



Expression of Interest (Eoi)

IP Strategy Development & Implementation for Startups

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Introduction:

North Forge Technology Exchange is pleased to invite law firms, IP agents, or professionals to submit proposals for providing IP strategy development and implementation services tailored to startups. As a leading incubator and accelerator supporting startup innovation, we assist budding entrepreneurs in securing and leveraging their intellectual property rights to foster growth and success.

Background:

We are North Forge Technology Exchange – a non-profit incubator accelerator that works with startups across Canada in technology, STEM, and advanced manufacturing from the ideation stages all the way through to Series A. We fuel Manitoba's innovation economy, providing founders with experienced mentors, entrepreneurs-in-residence, award-winning growth coaches, and a unique, online four-stage Founders program. We have worked with over 300 companies since June 2020 that have created over 1,500 jobs.

Armed with North America's largest fabrication lab (FabLab™), we operate out of 33,500 square feet across Innovation Drive and Innovation Alley in Winnipeg, including a new 4,000 sq foot location in Thompson, Manitoba.

Project Overview:

The Government of Canada has launched the [ElevateIP Program](#) to help Canadian startups access intellectual property services. The program starts in 2023 and lasts till March 2026. North Forge, in collaboration and partnership with Communitech, will focus on helping startups protect, strategically manage and leverage their IP assets in Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

The primary objective of this project is to develop tailored IP strategies for startups, considering their unique needs and challenges. The selected service providers will collaborate with North Forge and startup founders to create comprehensive IP strategies and implementation plans that protect their innovations, enhance market positioning, and facilitate future growth.

The program will be delivered through a 3-tiered approach:

- Tier 1 focuses on IP education and is delivered through online resources (availability to be determined).
- Tier 2 provides access to subject matter experts for IP assessments and to IP professionals for IP strategy development.
- Tier 3 focuses on the creation of IP assets that are delivered by an IP professional.

Impact Of the Project

- Capacity building of Business Accelerators, Incubators and startups.
- Access to high quality services from qualified personnel.
- Startups use these resources to formally file their Intellectual Property.
- Startups use tools and resources for sustainable expansion and growth including creating employment opportunities.

Scope of Work:

The service provider is expected to perform the following tasks:

- Conduct IP Audits & Assessments:** Assess the startups' existing intellectual property assets, including patents, trademarks, copyrights, and trade secrets.
- Customized IP Strategy Development:** Create personalized IP strategies aligned with each startup's business goals, market objectives, and target industries.
- IP Commercialization Support:** Offer guidance on IP monetization, licensing opportunities, and technology transfer.
- Risk Mitigation:** Identify and address potential IP infringement risks and recommend proactive measures to safeguard the startups' intellectual property.
- Customized IP Contracts and Agreements:** Create agreements and contracts such as (but not limited to) NDAs, Privacy Policies, Terms of Service etc.

Preferred Expertise:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria. Preference will be given to firms that have offices in Manitoba and/or Saskatchewan:

- a. **Relevant Experience:** Demonstrated experience in providing IP strategy services to startups or early-stage companies.
- b. **Team Expertise:** Qualifications, certifications, and expertise of the team members involved in the project.
- c. **Understanding of Startup Ecosystem:** Knowledge and understanding of the challenges and needs specific to startups in the IP domain.
- d. **Methodology and Approach:** Clear and innovative methodology for developing tailored IP strategies for startups.
- e. **Cost-effectiveness:** Competitive pricing and transparent fee structure for the proposed services.
- f. **References and Success Stories:** Positive feedback from previous startup clients and examples of successful IP strategy development.
- g. **Additional Value-Added Services:** Any extra support or resources offered to startups beyond IP strategy development.
- h. **Office location in Saskatchewan and/or Manitoba:** Any office located in either of the two provinces. If not located here, where is the nearest office that an ElevateIP startup can approach the service provider.

Submission of EoI:

Provide an estimated costs, timeline for completing the IP services for startups. Include key milestones and deliverables as shared in Annex - A.

Questions and Feedback:

All questions and queries can be sent directly to Atif Mumtaz, Program Manager for ElevateIP at email amumtaz@northforge.ca.

Proposal Submission:

Please submit your proposal to us at the email provided. Electronic submissions are preferred, and all documents should be sent to IP@northforge.ca.

Thank you for considering participating in this exciting opportunity. We look forward to receiving your proposal and working together to empower startups with effective intellectual property strategies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joelle Foster". The script is elegant and cursive.

Joelle Foster
CEO
North Forge Technology Exchange