00 p.m. (ADT)

Any proposals received after this time will be disqualified from consideration and will be discarded.

5. Timeline and Key Dates

This RFP will be governed by the following timetable of events. Although CBRL will attempt to meet all dates, it specifically reserves the right to modify any date(s) at its discretion and will notify all respondents by email at the email address provided in the bid package if that is the case.

RFP Issued: June 17, 2026
Deadline for Questions: July 8, 2026
Responses Issued: July 15, 2026
Deadline for RFP submissions: July 29, 2026
Notification of preferred consultant: August 31, 2026

6. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following weighted criteria:

Understanding of CBRL’s needs and project objectives	20%
Qualifications of the firm and consulting team	20%
Experience with similar organizations and references	20%
Campaign strategy and methodology	20%
Cost and schedule	15%
Quality of proposal	5%

7. Terms and Conditions

- Proposals may not be modified after the submission deadline.
- CBRL is not obligated to accept the lowest proposal.
- All proposals become the property of CBRL.
- CBRL is not liable for proposal preparation costs.
- Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed.
- CBRL reserves the right to cancel or amend this RFP at any time.
- The successful proponent will be required to execute a formal contract, in a form acceptable to CBRL, to carry out the services outlined in this tender.

8. Contact Information

Lisa Mulak
Executive Director, Cape Breton Regional Library
Email: lmulak@cbrl.ca

All communications regarding this RFP must be directed in writing to the contact identified above.

CBRL appreciates the interest of all proponents and looks forward to receiving thoughtful and innovative proposals in support of this transformative community project.