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Public Services and Procurement Canada seeks input on QBS

Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) plans a trial use of Qualifications-Based-Selection (QBS) for procuring architectural and engineering services and has issued a [Request-for-Information](#) seeking feedback on QBS from the industry.

The RAIC strongly encourages members to respond to the [questionnaire](#) by the March 13 deadline

“The RAIC and its members have long been concerned about the undue influence of fees on selection processes,” says RAIC President Michael Cox, FRAIC. “We see this RFI as an excellent initiative to explore a consultant-selection method that will respect the experience and approach that architects will bring to a project and allow them a fee base to provide their clients with a high quality of response.

“We encourage PSPC to continue with its plans to apply QBS to some pilot projects,” says Mr. Cox. “Members should review this RFI and if applicable respond to it. If there are any concerns, please inform the RAIC office.”

PSPC, which typically uses two-phase RFPs, seeks input on:

- The industry’s interest, capability, and willingness to participate in a Request-for-Proposals (RFP) and selection process using QBS as a means of identifying the winning proponent;
- The industry’s assessment of the advantage of using QBS in Canada;
- Opportunities, risk, and suggestions on use of QBS for procurement of architecture and engineering services.

Also, PSPC is seeking views on how to increase supplier diversity in procurement opportunities. In particular, it wishes to increase participation of businesses owned or led by Canadians from under-represented groups such as women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and visible minorities.

The RAIC along with the Association of Consulting Engineering Companies-Canada (ACEC) and other stakeholders have been working with PSPC for the last few months to familiarize key leaders within the federal government on the benefits of QBS.

About Qualifications Based Selection (QBS)

As described in the best-practices document [Selecting a Professional Consultant](#), by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, QBS is a competitive process for the



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procurement of professional consulting services based on professional qualifications. Qualifications are submitted to an owner, who evaluates and selects the best-qualified firm or individual(s) for the proposed design, based on technical qualifications. The selected firm and the owner then jointly refine the final scope of work for the procurement. The consultant's fee is then negotiated based on the agreed-upon scope of work and the consultant's submitted rate schedule.

Consulting engineers' association applauds QBS "breakthrough"

The Association of Consulting Engineers-Canada (ACEC) has issued a call to action to its members to participate in the [consultation](#) by Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) on Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS).

"A strong supportive message from the ACEC membership and industry partners is critical to a successful QBS pilot and subsequent adoption by PSPC," ACEC President and CEO John Gamble wrote in a statement to members.

"ACEC applauds the PSPC leadership for its openness to QBS and its willingness to work with the engineering and architecture sectors," said Mr. Gamble. "ACEC along with the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada (RAIC) and other stakeholders have been working with PSPC for the last few months to familiarize key leaders within the federal government on the many benefits of QBS.

"As a result, PSPC has committed to conducting a pilot of QBS procurement for engineering and architecture services to evaluate its effectiveness in achieving better outcomes, more innovation, and life-cycle savings. However, success will depend on the ACEC membership and other industry players demonstrating its strong support for QBS," he said.

"PSPC's plans to pilot QBS and its openness to adopting QBS represent a major breakthrough after years of effort by ACEC and its provincial and territorial Member Organizations across Canada. This was a team effort, and ACEC would also like to thank Toon Dreesen, FRAIC, of the RAIC/Ontario Association of Architects, Cal Harrison of QBS Canada and Mark Steiner of the American Council of Engineering Companies for their important roles in achieving this important QBS milestone. ACEC also thanks Assistant Deputy Minister Arianne Reza and her team at PSPC."



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