



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

IT Services Provider

1. Introduction

The College of Opticians of Ontario (COO) exists to protect the public as mandated by the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 (RHPA)*. It is the governing body for approximately 3,200 Registered Opticians (ROs) in Ontario and one of 26 regulatory colleges that govern Ontario's regulated health professions.

The COO is responsible for setting entry-to-practice requirements, establishing standards of practice, maintaining a government-mandated quality assurance program, and investigating concerns about registrants, including carrying out disciplinary action where required.

To support these functions, the COO relies on secure, reliable, and efficient information technology systems and services. The organization is seeking a qualified IT service provider to support its ongoing operational needs, ensure a high level of security and performance, and provide strategic guidance on technology infrastructure.

2. Background

The College of Opticians of Ontario (COO) operates in a highly regulated environment and relies on a range of information technology systems to support its core functions, including registration, quality assurance, complaints and discipline processes, and general operations.

The COO currently utilizes a combination of cloud-based systems and internal platforms to manage data, communications, and workflows across the organization. As the organization continues to evolve, there is an increasing need to ensure that its technology environment remains secure, reliable, and aligned with best practices in cybersecurity, data protection, and system performance.

Our organization is also focused on improving the efficiency and integration of its systems to better support internal operations and service delivery. This includes ensuring consistent system performance, minimizing downtime, and maintaining a stable and secure IT environment that can adapt to future organizational needs.

3. Objective of this RFP

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify and retain a qualified IT service provider to deliver comprehensive information technology support and services for the College of Opticians of Ontario (COO).

The selected provider will be responsible for supporting the COO's day-to-day IT operations, including maintaining system performance, reliability, and availability across all core platforms and services. This

includes ensuring that users are effectively supported, systems are functioning optimally, and any issues are addressed in a timely and efficient manner.

In addition to operational support, the provider will play a key role in maintaining the security and integrity of the COO's technology environment. This includes implementing and maintaining appropriate cybersecurity measures, supporting data protection practices, and ensuring that systems align with current industry standards and regulatory expectations.

The selected provider will be responsible for offering strategic guidance and advisory services to support ongoing improvements to its IT environment. This includes identifying opportunities to enhance system performance, streamline processes, improve integration between platforms, and support future technology planning as the organization evolves.

The selected provider will also demonstrate a proactive, responsive, and collaborative approach to service delivery, with the ability to adapt to growing/changing organizational priorities and to support both daily operational needs and long-term strategic objectives.

4. Scope of Work

The COO is requesting proposals from qualified IT service providers with demonstrated experience supporting small to mid-sized organizations in regulated environments.

The selected provider will be responsible for delivering a range of IT services, including but not limited to the following:

General IT Support and Service Delivery

- Provide ongoing IT support for all users, including troubleshooting hardware, software, and system-related issues
- Deliver responsive helpdesk services with defined service levels for issue resolution
- Monitor system performance and proactively identify and address potential issues
- Maintain documentation of IT systems, processes, and configurations

Infrastructure and Systems Management

- Support and maintain the College's IT infrastructure, including workstations, networks, and cloud-based systems
- Manage user accounts, permissions, and access controls
- Support system updates, testing, and upgrades to ensure stability and performance
- Assist with system integrations and improvements to enhance operational efficiency

Cybersecurity and Data Protection

- Implement and maintain cybersecurity best practices to protect organizational systems and data
- Proactively monitor for potential security threats and respond to incidents as required

- Support data backup and recovery processes, including testing and validation
- Ensure alignment with relevant data protection standards and regulatory expectations

Vendor and Systems Coordination

- Liaise with third-party vendors and system providers (e.g., software platforms, cloud services) to support issue resolution and system performance
- Provide guidance on vendor selection and technology solutions where required

Strategic Advisory and Planning

- Provide ongoing advice on IT strategy, infrastructure planning, and system improvements
- Identify opportunities to enhance efficiency, security, and scalability of the IT environment
- Support planning and implementation of new systems or technology initiatives

Additional Services

Proponents may also include additional services that would enhance the College's IT environment, such as:

- Advanced cybersecurity services (e.g., audits, penetration testing)
- Staff training on cybersecurity awareness and best practices

5. Proposal Submission Requirements

To submit a proposal in response to this RFP, Respondents must:

- I. Provide a brief overview of your organization with highlights of services offered and areas of expertise.
- II. Provide an overview of the proposed service team who will support the COO on an ongoing basis, as well as their areas of expertise and a description of how continuity of support will be maintained.
- III. Demonstrate previous experience including examples delivering IT services to similar organizations.
- IV. Provide at least 2 client references.
- V. Provide a detailed description of how your organization will deliver the services outlined in this RFP, including:
 - a. Approach to helpdesk and user support
 - b. System monitoring and maintenance practices
 - c. Cybersecurity and data protection approach
 - d. Escalation processes and issue resolution timelines
 - e. Approach to proactive support and continuous improvement
- VI. Provide a detailed breakdown of all costs associated with your proposal. This should include:
 - a. Base service fees (monthly or annual)
 - b. Any variable or usage-based costs
 - c. Hourly rates (if applicable)

- d. Costs for optional or value-added services
- VII. Describe your approach to onboarding and transitioning services, including timelines and any required support from the COO.

Proposals should use simple language with minimal jargon and avoid the use of elaborate marketing material beyond that necessary to provide a complete, accurate, and reliable offer.

Proposals must be submitted electronically via email to the address listed below by no later than **May 22, 2026**.

Please submit all proposals to Fizza Asad, Manager, Finance and Human Resources at fasad@collegeofopticians.ca

All proposals become the property of the College of Opticians.

Short-listed Respondents may be invited to virtually meet with the Leadership team to clarify or elaborate on the written proposal.

No proposal will be accepted from, nor any agreement awarded to any Respondent that is in arrears upon any debt or in default of any obligation. Additionally, no agreement will be awarded to any Respondent that has failed to perform satisfactorily pursuant to any prior agreement with the COO.

6. Terms, Conditions and Certifications

By submitting a proposal, the Respondent agrees to the following terms and conditions:

- The Respondent is fully responsible for all costs incurred in the development and submission of this proposal. The COO assumes no contractual obligation from the issuance of this RFP, the preparation or submission of a proposal by a Respondent, the evaluation of proposals or presentations, or final selection.
- The COO reserves the right to reject any or all proposals at its sole discretion for any reason whatsoever.
- All information obtained by the individual in connection with this RFP is the property of the COO, shall be treated as confidential and shall not be used for any purpose other than replying to this RFP.
- That their proposal shall be binding on the Respondent for ninety (90) days from the due date. A Respondent may withdraw or modify his/her proposal at any time prior to the due date by a written request.

By submitting a proposal, the Respondent is certifying that:

- Their proposal is genuine and is not made in the interest of, or on the behalf of, any undisclosed person, firm, or corporation.
- They have no existing other organizational relationship that would place it in a conflict of interest with the COO or a perceived conflict of interest.

- They have not directly or indirectly induced or solicited any other Respondent to put in a false proposal.
- They have not solicited or induced any other person, firm, or corporation to refrain from preparing a proposal.
- They have not sought by collusion to obtain for themselves any advantage over any other Respondent or over the College or any employee thereof.

7. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by a small team of individuals responsible for administering the Quality Assurance Program by the College. Proposals will be evaluated on the criteria below. Should the COO award the contract, the winning individual will be expected to sign an agreement provided by the COO.

The COO will evaluate all proposals based on the following criteria:

1. **Demonstrated ability to provide consistent, knowledgeable support**, including depth of team and continuity of service.
2. **Service levels and reliability**, including response/resolution times and overall dependability of support.
3. **Relevant experience**, and in particular experience providing IT services to similar organizations and/or in regulated environments.
4. **Cost and pricing structure**, including overall value, transparency and appropriateness for a long-term service arrangement.
5. **Client references**, including feedback on service quality, responsiveness and reliability.

Any questions or requests for clarification of this proposal should be written and submitted no later than May 22, 2026, to the attention of: Fizza Asad, Manager, Finance and Human Resources at fasad@collegeofopticians.ca.