

Capital Culture Lives Here

Request for expressions of interest
McConnell House



NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

Canada



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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST¹

CAPITAL CULTURE LIVES HERE

MCCONNELL HOUSE

1.0 About the Project

The NCC has a strong tradition of protecting and showcasing the natural and cultural heritage of the National Capital Region (NCR). We are proud to introduce the [Capital Culture Lives Here](#) initiative designed to breathe new life into heritage spaces with the help of partners. This initiative supports the NCC's goal of conserving and enriching cultural and natural heritage through design excellence and exemplary stewardship.

This Request for Expressions of Interest seeks partners to help transform "McConnell House," located at 1055 Chemin d'Aylmer, into a space that supports cultural activities and/or appreciation of the natural environment.

Through this initiative, organizations have an opportunity to secure a venue for a cultural centre, artist studio/gallery space, natural heritage interpretation centre, or other creative project. Proposals could include a commercial component, such as a café or food service, equipment rental or small-scale accommodations, such as an artist-in-residence program. The NCC is open to your suggestions.

This partnership presents an opportunity to:

- Offer arts, culture, heritage and nature conservation organizations or academic institutions a venue in a unique historic home conveniently located at the edge of District de Deschênes in Gatineau.
- Enhance the visitor experience in this sector of the Outaouais.
- Create a lasting partnership to protect a regional heritage site.
- Promote arts and culture and/or nature conservation in Canada's Capital.

2.0 Objectives

The Capital Culture Lives Here initiative has three key objectives for McConnell House:

1. To forge a **mutually beneficial partnership** between the NCC and one or more creative organizations to rehabilitate and lead activities at McConnell House.
2. To **breathe new life into the house and site** through a viable, sustainable new use and a multi-year lease.
3. To **showcase the unique history and heritage value** of the site and its unique surroundings.
4. To **support artistic development and/or nature conservation** as part of the Capital experience, in support of the NCC's mandate.

3.0 "McConnell House," 1055 Chemin d'Aylmer: A Heritage Gem in a Dynamic Corridor

This 19th century farmhouse, a "recognized" federal heritage building, is located between the Champlain Bridge and downtown Aylmer, in the Aylmer district of Gatineau. It features modest wood siding, a gabled roof and a large front veranda that runs the full length of the front facade. The connected barn, considered a rare feature among Quebec's agricultural heritage properties, can accommodate a variety of indoor activities.

¹ THIS IS NOT A SOLICITATION PROCESS

Potential partner organizations are reminded that this is not a tender process, nor a Request for Proposal. The issuance of this Request for Expression of Interest does not oblige the National Capital Commission (NCC) to issue or negotiate a subsequent contract, and does not bind the NCC legally or otherwise to enter into a contract.

McConnell House is uniquely situated on open, pastoral land — a beautiful contrast to the urban backdrop. Given its location, the site benefits from high visibility, accessibility and nearby access to public transit, which is also expected to improve in coming years. The size of the lot and existing parking facilities offer the potential to accommodate multiple programs.

The NCC has not yet committed any funds for rehabilitation of McConnell House. The building is currently vacant and interior finishes have been removed to expose the framing and structure.

4.0 NCC Plans and Priorities

As part of the NCC’s mandate to create a meaningful and inclusive Capital, the Commission is committed to cultural development, heritage conservation, and support diversity through a collaborative and regional approach to creative placemaking.

The long-term vision and policy direction for the Region is described in the NCC’s [Plan for Canada’s Capital, 2017–2067](#) and the [Capital Urban Lands Plan \(2015\)](#), respectively. Included in these plans are a number of important strategic directions and goals.

Among these, the Plan for Canada’s Capital (2017-2067) sets out key directions in support of a “Living Culture and Heritage” in the Capital, including:

- Protect heritage:
 - To protect heritage buildings and sites and bring them to life with new uses that respect their character, are compatible with the heritage features to be preserved, and have well-integrated accessibility features;
- Promote land use that supports Canada’s arts and culture:
 - To prioritize the use of NCC lands for national cultural activities and to support artistic creation;
- Enhance art in the Capital:
 - To work with federal partners to add to and enhance art of the highest quality in the public realm of the Capital, both as stand-alone installations and integrated into other development projects;
- Support diversity and inclusion in the arts:
 - To support artistic diversity in the Capital by allowing non-profit and educational institutions to use NCC lands, where appropriate, for temporary events.

The Capital Urban Lands Plan (2015) applies to the urban lands that extend to the Greenbelt boundary (Ontario), and lands located within the urban boundaries of Gatineau, excluding Gatineau Park. The plan outlines key roles for urban lands in the Capital, with a set of goals linked to each role: creating and fostering high-quality and meaningful places; supporting the Capital’s urban green and blue space network; and contributing to building a livable Capital Region. Within these roles, two key goals are of particular interest for the McConnell House site:

- improving, safeguarding and enriching the Capital’s cultural heritage
- protecting and enhancing the Capital’s picturesque landscapes

Links

[Capital Urban Lands Plan \(2015\)](#)

Located in the Capital green space network, which prioritizes environmental stewardship, and on lands designated “Capital urban green space,” McConnell House could offer opportunities for passive enjoyment and recreation with less intensive formal infrastructure.

Key policies of interest for Capital urban green space lands, including McConnell House, include the following:

- support the Capital experience, for example, to host various public activities and events of smaller scale

- preserve the overall multi-purpose nature of sites
- promote the Capital Experience through the discovery of built heritage and cultural landscapes
- provide spaces for leisure and various activities and events
- focus on new activities, amenities and services where the infrastructure support exists
- locate animation nodes where they can be integrated with existing pathway networks

The Capital Urban Lands Plan permits a variety of uses, including, for example:

- education and interpretive uses
- restaurants
- visitor amenities, such as rest stops and picnic areas
- conservation and enhancement of the built and landscape heritage
- events and gatherings

Ideally, such uses will contribute to the Capital activities and public enjoyment, generally maintain free public access to the site, and respect its heritage and scenic character.

5.0 Expressions of Interest

This Request for Expressions of Interest is being issued to solicit concept proposals from potential partners for the rehabilitation of and activities at McConnell House. The goal is to seek creative ideas from prospective partners on ways that the site can contribute to arts and culture and/or nature conservation and education in the National Capital Region.

Partnership Objectives

The NCC is looking for a partner or partners² who offer:

1. Compatible programming
2. A viable, financially sustainable concept
3. Partnerships, public benefits and community support
4. Bilingual client service and public communications, and/or
5. Financial contributions toward the site's rehabilitation

Request for Expressions of Interest (REI) Process

Upon receiving Expressions of Interest, the NCC will consider how the proposed concepts harmonize with its vision and plans, and will work with particular partners to develop these concepts in greater detail, including funding structures and leasing arrangements.

Lease agreements may vary in their terms and structures depending on the proposed concept, programming and contributions toward the rehabilitation project. The NCC will work with partners to ensure that the value of investments made to restore the site is reflected in the agreement.

An REI is not a formal tender or Request for Proposal (RFP). As such, responses will not be evaluated against one another in the aim of selecting a preferred proposal. Rather, the responses received may be used by the NCC to identify potential creative partnerships for activities at McConnell House. The NCC will review all responses received and will not reimburse organizations for expenses incurred in preparing the Expression of Interest.

² Multiple partnerships are possible; the singular form of 'partner' is used throughout for grammar purposes only.

Essential Requirements

Prospective partners are asked to respond to this REI no later than the required response date (see Section 8.0). Prospective partners must provide the following information in their REI:

- Title Page with the following information (any subsequent documents not included in the proposal should also provide this information):
 - Proposal title
 - Name and address of the respondent
 - Name, address and telephone number of the respondent's contact, and
 - Date
- Vision/concept
 - The Expression of Interest must clearly illustrate a vision in harmony with the NCC's goals and strategic directions and with the objectives of the Capital Culture Lives Here initiative (see section 2.0).
- Official languages
 - The Expression of Interest must confirm that the prospective partner commits to provide any public offerings or communications in both official languages.
- Additional partners
 - The Expression of Interest must confirm interest by any additional partners to be included in the proposal, with letters of support.
- Timeline
 - The Expression of Interest must include a proposed timeline for rehabilitation and launch of the proposed program.

This Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) is being issued to solicit concept proposals from potential partners for the rehabilitation of and activities at McConnell House. The goal is to seek creative ideas from prospective partners on ways that the site can contribute to the Capital experience.

6.0 Review and Next Steps

Upon receipt of an Expression of Interest that meets and/or exceeds the above requirements (see Section 5.0), prospective partners will be contacted to further develop their proposals under an agreement for the lease of and activities at McConnell House. To ensure fairness and transparency, partnership opportunities most compatible with the site and the Capital Culture Lives Here initiative will be considered competitively. Should more than one proposal reach this stage, submissions will be evaluated based upon the following established criteria (see Appendix A - Evaluation Matrix):

6.1 Evaluation Criteria

A successful Expression of Interest should:

- Demonstrate a clear, long-term and achievable **vision** for the McConnell House and site consistent with the Capital Culture Lives Here initiative and NCC plans.
- Demonstrate the **experience and knowledge** required to develop and realize the project.
- Illustrate a realistic **public benefit** to visitors and residents in the National Capital Region.
- Demonstrate **financial viability** by identifying sources of funding or revenue and developing a realistic budget to support the proposed project and program.

6.2 Additional Considerations

Further consideration may be given to Expressions of Interest that demonstrate the following:

- An existing or proposed nation-wide program or a program that reaches beyond the local or regional level
- An existing or proposed program that promotes diverse perspectives and experiences
- Experience in working with the local community and the ability to create synergies with other related projects and/or partners
- Experience in Indigenous engagement
- An existing or proposed program inclusive of under-represented groups, and/or
- A program or concept that could be achieved more quickly will be prioritized

If for any reason an agreement cannot be reached through this REI process, the NCC reserves the right to re-issue or cancel the process. It also reserves the right to reach out to organizations which have submitted an Expression of Interest as part of a previous process.

7.0 Deadline for Expressions of Interest

The closing date for this REI is **11:59pm on October 14th, 2022 EST**. Responses may be submitted in French or English, as the respondent prefers. **PLEASE SUBMIT REI RESPONSES TO: Heritage-Patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca**, using the subject line, “**Capital Culture Lives Here – McConnell House.**”

8.0 Enquiries

All enquiries and other communications related to this REI shall be directed exclusively to Heritage-Patrimoine@ncc-ccn.ca. Since this process does not require any bidder notification, the NCC will not necessarily respond to enquiries in writing or circulate answers to all respondents. Please ensure the subject line for all correspondence states: “**Capital Culture Lives Here – McConnell House.**”

Respondents interested in conducting activities at other NCC heritage sites are welcome to include in their proposals a programming vision that extends beyond the scope of the McConnell House site, though the NCC cannot guarantee an agreement.

9.0 Glossary

Artist: A person who displays in their work qualities required in art, such as sensibility and imagination (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/artist>)

Artist-in-Residence: A program in which an institution recruits a person or group of people with a specific skill or attribute to produce work, provide advice, and/or promote the institution for a defined period of time. (<https://museumhack.com/artist-in-residence/>)

Creative Placemaking: The deliberate integration of arts and culture into community revitalization work – placing arts at the table with land-use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety strategies, achieved through collaboration between artists, arts organizations, and community development practitioners.

(<https://www.arts.gov/impact/creativeplacemaking#:~:text=Creative%20placemaking%20is%20when%20artists,infr astructure%2C%20and%20public%20safety%20s>)

Cultural Programming: A powerful tool that establishes creative placemaking for a specific locale, aimed to help vitalize communities by increasing economic investment and strengthening social ties among residents, while also affirming the identity and core values of a company. (<https://www.culturecorps.com/cultural-programming#:~:text=Cultural%20Programming%20is%20a%20powerful,core%20values%20of%20a%20company>)

Appendix A – Evaluation Matrix

Criteria	Weight (%)	Score	Total (weight*score)	Notes
<p>Vision Is there a clear vision that achieves the key objectives of the NCC’s Capital Culture Lives Here pilot project, outlined in section 2.0 Objectives?</p>	20	<p>5: A clear, detailed vision for McConnell House that aligns with the key objectives is illustrated and ensures the long-term viability and conservation of McConnell House. 4: A clear, detailed vision for McConnell House that aligns with all 3 of the key objectives is illustrated. 3: The proposed vision lacks detail, is somewhat unclear, or aligns with 2 key objectives. 2: The proposed vision is lacks detail, is unclear or aligns with one key objective. 1: The proposed vision is very unclear, lacks detail, or does not clearly align with any of the key objectives.</p>		
<p>Experience Does the prospective partner(s) have experience in developing a similar project or program?</p>	15	<p>5: The partner is currently managing a similar project/program to what is proposed for McConnell House. 4: The partner possesses capacity and expertise to manage such a project/program, as demonstrated through project samples and/or references. 3: The partner has demonstrated some experience but does not currently have the capacity to manage the proposed project/program. 2: The partner has not demonstrated experience managing an applicable program but proposes to manage the program.</p>		
<p>Financial Viability Does the proposal demonstrate a realistic budget, and funding/revenue sources to sufficiently develop and sustain the proposed project and program?</p>	15	<p>5: The proposal identifies a detailed and realistic five-year breakdown of budget, staffing, and sources of funding with revenues or contingencies to exceed the partner’s selected terms of lease. 4: The proposal identifies a detailed and realistic five-year breakdown of budget, staffing, and sources of funding to achieve the partner’s selected terms of lease. If grants are identified but not awarded, the partner has demonstrated either support from the overseeing organization or an ability to obtain similar grants previously. 3: The proposal identifies a realistic five-year breakdown of budget. The identified sources of funding and/or staffing is unclear, unconfirmed, or do not carry through the entirety of the program duration. 2: The proposal illustrates an unrealistic or incomplete budget, insufficient staffing, or a dependency on the NCC as a source of funding to sustain the proposed program. 1: The proposal’s financial viability relies heavily on the NCC and/or does not identify sources of funding or revenue to sustain the proposed program.</p>		

<p>Public Benefit Does the proposal outline a public benefit to visitors and residents in the National Capital Region (NCR)?</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>5: The proposal outlines a new direct, measurable public benefit to visitors and residents in the NCR. 4: The program outlines an existing direct, measurable public benefit to visitors and residents in the NCR. 3: The proposal outlines a new indirect public benefit to visitors and residents in the NCR. 2: The proposal outlines an existing indirect public benefit to visitors and residents in the NCR. 1: The proposal does not identify a concrete benefit to residents of the NCR.</p>		
<p>Compatible Use Is the proposed use of the space compatible with the Capital Urban Lands Plan?</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>5: The proposed use of McConnell House is fully compatible with the objectives of the Capital Urban Lands Plan and heritage character of the residence. 4: The proposed use of McConnell House is largely compatible with the Capital Urban Lands Plan, with only minor impacts to the heritage character of the residence. 3: The proposed use of McConnell House is largely compatible with the Capital Urban Lands Plan but has moderate impacts to the heritage character of the residence. 2: The proposal requires some changes to meet the Capital Urban Lands Plan or has substantial impacts to the heritage character of the residence. 1: The proposed use of McConnell House requires substantial change to fit within the Capital Urban Lands Plan or envisions major impacts to the heritage character of the residence.</p>		
<p>Timeline Is the projected timetable to implement the project in alignment with the NCC’s objective to launch a program at the McConnell House in the near term?</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>5: The proposed timeline can realistically achieve occupancy by 2024. 3: The proposed timeline indicates occupancy by 2026. 1: The proposed timeline indicates an inability to launch a program prior to 2028.</p>		
<p>Program Duration Is the proposed program for five years?</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>1 point will be awarded for each year of the proposed program duration at the McConnell House, as expressed through the breakdown of budget and/or timeline (up to a maximum of 5 years).</p>		
<p>Synergies Does the partner have experience in working with the local community and the ability to create synergies with related projects and/or partners?</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>3 points will be awarded for each organization that expresses interest in collaborating with the potential partner, as shown in a letter of support (up to a maximum of 3 organizations).</p>		

<p>Additional Considerations</p> <p>Is a nation-wide program or a program that reaches beyond a local or regional level proposed?</p> <p>Does the program promote diverse perspectives and experiences?</p> <p>Does the program provide opportunities for Indigenous involvement?</p> <p>Is the proposed program inclusive of under-represented groups?</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>2 points will be awarded to potential partners whose proposed program clearly describes how it will achieve each of the additional considerations addressed in the criteria questions (maximum of 8 points).</p>		
<p>Total</p>				