MINISTRY OF FORESTS LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Multi-Use List Request for Qualifications

SEED GOODS AND SERVICES

Request for Qualifications Number:	ON-003735
Issue Date:	January 21th, 2022
Initial Intake Response Deadline	February 22th, 2022
RFQ Termination Date:	January 20rd, 2027

Delivery Instructions and Delivery Location
Email, to procurement@gov.bc.ca, with the Request for Qualifications number in the subject line and following the instructions in Section 3.20 of this RFQ and the Guidelines for Vendors for Submissions Via Email. **In order to be considered for the Initial Intake, a Response must be received before the Initial Intake Response Deadline identified above.** **Vendors may submit Responses after the Initial Intake Response Deadline and those Responses will be dealt with as described in section 3.6.**

Government Contact
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1. Summary of the Opportunity

Interested Vendors are invited to submit a Response to this RFQ for the opportunity to be evaluated and determined whether they are eligible to be added to the Ministry's list of Qualified Supplier of various seeds and seed blends.

As described in section 6, on a non-exclusive "as, if and when requested" basis, Qualified Suppliers may be sent Competition Notices providing the opportunity to compete to provide Services to the Ministry.

Only Qualified Suppliers will be sent and may respond to Competition Notices that may issue from this RFQ. No Competition Notices will be issued before the Initial Intake.

The Services include the certification, provision, packaging, and shipping of various seeds and seed blends for delivery to Ministry offices and warehouses across British Columbia. The Services are described in greater detail, including in section 5 and the Appendices.

Interested Vendors should familiarize themselves with the entirety of this RFQ and submit a Response as described in section 8.

2. Definitions used in this Request for Qualifications

Throughout this Request for Qualifications, the following definitions will be used (and the singular is interchangeable with the plural):

"**Addenda**" means all additional information regarding this RFQ including amendments to the RFQ.

"Appendix" means an Appendix to the RFQ.

"**BC Bid**" means the electronic tendering service maintained by the Province including the website at http://www.bcbid.ca or any replacement website.

"**Competition Notice**" means the Province's standard request for proposals solicitation document or such other solicitation document as determined in the Ministry's sole discretion.

"**Contract**" means a written contract between the Ministry and a Qualified Supplier in the form referenced in a Competition Notice.

"**Contractor**" means a Qualified Supplier that has entered into a Contract.

"**Delivery Location**" means the location or, if applicable, the locations for delivery of Responses identified on the cover page of the RFQ.

"**Government Contact**" means the person or contact identified on the cover page of the RFQ.

"**Initial Intake Response Deadline**" means the date and time set out on the cover page of the RFQ that applies to the first intake of Responses.

"**Initial Intake**" means the initial intake and evaluation of Responses that are received before the Initial Intake Response Deadline. After the Initial Intake Response Deadline, Responses will be received on a continuous basis as further described in section 3.6.

"**List of Qualified Suppliers**" or "**List**" means the Qualified Suppliers, that have been determined by the Ministry to possess the qualifications described in this RFQ (or any subsequent modifications thereof, if any) and that have satisfied any conditions set by the Ministry for remaining on the List.

"**Ministry**" means the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

"**must**" or "**mandatory**" means a requirement that must be met in order for a Response to receive consideration.

"**Part 1: Respondent's Statement**" means the portion of the Respondent Qualification Template which includes the statement that, amongst other things, the Respondent agrees with the terms and conditions of the RFQ.

"**Province**" means Her Majesty the Queen in right of the Province of British Columbia and includes the Ministry.

"**Qualified Resource**" means a Resource that has been evaluated under this RFQ and meets the qualifications described in this RFQ and any condition set by the Ministry for continuing to be considered qualified.

"**Qualified Supplier**" means a Respondent that meets the qualifications described in this RFQ and that has satisfied any conditions set by the Ministry for being added to, and staying on, the List of Qualified Suppliers.

"**Resource Qualification Template**" means the template if attached.

"**Resource**" means an employee or subcontractor of a Respondent or Qualified Supplier that is proposed in the Respondent's Response, if applicable or, if Resources are not evaluated in this RFQ, a Resource proposed in response to a Competition Notice, if applicable.

"**Respondent Qualifications Template**" means the template attached as Appendix A.

"**Respondent**" means a Vendor that submits a Response.

"**Response**" means the written application from a Respondent submitted in reply to this RFQ.

"**RFQ Termination Date**" means the date (including any modifications thereof) that marks the termination and end of the period of validity for the RFQ and the List.

"**RFQ**" or "**Request for Qualifications**" means this document, including the processes described in this document, as may be modified from time to time.

"**Services**" means the services described in the RFQ.

"**should**" or "**desirable**" means a requirement having a significant degree of importance to the objectives of this RFQ.

"**Tax Verification**" Letter means a letter issued by the Province's Ministry of Finance to verify that a Qualified Suppler prior to becoming a Contractor, meets its applicable B.C. corporate income tax filing obligations and provincial sales tax (PST) filing and payment obligations.

"**Vendor**" means a natural person or single legal entity (excluding its parents, subsidiaries or other affiliates) with the legal capacity to contract that seeks to supply or supplies goods or services and includes Respondents and Qualified Suppliers.

3. The Terms and Conditions of this Request for Qualifications

3.1 Copyright

This document is subject to copyright and may be used, reproduced, modified and distributed to the extent necessary for the Vendor to prepare and submit a Response.

3.2 RFQ Termination Date

Unless terminated earlier, or extended, the RFQ and its period of validity ends and is terminated on the date set out on the cover page of the RFQ.

3.3 Trade Agreements

The List of Qualified Suppliers established under this RFQ may be used for procurements covered by trade agreements including:

a) Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement;

b) New West Partnership Trade Agreement;

c) Canadian Free Trade Agreement;

d) Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement;

e) World Trade Organization Agreement on Government Procurement;

f) Canada-UK Trade Continuity Agreement; and

g) Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

3.4 Enquiries

All enquiries related to this RFQ are to be directed *in writing* to the Government Contact at the Government Contact email address on the front cover of this RFQ. Information obtained from any other source is not official and should not be relied upon. Please include the RFQ number in the subject line of any email.

Enquiries and any responses providing new information will be recorded and posted to BC Bid or otherwise distributed.

Despite the foregoing, the Ministry may choose in its sole discretion not to respond, respond in whole or in part, or reformulate enquiries in whole or in part. The Ministry may in its sole discretion choose whether to post any such enquiries (as reformulated if reformulated) and responses to BC Bid or otherwise distribute to Vendors, Respondents or Qualified Suppliers, as it deems appropriate.

Details regarding email standards and rules are provided in section 3.20.

3.5 Additional Information on the RFQ

Subject to above section 3.4, all subsequent information regarding this RFQ, including modifications made to the RFQ, will be posted on the BC Bid Website. It is the sole responsibility of Vendors to check for amendments and additional information on the BC Bid Website.

3.6 Vendors May Also Submit Responses After the Initial Intake Response Deadline

Vendors may submit a Response at any time up to the RFQ Termination Date.

Any Response received after the Initial Intake Response Deadline will be subject to that Respondent submitting its Response in the manner as outlined in this RFQ and will be

evaluated and considered for inclusion on the List within a reasonably short period of time after the Response is received, accounting for the Ministry to reasonably and practicably convene a qualifications review committee to evaluate such Response.

A Respondent who is not successful in becoming a Qualified Supplier may submit a new Response after the Initial Intake Response Deadline. The Ministry will evaluate all such new Response(s) without consideration to any past Response(s) and consistent with the evaluation process described in this RFQ.

3.7 Review and Selection

Responses will be assessed in light of the qualification review criteria. The Ministry will be under no obligation to receive further information, whether written or oral, from any Respondent.

Responses will be assessed by a qualifications review committee formed from time to time by the Ministry. The qualifications review committee may change in composition from time-to-time and may include contractors of the Province.

The qualifications review committee will evaluate Responses as described in section 7.

3.8 Responses

By submitting a Response, the Respondent agrees that such Response will be deemed to have been submitted with all due authorization of the Respondent and that the Respondent is agreeing to the terms and conditions of the RFQ, including how procurements are conducted under section 6 and the minimum time that a Qualified Supplier may have to respond to a Competition Notice as set out in section 6.1.2.

3.9 Changes to Response Wording

The Respondent will not change the wording of its Response after the Response is submitted, and no words or comments will be added to the Response unless requested by the Ministry for purposes of clarification.

3.10 Vendor's Expenses and Limitation of Liability

Vendors are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing a Response. The Ministry will not be liable to any Vendor for any claims (in contract, tort or otherwise) including for costs or damages incurred in preparing a Response, any errors or technical difficulties associated with communication by email, or any other matter whatsoever.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, nothing in this section shall limit the right of a Respondent to access and utilize the Bid Protest Mechanism established under the New West Partnership Trade Agreement.

3.11 The RFQ is not a Contract

This RFQ is neither an offer nor an agreement to purchase any Services from any Respondent. Nor is this RFQ an offer or an agreement to enter, or to select any Respondent to enter into a Contract. The Ministry is not bound to enter into a Contract with any Qualified Supplier.

Notice in writing to a Respondent that it has been identified as a Qualified Supplier will not give the Respondent any legal or equitable rights or privileges relative to the Services that a Qualified Supplier may render as a Contractor. Only if a Qualified Supplier and the Ministry enter into a subsequent full written Contract will a Respondent acquire any legal or equitable rights or privileges. The Ministry makes no representations whatsoever with respect to the number of Competition Notices or Contracts that may be issued under the RFQ.

3.12 List of Qualified Suppliers Not Binding

A Respondent may withdraw its Response at any time by notifying the Government Contact in writing.

A Qualified Supplier may withdraw from the List of Qualified Suppliers at any time by notifying the Government Contact in writing.

The Ministry may withdraw the name of a Qualified Supplier from the List of Qualified Suppliers, or withdraw a Qualified Resource from eligibility to provide Services, by promptly notifying that Qualified Supplier in writing. On request by such Qualified Supplier, the Ministry will provide written reasons for the withdrawal.

3.13 Modification of RFQ

The Ministry reserves the right to modify this RFQ at any time in its sole discretion, including changing the RFQ Termination Date, or cancelling this RFQ.

3.14 Qualified Suppliers to Advise of Changes

Qualified Suppliers will promptly advise the Government Contact in writing of any change in submitted qualifications for the Qualified Supplier, or, if applicable, a Qualified Resource; point of contact information for notices; business entity structure; business name; or other such changes that would affect the Qualified Supplier's or Qualified Resources.

3.15 Ownership of Responses

All documents, including Responses, submitted to the Ministry become the property of the Ministry. They will be received and held in confidence by the Ministry, subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Documents will not be returned to Respondents even if the Response is withdrawn. For more information on the application of the Act, go to:

http://www.cio.gov.bc.ca/cio/priv_leg/index.page.

3.16 Collection and Use of Personal Information

Respondents are solely responsible for familiarizing themselves with, and ensuring that they comply with, the laws applicable to the collection and dissemination of information, including resumes and other personal information concerning any Resources. If this RFQ requests Respondents to provide the Ministry with personal information of Resources, Respondents will ensure that they have obtained written consent from each of those Resources before forwarding such personal information to

the Ministry. Such written consents are to specify that the personal information may be forwarded to the Ministry for the purposes of responding to this RFQ and used by the Ministry for the purposes set out in the RFQ. The Ministry may, at any time, request the original consents or copies of the original consents from Respondents, and upon such request being made, Respondents will immediately supply such originals or copies to the Ministry.

3.17 Conflict of Interest

A Response may be disqualified, a Qualified Supplier removed from the List, or, if applicable, a Qualified Resource's eligibility withdrawn, if the Respondent's, Qualified Supplier's, or Qualified Resource's current or past business or other interests, may, in the Ministry's opinion, give rise to an actual or potential conflict of interest in connection with any Services described in the RFQ. This includes, but is not limited to, involvement by a Respondent, Qualified Supplier or Qualified Resource in the preparation of the RFQ or a relationship with any employee, contractor or representative of the Province involved in preparation of the RFQ, participating on the qualifications review committee evaluation committee, or involved in the procurement of or administration of any Contract.

If a Vendor is in doubt or has a question as to whether there might be a conflict of interest, they should consult with their own advisors and with the Government Contact prior to submitting a Response. By submitting a Response, the Respondent represents that it is not aware of any circumstances that would give rise to a conflict of interest that is actual or potential, in respect of the RFQ.

3.18 Lobbying

A Respondent must not attempt to influence the outcome of the RFQ process by engaging in lobbying activities. Any attempt by the Respondent to communicate for this purpose directly or indirectly with any employee, contractor or representative of the Province, including members of the evaluation committee and any elected officials of the Province, or with the media, may result in disqualification of the Respondent.

3.19 Reservation of Rights

In addition to any other discretionary rights or reservation of rights allowed the Ministry, the Ministry reserves the right, in its sole discretion:

a) to waive any non-material irregularity, defect or deficiency in a Response;

b) to reject any Response due to unsatisfactory references or unsatisfactory past performance under contracts with the Province, or any material error, omission or misrepresentation in the Response;

c) to exclude a Respondent from participation in the RFQ, at any point in the RFQ process, or to exclude a Qualified Supplier from participation in a subsequent procurement associated with a Competition Notice issued under this RFQ, where there is supporting evidence, on grounds of one or more of the following:

i) bankruptcy or insolvency;

ii) false declarations or misrepresentations;

iii) significant or persistent deficiencies in performance of any substantive requirement or obligation under a prior contract or contracts with the Province, including a Contract;

iv) final judgments in respect of serious crimes or other serious offences;

v) professional misconduct or acts or omissions that adversely reflect on the commercial integrity of the Respondent or Qualified Supplier; or

vi) engaging in conduct prohibited by the *Competition Act* such as bid-rigging as described in section 47 of the *Competition Act*, or engaging in conspiracies, agreements or arrangements between competitors as described in section 45 of the *Competition Act*;

vii) failure to pay taxes; and

d) To remove a Qualified Supplier from the List or, if applicable, remove a Qualified Resource's eligibility, for failing to meet the requirements for staying on the List of Qualified Suppliers as set out in this RFQ, or as may be communicated by the Ministry from time to time.

3.20 Email Standards and Rules

a) The Respondent is solely responsible for ensuring that its electronic Response, including all attachments (if any), is received at the Delivery Location and any enquiries are received by the Government Contact.

b) The maximum size of each Response submission component or enquiry is 20 MB or less (Respondents are solely responsible for ensuring that email Response submissions and enquiries comply with any size restrictions imposed by the Respondent's internet service provider).

c) Respondents should submit the email Response or enquiry in a single email, include the RFQ number in the subject line of the email and avoid sending multiple email submissions for the same Response or enquiry. However, if the file size of an electronic submission or enquiry exceeds the applicable maximum size, the Respondents may submit multiple emails to reduce attachment file size to be within the maximum applicable size. In such cases, Respondents should clearly identify the order and number of emails making up the email Response submission or enquiry (e.g. "email 1 of 3, email 2 of 3…") and include the RFQ number in the subject line of the email. In all cases, the email Response or enquiry should clearly identify that the email is sent by the Respondent and set out the name of the Respondent.

d) For email Response submissions sent through multiple emails the Ministry reserves the right to seek clarification or reject the Response if the Ministry is unable to determine what documents constitute the complete Response.

e) Attachments should not be compressed, should not contain a virus or malware, should not be corrupted and should be able to be opened by the Ministry. Respondents are solely responsible for ensuring that any emails or attachments are not corrupted. The Ministry may reject Responses that are compressed, cannot be opened or that contain viruses or malware or corrupted attachments.

4. Background

The Ministry requires various seeds and seed blends to be procured upon request to address standard business needs and to facilitate a rapid response to natural disasters such as wildfire. Due to the need for prompt response, seeds must be readily available, and the volume of seed required is scalable depending on the scope of the natural disaster.

5. Services

This section describes the Services for which the List of Qualified Suppliers may be used.

5.1 Services Description

The Ministry will require the following:

- Provision of common seed blends and listed species;
- Seed Certification and Seed Analysis reports;
- Inoculation;
- Packaging;
- Shipping.

5.2 Provision of common seed blends and listed species

The vendor should be able to provide the following seed blends as well as any blend made from the species on the following list. The vendor may be asked to supply additional species, such as native species, or varieties not on this list.

Seed Blend #1

SPECIES		**BLEND COMPOSITION**
Common name	**Scientific name**	**% by weight**
Annual Ryegrass	*Lolium multiflorum*	35
Crested Wheatgrass	Agropyron cristatum	40
Chewings Fescue	*Festuca rubra*	15
Hard Fescue	*Festuca trachyphylla*	10

Seed Blend #2

SPECIES	**BLEND COMPOSITION**

Common name	Scientific name	% by weight
Annual Ryegrass	*Lolium multiflorum*	25
Crested Wheatgrass	*Agropyron cristatum*	30
Chewings Fescue	*Festuca rubra*	10
Hard Fescue	*Festuca trachyphylla*	10
Alfalfa	*Medicago sativa*	25

Seed Blend #3

SPECIES		**BLEND COMPOSITION**
Common name	**Scientific name**	**% by weight**
Annual Ryegrass	Lolium multiflorum	30
Crested Wheatgrass	*Agropyron cristatum*	40
Alfalfa	*Medicago sativa*	30

Seed Blend #4

SPECIES		**BLEND COMPOSITION**
Common name	**Scientific name**	**% by weight**
Annual Ryegrass	Lolium multiflorum	50
Chewings Fescue	*Festuca rubra*	25
Hard Fescue	*Festuca trachyphylla*	25

Seed Blend #5

SPECIES		**BLEND COMPOSITION**
Common name	**Scientific name**	**% by weight**
Annual Ryegrass	*Lolium multiflorum*	55
Orchard Grass	*Dactylis glomerata*	30
White Clover	*Trifolium repens*	15

Seed Blend #6

SPECIES		**BLEND COMPOSITION**
Common name	**Scientific name**	**% by weight**
Slender Wheatgrass	*Elymus trachycaulus*	50
Orchard Grass	*Dactylis glomerata*	30
Italian Ryegrass	*Lolium spp*	10
Annual Fall Rye	*Secale cereale*	10

Seed Blend #7

SPECIES		**BLEND COMPOSITION**
Common name	**Scientific name**	**% by weight**

Annual Ryegrass	*Lolium multiflorum*	40
Chewings fescue	*Festuca rubra ssp. commutata*	30
Orchard Grass	*Dactylis glomerata*	25
Redtop	*Agrostis scabra*	5

Seed Blend #8

SPECIES		**BLEND COMPOSITION**
Common name	**Scientific name**	**% by weight**
Slender Wheatgrass	*Elymus trachycaulus*	40
Annual Ryegrass	*Lolium multiflorum*	30
Chewings Fescue	*Festuca rubra*	15
Hard Fescue	*Festuca trachyphylla*	10
Red Clover	*Trifolium pratense*	5

Seed Blend #9

SPECIES		**BLEND COMPOSITION**
Common name	**Scientific name**	**% by weight**
Annual Ryegrass	*Lolium multiflorum*	40
Orchard Grass	*Elymus trachycaulus*	35
Timothy	*Phleum pratense*	15
Red clover	*Trifolium pratense*	10

The Ministry may assemble a custom seed blend from any of the following species:

Common name	Scientific name
Annual Fall Rye	*Secale cereale*
Annual Ryegrass – tetraploid	*Lolium multiflorum*
Annual Ryegrass – diploid	*Lolium multiflorum*
Alfalfa* - Certified Rambler	*Medicago sativa*
Alfalfa* - Certified Rangelander	*Medicago sativa*
Alsike Clover – inoculated	*Trifolium hybridum*
Annual Ryegrass	*Lolium multiflorum*
Birdsfoot Trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*
Blue (smooth) Wild Rye	*Elymus glaucus*
Bluebunch Wheatgrass	*Pseudoroegneria spicata*
Canada Bluegrass	*Poa Compressa*
Chewings Fescue	*Festuca rubra ssp. commutata*
Creeping Red Fescue – common	*Festuca rubra ssp rubra*
Crested Wheatgrass	*Agropyron cristatum*
Dahurian Wild Ryegrass	*Elymus dahuricus*
Fowl Bluegrass	*Poa Palustris*
Fringed Bromegrass	*Bromus Cilliatus*
Hard Fescue	*Festuca trachyphylla*
Italian Ryegrass – tetraploid	*Lolium multiflorum*
Italian Ryegrass – diploid	*Lolium multiflorum*
Northern Wheatgrass	*Elymus lanceolatus ssp. lanceolatus)*
Sainfoin	*Onobrychis viciifolia*
Orchardgrass – Common	*Dactylis glomerata*
Perennial Ryegrass	*Lolium Perenne*
Red Clover	*Trifolium pratense*
Red Top	*Agrostis scabra*
Rocky Mountain Fescue	*Elymus trachycaulus*
Sheep Fescue	*Festuca Ovina*
Single Cut Red Clover – inoculated	*Trifolium pratense*
Slender Wheatgrass	*Elymus trachycaulus*
Tall Fescue	*Festuca Arudinacea*
Ticklegrass (Hair bentgrass)	*Agrostis scabra*
Timothy – common	*Phleum pratense*
Tufted Hairgrass	*Deschampsia cespitosa*
Western Wheatgrass	*Pascopyrum smitthii*
White Clover	*Trifolium repens*

5.3 Seed Certification and Seed Analysis Reports

Seed Type and Grade

All seed supplied either as individual species, or as a seed blend, shall comply with the requirements of the Canada Seed Act and Seeds Regulations, and the grade standards for that

crop kind. The Ministry may request the company to share the accredited lab that is used to support the company's compliance with the Canada Seed Act and Seeds Regulation. Seed shall meet or exceed Common No. 1 grade prior to blending with other species. Seed shall be free of propagules of plant species designated as noxious under the Weed Control Act & Weed Control Regulation or as an Invasive Plant under the Forest and Range Practices Act, Invasive Plants Regulation, and any invasive plant species identified as candidates for eradication.
https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/plants-animals-and-ecosystems/invasive-species/guidance-resources/edrr_candidate_invasive_plants.pdf

Seed Analysis Report

If requested, the Contractor shall provide valid Certificates of Seed Analysis for each species and seed lot to be used in a blend at least five working days prior to the desired blending of seeds and shipping of the seed from the seed supplier to the Contractor, for the approval by the Ministry Representative. The Certificates of Seed Analysis shall set out details of the seed as specified in the Canada Seeds Act. The Ministry Representative will review the Certificates of Seed Analysis and, if the specifications are met, give the Contractor approval to proceed with blending and seed use.

5.4 Inoculation

Legumes are to be pre-inoculated to meet Agriculture Canada minimum live cells per seed. The seed supplier will provide proof of seed testing for the following parameters: purity of each seed lot; germination of each seed lot; level of inoculation for the clover

- Upon delivery, the seed blend may be tested to confirm the composition of the blend in addition to the parameters of purity, germination, and rhizobium levels; and
- If delivered seed does not meet testing specifications, it will be returned to the Supplier at no cost to the Province.

5.5 Packaging

The seed once proportioned must be thoroughly blended and packaged/bagged in 25 kg or 22.5 kg. polyweave sacks. Each seed blend will require the seed bags to be colour coded and labelled as to the blend name and contents to clearly identify each seed blend. Bags are to be on pallets, with 20 bags per pallet and shrink wrapped for shipping. Cardboard must be placed under the seed before placing seed on the pallets. Minimum Order is two 25 kg or 22.5 kg polyweave sacks.

5.6 Shipping

Vendor must be able to ship to any FLNRORD office or warehouse within BC. Pricing is exclusive of GST. Pricing is F.O.B. Destination with shipping prepaid and charged to invoice. A copy of the waybills must accompany the invoice. Expeditious shipping could be required in response to

natural disasters. Successful bidders will be required to meet due dates set out by the Ministry representative during the Competition Notice.

6. How the List of Qualified Suppliers will be used

6.1 Guidelines

This section describes how the Ministry may use the List of Qualified Suppliers to select Qualified Suppliers to deliver Services as Contractors.

These guidelines are subject to change, from time to time, as the Ministry may deem necessary, with notice to Qualified Suppliers posted as Addenda on BC Bid.

By submitting a Response, the Respondent agrees to the process below, including the minimum time frame within which the Qualified Supplier, may have to respond to a Competition Notice as set out in section 6.1.2.

6.1.1 Use on a Non-exclusive "as, if and when Requested" Basis

The Ministry may, in its sole discretion, from time to time, use the List of Qualified Suppliers in connection with the acquisition and provision of the Services described in the RFQ.

Qualified Suppliers may be contacted on a non-exclusive "as, if and when requested" basis to compete on opportunities for the provision of Services in accordance with the selection methods set out in this section 6. The selection of a Qualified Supplier to serve as a Contractor will not be based on the scores assigned to a Response associated with becoming a Qualified Supplier under this this RFQ, but will be based upon the requirements and evaluation criteria included in a Competition Notice issued with respect to a specific project or assignment for Services.

6.1.2 Selection Methods

The Ministry may select a Qualified Supplier to act as a Contractor using the following selection methods:

a) The Ministry will invite, by written Competition Notice, all Qualified Suppliers to compete to supply the Services described in a given Competition Notice, except as otherwise provided in this section 6.

b) Only Qualified Suppliers will be sent Competition Notices that may issue from this RFQ and no Competition Notices will be issued before the Initial Intake.

c) The Competition Notice will specify the requirements of a particular project or assignment and the criteria upon which a Qualified Supplier will be evaluated. These criteria may include, but not necessarily be limited to:

   i) a Qualified Supplier's pricing;

   ii) Ability to deliver seeds withing the stipulated time, and,

iii) other requirements as detailed in the Competition Notice.

d) A Qualified Supplier will have not less than ten calendar days from the date on which a Competition Notice is issued by the Ministry (the actual response deadline to be specified in the Competition Notice) to submit a written response to the Competition Notice.

e) The Ministry may directly negotiate a Contract with a supplier of the Ministry's choice or a Qualified Supplier where one or more of the following conditions applies:

i) only one Qualified Supplier has been qualified under the RFQ;

ii) an extreme urgency brought about by event unforeseeable by the Ministry and the Services could not be obtained in time by means of a competitive process;

iii) a competitive process would interfere with the Ministry's ability to maintain security or order or to protect human, animal or plant life or health;

iv) the acquisition is of a confidential or privileged nature and disclosure through an open bidding process could reasonably be expected to compromise government confidentiality, cause economic disruption or be contrary to the public interest; or

v) other allowed grounds that may be provided for by applicable trade agreements and policy.

6.1.3 Vendor Request for Participation in a Procurement

Where the Ministry rejects a Vendor's request for participation in a procurement conducted under section 6, the Ministry will promptly inform the Vendor and, on request of that Vendor, offer that Vendor a debriefing regarding its decision. The debriefing will be, at the sole option of the Ministry, by telephone conference or some other means. On request of the Vendor, the Ministry will promptly provide a written explanation for its decision.

6.1.4 No Obligation to Contract or Use the List

The Ministry has no obligation to:

a) enter into a Contract with any one or more Qualified Supplier(s); or

b) use the List of Qualified Suppliers in an exclusive manner, and reserves the right, in its sole discretion to:

i) employ open competitions that include suppliers external to the List of Qualified Suppliers; and

ii) otherwise engage suppliers external to the List of Qualified Suppliers in connection with any project required by the Ministry.

6.1.5 Form of Contract

The Competition Notice will identify the form of the applicable Contract (or alternately select contract clauses that may be applicable) that may result from it. Any Contract will be between the Ministry and Qualified Supplier (as Contractor) and, as applicable, will name specific Qualified Resources as key personnel who the Contractor will cause to perform the Services on the Contractor's behalf.

Contracts are likely to include terms and conditions similar to those included in the Province's standard "General Services Agreement", "Information Technology & Management Consulting Professional Services Agreement", or "Financial Review and Assurance Services Agreement". Copies of these agreements can be found at https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/services-for-government/bc-bid-resources/templates-and-tools/service-contract-templates#corporate_GSA.

Some Competition Notices may be structured where the form of Contract will be subject to negotiations.

6.1.6 Binding and Non-binding Competition Notices

Each Competition Notice may be a binding process that is intended to create what is known in Canadian tendering law as "contract A" or it may be a negotiated, non-binding process that is not intended to create any contract A.

6.1.7 Tax Verification Letter

A Competition Notice will indicate whether a Tax Verification Letter will be required as part of Contract finalization.

7. How Responses will be Evaluated

7.1 Evaluation Process

The Ministry's evaluation of Responses includes four stages as follows:

7.1.1 Stage One: Evaluation of Mandatory Criteria

Responses will be checked for compliance with the following mandatory criteria. Responses that do not meet the mandatory criteria will not pass this stage and will receive no further consideration.

Mandatory Criteria	
a)	The Response must be delivered in accordance with the delivery instructions on the cover page of this RFQ. Responses received prior to the Initial Intake Response Deadline will be considered for the Initial Intake. Responses received after the Initial Intake Response Deadline will be considered as described in section 3.6.
b)	The Respondent Qualifications Template (Appendix A), including an unedited Part 1: Respondent's Statement, must be submitted as part of the Response.
c)	The Response must be in English.
d)	The Response must be in writing and, if in electronic form, must be able to be opened and read by the Ministry. If the Ministry cannot read or open any attachment to a Response, the Response will be rejected in its entirety.

7.1.2 Stage Two: Evaluation of Desirable Qualifications

Responses that meet all mandatory criteria will be further assessed against the desirable qualifications.

The Ministry will first evaluate the Respondent's qualifications and, if the Respondent passes that portion of the evaluation, the Ministry will then evaluate Resource qualifications (if applicable).

The desirable qualifications for Respondents are identified in the Respondent Qualification Template. Response guidelines, which provide guidance about what Respondents should provide to demonstrate they meet the qualifications are also provided in those templates.

The Ministry will evaluate the Respondent's response to each response guideline and assign points based on how well the response demonstrates that the Respondent or Resource, as the case may be, meets or exceeds the associated desirable qualifications.

Each response guideline identifies how many points it is worth in the evaluation of desirable qualifications and if it has a minimum score associated with it.

7.1.3 Respondent's Qualifications

To pass this stage of the evaluation, Respondents are required to:

1.) Meet or exceed any minimum scores associated with individual response guidelines in the Respondent Qualification Template; and

2.) Meet or exceed any minimum overall score identified in the Respondent Qualification Template.

The Response of any Respondent that does not meet the criteria above will not pass this stage and will receive no further consideration.

7.1.4 Stage Three: Reference Checks

The Ministry may conduct due diligence reference checks on Respondents that have passed stage two.

Reference checks may be conducted on the Respondent on a pass-fail basis. The Ministry may reject any for which references requested are not provided or if requested, the references, in the Ministry's sole opinion, are deemed to be unsatisfactory.

Any reference cannot be a contact internal to the Respondent's organization e.g., the reference cannot be a co-worker, supervisor, or other internal contact. References need to be from a party that is not the Respondent. For each reference, the Respondent should provide the following information:

a) Name of the reference and their organization, together with the position, mailing address, telephone number and email address of the reference; and

b) Current relationship with the Respondent, if any, with the reference.

Failure to provide the references, if requested, will result in the Respondent failing the reference check.

In addition, the Ministry reserves the right to contact and use references that are not among those references provided to the Ministry (including obtaining a substitute referee from the same reference). The Ministry reserves the right, on a pass-fail basis, to reject any Respondent or, if applicable, proposed Resource if any of these other references, if any, in the Ministry's sole opinion, are deemed to be unsatisfactory.

Stage three does not supersede any other reservation of rights in favour of the Ministry, including any reservation of rights set out in section 3.19.

In addition to the Stage three reference check, the Ministry reserves the right to recheck Qualified Supplier and Qualified Resource references, and to recheck proposed references in connection with a particular Competition Notice.

7.1.5 Stage Four: Notification and Debriefings

Respondents will be notified as to whether the Respondent has become a Qualified Supplier.

The Ministry will offer a debriefing to Respondents. The debriefing will be at a mutually agreeable time and; at the sole option of the Ministry, by telephone conference or some other means. On request of the Respondent, the Ministry will promptly provide a written explanation for its decision.

8. How Responses should be organized

Responses should be organized as follows:

a) Respondents should take care to prepare and submit their Response in conformity with the mandatory criteria table in section 7.1.1., including providing the Respondent Qualifications Template (Appendix A.

b) Additional attachments that should be included in a Response may be identified in the Respondent Qualification Template and the Resource Qualification template.

c) Unless specifically requested by the Ministry, the Response should not include any additional attachments or appendices. In its evaluations the Ministry may only consider material that is included in the Response. The Ministry may not, for example, consider the content of a website or online document even if the URL or a hyperlink to it is provided in the Response.

d) All pages should be consecutively numbered.

Appendix A: Respondent Qualification Template

Response to Request for Qualifications No. ON-003735 for the certification, provision, packaging, and shipping of various blends of seed for delivery to Ministry offices and warehouses across British Columbia on an "as, if and when requested" basis.

Part 1: Respondent's Statement

The enclosed Response is submitted in response to the above-referenced RFQ.

By submitting a Response to the RFQ, the Respondent agrees that such Response will be deemed to have been submitted with all due authorization of the Respondent and that the Respondent is agreeing to the terms and conditions of the RFQ, including how procurements are conducted under section 6 of the RFQ and the minimum time that a Qualified Supplier may be allowed to respond to a Competition Notice.

The Respondent confirms it has carefully read and examined the RFQ and has conducted such other investigations as were prudent and reasonable in preparing the Response.

Part 2: Instructions for Respondents

Submit one Respondent Qualification Template in your Response.

Areas for Respondents to enter text are identified with red text fields. Click on the field and you can start entering text. The fields should expand to accommodate your text.

Note: Any personal information (as defined in the British Columbia *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("FOIPPA")) provided on this Response to the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is being collected pursuant to section 26(c) of FOIPPA and will be used to assess the Respondent's response and suitability for placement on the List. If you have any questions about the collection or use of this personal information, please contact Aftab Ahmad, Procurement Consultant, procurement@gov.bc.ca.

Part 3: Minimum Overall Score Required

In addition to meeting or exceeding any minimum scores associated with individual response guidelines in this Respondent Qualification Template, the Respondent is required to meet or exceed the following minimum overall score to pass stage two of the evaluation process:	60

Part 4: Respondent Identification

Respondent's Legal Name	Respondent: Click here to enter text.

Respondent's Primary Office Address	Respondent: Click here to enter text.
Authorized Representative's Name	Respondent: Click here to enter text.
Authorized Representative's Title	Respondent: Click here to enter text.
Authorized Representative's email Address	Respondent: Click here to enter text.
Authorized Representative's Phone Number	Respondent: Click here to enter text.

Part 5: Respondent Contact Information

If the Respondent would like someone other than the authorized representative identified in Part 4 to receive any future communications regarding this Response, including receiving Competition Notices, please identify that person below.

Respondent Contact's Name	Respondent: Click here to enter text.
Respondent Contact's Title	Respondent: Click here to enter text.
Respondent Contact's email Address	Respondent: Click here to enter text.
Respondent Contact's Phone Number	Respondent: Click here to enter text.
Respondent Contact's Address	Respondent: Click here to enter text.

Part 6: Desirable Qualifications and Response Guidelines

The following parts of this Respondent Qualification Template describe the qualifications that a Respondent should have.

"Response guidelines" are included throughout this template to help guide Respondents regarding what to include in their Response. Respondents should follow the instruction in the response guidelines and provide a response to all response guidelines. The response guidelines are not intended to be comprehensive and Respondents should use their own judgement in determining what information to provide to demonstrate that they meet or exceed the desirable qualifications.

1. Seed Certification, Seed Analysis Reports, and Inoculation

1.1 Seed type and Grade Qualification #1

All seed supplied either as individual species, or as a seed blend, shall comply with the requirements of the Canada Seed Act and Seeds Regulations, and the grade standards for that particular crop kind. Seed shall meet or exceed Common No. 1 grade prior to blending with other species. Seed shall be free of propagules of plant species designated as noxious under the Weed Control Act & Weed Control Regulation or as an Invasive Plant under the Forest and Range Practices Act, Invasive Plants Regulation, and any invasive plant species identified as candidates for eradication (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/plants-animals-and-ecosystems/invasive-species/guidance-resources/edrr_candidate_invasive_plants.pdf),

Response Guideline 1	**Points Available**	**Minimum Score**
	15	9
Instructions for Respondents:		
Describe how you meet or exceed the requirements described in this sub-section.		
Respondent: Click here to enter text. The field will expand to accommodate your text.		

1.2 Seed Analysis Report Qualification #2

The Contractor shall provide valid Certificates of Seed Analysis for each species and seed lot to be used in a blend at least five working days prior to the desired blending of seeds and shipping of the seed from the seed supplier to the Contractor, for the approval by the Ministry Representative. The Certificates of Seed Analysis shall set out details of the seed as specified in the Canada Seeds Act The Ministry Representative will review the Certificates of Seed Analysis and, if the specifications are met, give the Contractor approval to proceed with blending and seed use.

Response Guideline 2	**Points Available**	**Minimum Score**
	15	9
Instructions for Respondents:		
Provide an example of your company's Certificate of Seed Analysis. The Certificate of Seed Analysis must meet or exceed the requirements described in this sub-section.		
Respondent: Click here to enter text. The field will expand to accommodate your text.		

1.3 Inoculation Qualification #3

* Legumes are to be pre-inoculated to meet Agriculture Canada minimum live cells per seed. The seed supplier will provide proof of seed testing for the following parameters: purity of each seed lot; germination of each seed lot; level of inoculation for the clover; and

- Upon delivery, the seed blend may be tested to confirm the composition of the blend in addition to the parameters of purity, germination, and rhizobium levels; and
- If delivered seed does not meet testing specifications, it will be returned to the Supplier at no cost to the Province.

Response Guideline 3	Points Available	Minimum Score
	15	9
Instructions for Respondents:		
The seed supplier will provide proof of seed testing as per the requirements described in this sub-section.		
Respondent: Click here to enter text. The field will expand to accommodate your text.		

2. Provision of common seed blends and listed species

2.1 Provision of Common Seed Blends Qualification #4

The vendor should be able to provide the seed blends identified in Section 5.2 as well as any blend made from the species listed in Section 5.2, or requested by the Ministry.

Response Guideline 4	Points Available	Minimum Score
	15	9
Instructions for Respondents:		
The respondent must confirm their ability to provide all seed blends and seed species identified in Section 5.2. and indicate the average turn-around times.		
Respondent: Click here to enter text. The field will expand to accommodate your text.		

3. Packaging

3.1 Packaging Qualification #5

The seed once proportioned must be thoroughly blended and packaged/bagged in 25 kg or 22.5 kg polyweave sacks. Each seed blend will require the seed bags to be colour coded and labelled as to the blend name and contents to clearly identify each seed blend.

Response Guideline 5	Points Available	Minimum Score
	15	9
Instructions for Respondents:		
The respondent must submit an example of the label that will be used to confirm that they are able to meet or exceed the requirements described in this sub-section.		
Respondent: Click here to enter text. The field will expand to accommodate your text.		

4. Shipping

4.1 Shipping Qualification #6

The respondent must be able to ship to any Ministry office or warehouse within BC. Pricing is exclusive of GST. Pricing is F.O.B. Destination with shipping prepaid and charged to invoice. A copy of the waybills must accompany the invoice.

Response Guideline 6	Points Available	Minimum Score
	15	9
Instructions for Respondents:		
The respondent must confirm that they are able to meet or exceed the requirements described in this sub-section.		
Respondent: Click here to enter text. The field will expand to accommodate your text.		

5. Company Experience

5.1 Company Experience Qualification #7

The respondent must provide proof of supplying large order seed requests, greater than 100 sacks, within the past 5 years.

Response Guideline 7	**Points Available**	**Minimum Score**
	10	6
Instructions for Respondents:		
Describe how you meet or exceed the requirements described in this sub-section.		
Respondent: Click here to enter text. The field will expand to accommodate your text.		

Appendix B: Resource Qualification Template

Not Applicable.