



Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources (UINR) Advancing Sovereignty Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

CONSULTANT ELIGIBILITY: This procurement is open to consultants or individuals that satisfy the minimum qualifications stated herein and are eligible to work in Canada.

UINR

UINR represents five First Nations and is considered the Mi'kmaw voice on the natural environment and contributes to a better understanding and protection of Unama'ki ecosystems through research, monitoring, education, and management. UINR works closely with Mi'kmaw Elders, Knowledge Holders and youth to ensure Mi'kmaw values and knowledge are protected and shared. Mi'kmaw guiding principles of Netukulimk and Etuaptmumk are the foundation of UINR's work.

UINR's programs include Mi'kmaw Protected and Conserved Area (land, sea, sky), Biocultural Connectivity, Mi'kmaw Forestry Initiative, Earth Keepers Network, Natural Climate Solutions, and Recovery of Culturally Significant and At-Risk Species.

INTENT

The Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaw Chiefs in collaboration with Nova Scotia initiated an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas Program in 2019. UINR implements the program in Unama'ki and as part of the program, hired an IPCA GIS technician in 2021. A comprehensive information management system plan is needed to guide the long-term collection, storage, and protection of data.

The Canada–Nova Scotia Nature Agreement was signed in 2023 and sets out target outcomes in six key areas:

- Increase the amount of protected and conserved areas in the province by 82,500 ha, by March 2026, which will result in protection for close to 15% of the province's land mass;
- Creating a pathway to the provincial goal of 20% by 2030, and the federal goal of 30%

- by 2030, by supporting and accelerating processes that enhance land use planning;
- Supporting the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia in conservation leadership and care of nature;
 - Species at Risk protection and recovery;
 - Foundational knowledge and information sharing; and
 - Support Canada's domestic and international biodiversity commitments including through the implementation of the GBF.

Both governments are committed to working collaboratively with the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia to implement the Agreement in a way that recognizes the unique rights and relationship the Mi'kmaq have to the land. Development of a GIS framework or plan was approved as part of UINR's Nature Plan Agreement.

SCOPE OF WORK

Objectives:

1. Conduct a search of academic, grey, and online resources that provide examples of Indigenous Nations and organizations use of GIS to strengthen decision-making, preserving and mobilizing knowledge, revitalizing culture and language, and providing employment opportunities.
2. Conduct interviews with 7 UINR staff (Directors, Managers, and technicians) to identify key issues, concerns, data needs, and analysis for terrestrial, marine, and spiritual ecosystems in Unama'ki.
3. Develop a GIS Plan using outcomes from the Indigenous GIS search and UINR staff interviews and include components such as:
 - Data sovereignty and empowerment
 - First Nations Principles of OCAP and beyond
 - An Etuaptmumk approach to GIS (western science and Mi'kmaw knowledge)
 - Data sources and reclamation
 - Data collection, management, storage, and sharing protocols
 - GIS needs assessment including recommended hardware and software
 - Training and Capacity building
 - Barriers and Considerations when lack of resources
 - Organization GIS policies

DELIVERABLES AND TIMING

This project will not require fieldwork or travel. All deliverables are to be completed by 05 January 2026 and include the following:

Task	Deliverable	Start
Background research	Conduct a review to identify legislation, guidelines, and case studies of First Nations data governance strategies.	07 July 2025
Key Informant Interviews	Work with UINR to identify and interview 10 staff members to determine current and future data needs.	07 July 2025
GIS Analysis	Conduct a GIS needs analysis for UINR	01 Oct 2025
Progress Meeting with UINR	Meet with project manager and discuss findings from background research, staff interviews, and GIS analysis.	17 Oct 2025
Prepare draft plan	Prepare a draft plan that outlines key requirements for data governance and sovereignty and share with UINR project manager	01 Nov 2025
Review of draft plan by UINR	UINR staff to review draft plan and provide feedback and comments.	01 Dec 2025
Finalize Plan	Incorporate revisions and feedback and finalize UINR plan.	05 Jan 2026

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Interested parties are required to submit one copy of their proposal. The proposal must arrive at UINR no later than **01 July 2025**. UINR assumes no responsibility for delays and all late proposals will be disqualified from further consideration.

Electronic proposals must be emailed as an attachment in Microsoft Word or as a PDF to Lisa Young, Executive Director, UINR at lisa@uinr.ca. If UINR's email is not working on the submission date, appropriate allowances will be made. Proposals will be submitted to:

Name	Lisa Young, Executive Director, UINR
Email Address	lisa@uinr.ca

Mailing Address	4102 Shore Rd, Eskasoni, NS B1W 1M4
Phone Number	(902) 379-2163

Any other communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding with UINR.

PROPRIETARY INFORMATION/PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Proposals submitted in response to this competitive procurement will become the property of the UINR.

REVISIONS TO THE RFP

If revisions are made to the RFP, addenda will be provided via email to firms and individuals who have made their interest aware to the UINR Executive Director. Please send your name, email address, and telephone number to the Executive Director to receive RFP addenda.

RESPONSIVENESS

All proposals will be reviewed by UINR staff to determine compliance with administrative requirements and instructions specified in the RFP. Failure to comply with any part of the RFP may result in rejection of the proposal as non-responsive. UINR also reserves the right to waive minor administrative irregularities.

MOST FAVOURABLE TERMS

UINR reserves the right to contact a Consultant for clarification. Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially using the most favorable terms with no best and final offer procedure. The Apparent Successful Contractor should be prepared to accept this RFP for incorporation into a contract. It is understood that the proposal will become a part of the official procurement file on this matter without obligation to UINR.

COSTS TO PROPOSE

UINR will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Consultant in preparation of a proposal submitted in response to this RFP, in conduct of a presentation, or any other activities related to responding to this RFP.

NO OBLIGATION TO CONTRACT

This RFP does not obligate UINR to contract for services specified herein.

REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

UINR reserves the right at its sole discretion to reject any and all proposals received without penalty and a contract as a result of this RFP.

COMMITMENT OF FUNDS

The Executive Director of UINR is the only individual who may legally commit UINR to the expenditure of funds for a contract resulting from this RFP. No cost chargeable to the proposed contract may be incurred before receipt of a fully executed contract.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

The Proposal must contain a comprehensive description of services including the following:

- A. Project Approach/Methodology – a complete description of the proposed approach and methodology for the project. The section should convey the Consultant’s understanding of the proposed project.
- B. Work Plan - This section must contain sufficient detail for the evaluation team to understand the Consultant’s knowledge of the subject and skills necessary to successfully complete the project. Include any required involvement of UINR staff.
- C. Project Schedule - Include a project schedule indicating when each task will be completed.
- D. Outcomes and Performance Measurement – Describe the outcomes proposed to achieve delivery of these services including how these outcomes would be monitored, measured and reported to UINR.
- E. Risks - The Consultant must identify potential risks that are considered significant to the success of the project and how these risks will be managed and reported to UINR.
- F. Project Team Structure/Internal Controls - Identify key project team members

noting the project lead and any partners or subconsultants.

- G. Staff Qualifications/Experience - Identify responsibilities and qualifications of each of the team members. Brief CVs may be included in an appendix. The consultant must commit staff identified will perform the assigned work. Indicate the experience the Consultant and any subcontractors have in the following areas:
- Mi'kmaw guiding principles and values, data sovereignty, and Indigenous-led conservation.
 - Understanding First Nation rights in Canada, and UNDRIP.
 - Conducting key informant interviews with Indigenous Elders and community members.
 - Other relevant experience that indicates the qualifications for the performance of the potential contract.
 - A list of contracts the Consultant has had during the last five years that relate to the Consultant's ability to perform the services needed under this RFP.
- H. References - Provide names, addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers and email addresses of three (3) business references for the Consultant and three (3) business references for the lead staff person for whom work has been accomplished and briefly describe the type of service provided. Do not include current UINR staff as references.
- I. Identify all costs in Canadian dollars including all expenses to be charged to accomplish the objectives of the contract. A fully detailed budget outlining deliverables with staff costs, travel costs, and other costs is required as outlined in the RFP.

EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

Proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in the RFP and any additional addenda. Proposals will be reviewed, evaluated, and ranked by designated by UINR.

UINR will notify the Apparently Successful Contractor of their selection in writing following the evaluation process. Individuals or firms not selected for further negotiation or award will be notified separately by email or facsimile.