



Possibility grows here.

Greenbelt Foundation

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## **Request for Proposals**

### **Survey: Connecting New Canadians to the Greenbelt**

#### **Background**

In 2019, the Greenbelt Foundation wanted to better understand how we could continue to expand our outreach to New Canadians in order to increase their familiarity with the Greenbelt and the benefits it provides, as well as increase their use of the Greenbelt's outdoor recreation opportunities for the many benefits they can provide to them.

New Canadians are becoming a significant proportion of the province's population, but research and anecdotal evidence suggest that they are underrepresented in accessing parks and outdoor areas. The Greenbelt is more than 2 million acres of agriculture and natural areas in and near municipalities with large New Canadian populations, including Brampton, Markham, Mississauga, Richmond Hill, and Toronto. The Greenbelt contains many agri-tourism, nature-based tourism, and other recreational opportunities throughout its parks, natural areas, and agricultural areas, including 10,000km of trails, a 475km cycle route, and a number of Pick-Your-Own farms. The Foundation recognizes that the Greenbelt's parks, natural areas, and agricultural areas can provide New Canadians with opportunities to participate in nature-based tourism, agri-tourism, and other recreational activities near their new home.

In 2019 the Foundation retained expert services to undertake key informant interviews with organizations that are involved with outdoor recreation programming for New Canadians in the GTA, followed by focus groups with first- and second-generation<sup>1</sup> Chinese and South Asian Canadians. The six focus groups were held across three nights in Toronto, Mississauga, and Markham, with a total of 48 participants. The Toronto focus groups included second-generation Chinese Canadians, the Mississauga focus groups included first- and second-generation South Asian Canadians, and the Markham focus groups included first-generation Chinese Canadians. We selected focus groups with Chinese Canadians and South Asian Canadians because in recent years, India and China were the top two places of birth for recent immigrants to the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area

The findings from the interviews and the focus groups have helped the Greenbelt Foundation to understand what these audiences are interested in, what activities they are already engaging in (e.g. hiking, cycling, and on-farm fruit picking), but generally they had little knowledge that they were in the Greenbelt or what it was. We also began to understand how to target and reach New Canadian audiences with information. The Greenbelt Foundation is

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this research, "first-generation" referred to individuals who were born elsewhere and immigrated to Canada, while "second-generation" referred to the children of immigrants and were born in Canada.

interested in continuing to build on this research to inform approaches to increase Greenbelt awareness among New Canadians, identify barriers to engagement, and how to continue to effectively expand our reach to these audiences.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this research is to:

- Understand New Canadians' familiarity and awareness of the Greenbelt, and the nature-based recreational and agri-tourism opportunities it provides;
- Identify how to effectively target and reach diverse New Canadian populations with information about the Greenbelt regarding its agri-tourism and nature-based recreational opportunities; and,
- Identify what nature-based and agriculture-based programming and activities are most of interest and relevant for New Canadians.

Since the COVID19 pandemic has highlighted the interest and need for park space and other nature experiences to maintain physical and mental health, we would also like for this project and its results to contribute to our understanding of the importance of these spaces, and any potential barriers New Canadians experience with accessing parks, natural areas, and outdoor recreation opportunities in the Greenbelt.

The results of the study will continue inform the Foundation's strategies to reach and engage with diverse New Canadian communities and help agri-food and nature-based recreation tourism businesses and agencies in the Greenbelt expand their services and reach new customers. We expect to use the results internally to help shape our communications and outreach strategies, programming and grant-making priorities, and research priorities. We will also share the results with our partners in a variety of sectors who may benefit from this information, such as outdoor and agri-food tourism businesses, tourism industry groups, community groups and non-profits, conservation authorities, and municipalities.

## **Scope of Work**

This project will involve conducting an online survey or telephone polling with New Canadians in order to achieve the purposes of the research as outlined above. The survey should achieve at minimum 450 responses, and the consultant is invited to include options for a higher number of responses. Survey questions should include and expand on questions included in the 2019 focus groups, which would probe:

- level of Greenbelt brand awareness;



- attitudes and perceptions of the Greenbelt specific to outdoor recreation and agri-tourism opportunities;
- interest in a variety of Greenbelt agri-tourism and outdoor recreation activities, including what they like and enjoy about these activities;
- barriers they encounter in accessing and enjoying outdoor recreation activities and natural spaces, and what is needed to address these barriers (e.g., better wayfinding, transportation access, etc.); and,
- where they get their information.

We will determine which audiences specifically the survey should target, or if the survey should broadly target anyone who identifies as a New Canadian in conversation with the selected consultant.

The final deliverables will include a survey questionnaire of around 20-30 questions for review by Foundation staff, a report summarizing the results, and one presentation on the findings to Foundation staff.

Other research activities may be proposed by the consultant.

### **Project Timeline**

The project should be completed by **December 15th, 2020**.

### **Proposal Requirements**

Proposals should include the following:

- A description of your understanding of the assignment and the proposed approach;
- A draft project timeline with key decisions, touchstone meetings, milestones and project completion dates;
- CV for the consultant (and any other team members) that clearly outlines their qualifications relevant to this assignment;
- Three examples of similar projects completed;
- Three references relevant to this assignment;
- A time/task breakdown by project team member (if more than one consultant); and,
- A proposed budget including reimbursable expenses as applicable.

The Greenbelt Foundation reserves the right to choose any or none of the vendors responding to this request for proposals.



Any questions and completed proposals should be directed to:

Kathy Macpherson

Vice President, Research and Policy

Greenbelt Foundation

[kmacpherson@greenbelt.ca](mailto:kmacpherson@greenbelt.ca)

**Proposals must be received by email no later than October 30<sup>th</sup>.**

