

Nujikina'muet-jij Storybook Project

Issues: September 28, 2026

Closing Date: October 31, 2026

RFP Reference Number: NSMTC-2026-01

Requests for Proposals (RFP)

To support the development of the Nujikina'muet-jij (Little Teacher) initiative we are issuing a Requests for Proposal (RFP) for Indigenous professionals with expertise in illustration. This role will work among other professionals to further develop the storybook project.

Together, these roles will create culturally grounded educational resources that integrate Mi'kmaq knowledge, digital literacy, online safety, Indigenous Data Sovereignty, and OCAP® principles.

Final products will consist of a story book, Course slides and course materials.

- **September-October 2026: RFPs publicly posted and shared to encourage broad Indigenous participation.**
- **End of October 2026: Evaluation and selection of successful proponents.**
- **November 2026 – February 2027: Collaborative development of illustrative materials.**
- **February 2027: Completion and delivery of all project materials.**

RFP Contact:

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1. Project Overview

Little Teacher Project

Digital Knowledge Sharing & Data Governance

Nujikina'muet-jij (Little Teacher) is an NSMTC-led program that brings youth, Elders, and community members together through inter-generational digital learning. The program focuses on practical digital knowledge, online safety, and Indigenous data governance, while working within existing community and Elder gatherings rather than creating new systems. All activities are guided by OCAP® principles and responsibility for the next seven generations.

Why We're Doing This

Community engagement has shown that fear of technology, uncertainty around the internet, and limited digital safety knowledge create real barriers—especially for Elders. At the same time, youth use digital tools daily without always receiving guidance on privacy, scams, or data protection. Communities have also raised concerns about Indigenous knowledge and data being misused or taken without consent. Nujikina'muet-jij responds to these gaps by building confidence, reducing risk, and reinforcing community control over digital spaces and information.

Core Approach

The program is built on inter-generational learning, coordinated by youth leads and community contacts:

- Youth share practical digital skills and online safety knowledge
- Elders share teachings around responsibility, care, and storytelling
- Communities guide how and where learning takes place

This approach helps reduce fear, build trust, and strengthen long-term relationships.

Youth Training & Participation

Youth (ages 18–30, selected from their own communities where possible) receive paid training focused on:

- OCAP® principles and Indigenous Data Sovereignty
- Privacy, consent, and digital safeguards
- Online scams, fraud, and digital harm awareness
- Safe use of phones, tablets, computers, and social media

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Training is delivered over two weekends (4 hours per weekend), using a mix of in-community and online sessions. Youth will be compensated for training, community participation, and related learning activities.

Data Governance & Protection

A core focus of the program is reinforcing Indigenous Data Sovereignty. Participants learn that community data belongs to the community, decisions about collection and access remain local, and consent guides all digital interactions. No personal or sensitive Elder data is collected without consent, and participation tracking is limited to attendance, hours, and activity type.

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2. Indigenous Artist / Illustrator

Nujikina'muet-jij (Little Teacher)

The North Shore Mi'kmaq Tribal Council (NSMTC) is seeking proposals from Indigenous artists and illustrators to support the visual development of the Nujikina'muet-jij (Little Teacher) initiative.

About Little Teacher:

Nujikina'muet-jij (Little Teacher) is an NSMTC-led inter-generational digital learning initiative that brings together youth, Elders, and communities through storytelling, digital literacy, online safety, and Indigenous data governance. The project combines traditional teachings with modern educational tools while reinforcing OCAP® principles and Indigenous Data Sovereignty. Using Cultural understanding to teach new ideas

The initiative aims to create culturally grounded educational resources that strengthen community knowledge sharing, reduce fear around technology, and support future generations through respectful digital learning.

Scope of Work:

NSMTC is seeking an Indigenous artist or illustrator to create culturally grounded visual materials for educational and storytelling purposes. Draft concepts and preliminary designs have already been completed and will be provided to the selected artist as a foundation for the final work.

Responsibilities include:

- Developing illustrations and visual storytelling elements based on existing draft concepts
- Creating artwork suitable for book, course, and presentation materials
- Supporting visual representation of Mi'kmaq teachings, inter-generational learning, and community knowledge sharing
- Collaborating with project leads to ensure cultural relevance and consistency.
- Preparing final artwork in formats suitable for print and digital use

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Deliverables:

The successful proponent will provide:

- Finalized illustrations and artwork based on approved drafts.
- Visual assets for course slides, storytelling materials, and educational resources
- Print-ready and digital-ready artwork files.
- Minor revisions as required through the review process.
- Attend Bi-weekly virtual meetings for development, reporting and updating.
- Developed approx. 26-30 pages for a story book/ presentation slide.

Budget:

Total available budget: \$8,500 CAD

This amount includes design development, revisions, preparation of final files, and all related artistic services.

Timeline:

Work is expected to occur during the 2026 project period, with timelines coordinated alongside content and course development. Artist illustrations should be complete no later than February 28th, 2027.

Submission Requirements

- Interested applicants should submit:
- Portfolio or examples of previous artwork
- Brief description of artistic approach and experience
- Contact information.

Preference will be given to Indigenous artists with experience in culturally grounded storytelling and educational illustration.

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3. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for evaluation, proposals must include the information requested below. Applicants should provide clear and relevant information that demonstrates their ability to complete the work outlined in the RFP.

3.1. Cover Letter

The applicant shall provide a dated and signed cover letter.

The cover letter should include:

A brief statement demonstrating the applicant's understanding of the Nujikina'muet-jij (Little Teacher) initiative and the work required.

Confirmation that the applicant can complete the required deliverables by February 28, 2027.

The name and contact information of the person who will serve as the main contact throughout the project.

A list of any additional team members or subcontractors who will contribute to the project, including their roles.

Any important information or clarification the applicant would like NSMTC to consider.

3.2. Project Understanding and Relevant Experience

The applicant shall demonstrate an understanding of the Little Teacher initiative, including its focus on:

Mi'kmaq knowledge and cultural teachings.

Inter-generational learning between youth and Elders.

Digital literacy and online safety.

Indigenous Data Sovereignty.

OCAP® principles.

Creating culturally grounded and accessible educational resources.

Applicants should describe their experience working with First Nation or Indigenous communities, organizations, Elders, youth, or Indigenous knowledge systems.

Applicants should explain how they will work respectfully with the NSMTC project team, the project Elder, other selected contractors, and community participants.

3.2.1. Indigenous Artist/Illustrator Requirements

Applicants for the Indigenous Artist/Illustrator RFP should also provide:

A portfolio or examples of previous artwork.

A description of their artistic style and approach.

Examples of illustration, visual storytelling, book design, presentation design, or educational artwork.

Experience creating culturally grounded artwork.

An explanation of how existing draft concepts will be developed into completed illustrations.

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An explanation of how cultural accuracy and consistency will be maintained across the storybook, course slides, and educational materials.

Confirmation that final artwork can be provided in print-ready, digital-ready, and editable formats where applicable.

3.2.2. Storytelling and Knowledge Gathering Requirements

Applicants for the Storytelling and Knowledge Gathering RFP should also provide: Examples of relevant storytelling, writing, facilitation, knowledge gathering, or educational work.

Experience working respectfully with Elders, youth, community members, and cultural knowledge.

An explanation of how stories, teachings, and meeting discussions will be documented and organized.

An explanation of how the applicant will support the development of storybook, course, slide, and educational content.

An explanation of how sensitive cultural knowledge and community information will be handled respectfully.

An explanation of how the applicant's work will follow Indigenous Data Sovereignty and OCAP® principles.

3.2.3. Curriculum Coordinator Requirements

Applicants for the Curriculum Coordinator RFP should also provide:

A resume or organizational profile.

A description of curriculum development experience.

Examples of previous curricula, lesson plans, facilitator guides, training programs, or educational resources.

Experience developing learning materials for youth or community-based programs.

Experience working respectfully with Elders and Indigenous knowledge systems.

An explanation of how project discussions, cultural teachings, meeting notes, and existing materials will be developed into a complete curriculum.

An explanation of how digital literacy, online safety, privacy, Indigenous data governance, and the broader data ecosystem will be included.

An explanation of how the applicant will support the development of a land-based learning activity with the project Elders.

An explanation of how curriculum materials will be made clear, culturally appropriate, accessible, and suitable for youth ages 18–30.

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3.3. Proposed Project Plan

The applicant shall provide a clear project plan describing how they will complete the work.

The project plan should include:

The applicant's proposed approach.

The main activities and steps required to complete the work.

A schedule showing when drafts, reviews, revisions, and final materials will be completed.

A list of the required deliverables.

How the applicant will participate in bi-weekly virtual development and update meetings.

How the applicant will communicate and collaborate with NSMTC, the project Elder, and the other selected contractors.

How feedback and requested revisions will be addressed.

Any support, information, or materials required from NSMTC.

The proposed schedule must demonstrate that all final materials can be completed and delivered by February 28, 2027.

3.4. Applicant or Project Team Qualifications

Applicants should identify every person who will contribute to the project.

For each person, provide:

Name.

Role.

Responsibilities.

Relevant education or training.

Professional or cultural experience relevant to the work.

Previous experience working on similar projects.

If the applicant plans to use subcontractors or additional team members, their qualifications and responsibilities must also be included.

The applicant shall identify one person who will act as the main contact with NSMTC throughout the project.

3.5. Examples of Previous Work

Applicants shall provide examples of work that is relevant to the RFP for which they are applying.

Examples may include:

Illustrations, storybooks, visual storytelling, or educational artwork.

Written stories, knowledge gathering materials, community publications, or presentation content.

Curricula, lesson plans, facilitator guides, learning activities, or training materials.

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Work completed with Indigenous communities, Elders, youth, or Indigenous organizations.

Applicants should provide enough information to explain their role in developing each example.

3.6. Proposed Budget

The applicant shall provide a clear budget showing how the available funding will be used.

The budget must include all costs required to complete the work, including:

Professional or artistic fees.

Meeting participation.

Planning and preparation.

Draft development.

Revisions.

Final file preparation.

Materials or supplies.

Travel, if required.

Subcontractor or team member costs.

Applicable taxes.

The total proposed cost must not exceed the budget available for the applicable RFP:

Indigenous Artist/Illustrator: \$8,500 CAD.

Storytelling and Knowledge Gathering Support: \$3,500 CAD.

Curriculum Coordinator: \$5,000 CAD.

No additional funding beyond the approved budget will be available unless agreed to in writing by NSMTC.

The applicant should suggest a payment schedule connected to the completion of specific project steps or deliverables.

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4. SUBMISSION

Proposals must be submitted as a single electronic document according to the submission instructions and deadline identified in the applicable RFP.

The proposal must be signed by the applicant or by a person authorized to make commitments on behalf of the applicant or organization.

Late or incomplete proposals may not be considered.

4.1. Evaluation and Acceptance of Proposals

4.1.1.

This RFP does not create an obligation for NSMTC to enter into a contract with any applicant.

4.1.2.

NSMTC will review the proposals and select the applicant whose submission best meets the needs of the project.

4.1.3.

NSMTC will not be responsible for costs incurred while preparing or submitting a proposal or participating in an interview.

4.1.4.

NSMTC accepts no liability to an applicant before a written contract has been signed.

4.1.5.

NSMTC may request clarification or additional information from an applicant during the evaluation process.

4.1.6.

NSMTC may negotiate the project scope, schedule, deliverables, payment schedule, or other contract details with the preferred applicant.

4.1.7.

NSMTC reserves the right to amend this RFP. Any changes will be shared equally with all known applicants through an addendum.

4.1.8.

Submitting a proposal does not require NSMTC to accept the proposal or proceed with the project.

4.1.9.

NSMTC may accept or reject any or all proposals and may cancel or reissue the RFP without penalty.

4.1.10.

Applicants must identify any information in their proposal that they consider confidential or proprietary.

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4.1.11.

By submitting a proposal, the applicant acknowledges and accepts the terms and conditions contained in the RFP.

4.2. Rejection of Proposals

NSMTC may reject a proposal if:

It is incomplete.

It does not meet the requirements of the applicable RFP.

It is received after the submission deadline.

The proposed budget exceeds the available funding.

The applicant cannot meet the required project timeline.

The proposal contains false or misleading information.

4.3. Ownership and Use of Project Materials

All ownership, use, storage, and future editing rights for materials developed through the project will be confirmed in the final contract.

Project materials must be handled in a manner consistent with Indigenous Data Sovereignty, OCAP® principles, and any cultural protocols identified by NSMTC or the project Elder.

The successful applicant must receive approval from NSMTC before publicly sharing, reproducing, publishing, or using project materials outside the Little Teacher initiative.

4.4. Method of Payment

Payment will be made based on invoices submitted for completed work or approved project milestones.

Applicants should propose a payment schedule connected to specific project steps or deliverables.

The final payment schedule will be negotiated with the successful applicant and included in the project contract.

Final payment may be held until all required deliverables, revisions, and final files have been received and approved by NSMTC.

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