

Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC)

GUIDELINES

Medium Investment Stream

(\$50,000 to \$150,000)

Large Investment Stream

(\$150,000 to \$250,000)

June 2020

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THE VIRTUAL MUSEUM OF CANADA (VMC)

Managed by the Canadian Museum of History (CMH), the Virtual Museum of Canada is a federally funded investment program that helps build digital capacity in Canadian museums and heritage organizations and gives Canadians unique access to diverse stories and experiences.

Funding is available for modest to ambitious bilingual online products with interpreted content and an engaging user experience. The application process is competitive but straightforward, with experts on hand to provide feedback on ideas and guide the development of funded projects.

There are three investment streams. The Small investment stream provides a \$15,000 investment, and a template, to create a virtual exhibit. The Medium stream provides an investment of \$50,000 to \$150,000, and the Large stream an investment of \$150,000 to \$250,000. Both of these streams require institutions to work with the technology provider of their choice.

Choose Your Investment Stream

- For all eligible institutions: [Medium stream or Large stream](#)
- For eligible institutions with five full-time paid employees or less: [Small stream](#) (Community Stories)

Calls for Proposals

There is an annual call for proposals for each investment stream. Please consult each stream for details.

For more information, contact the Virtual Museum of Canada at vmc.proposals@historymuseum.ca

MEDIUM AND LARGE INVESTMENT STREAMS

Call for Proposals 2020 for the Medium and Large investment streams is now open.

The deadline to submit your proposals is **October 28, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time.**

The Virtual Museum of Canada investment program helps Canadian museums and heritage organizations develop online products that engage audiences of all ages, interests and abilities in Canada's history, heritage and culture.

For the 2020 Call for Proposals, eligible institutions are invited to submit a proposal for an online product on the subject of their choice. This type of product provides *a complete online experience* for users; content can be consumed in any location, without specialized equipment. Examples include virtual exhibits, virtual tours, web-based games, web applications, educational resources, and more.

Online products that receive funding through the Medium and Large investment streams must be available online in both English and French for a period of five years following the launch of the product.

All online products must comply with the [VMC Technical Specifications](#).

The Quick Pitch

Get some guidance before you prepare your full proposal. For a 4-week period at the beginning of the call for proposals, institutions can complete a brief questionnaire outlining their project idea, and submit it for feedback, one time only. The quick pitch is optional but recommended.

*The deadline to submit a quick pitch for VMC feedback is **July 15, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time.***

Value of Investment

The Medium investment stream provides funding of \$50,000 to \$150,000 (excluding applicable taxes). The Large stream provides funding of \$150,000 to \$250,000 (excluding applicable taxes)

Eligibility

Not-for-profit Canadian museums and heritage organizations, including equivalent Indigenous peoples' organizations, are eligible.

Members of the Canadian Heritage Portfolio, and institutions currently working on a VMC-funded project that will launch *after* the closing date of this call for proposals, are **ineligible**.

More detailed information is provided in 2.1 [Eligibility](#).

Evaluation

This process takes six months from the proposal submission deadline.

The budget for the Medium and Large investment streams is limited and all eligible proposals are evaluated on a competitive basis. For more information, contact the Virtual Museum of Canada at vmc.proposals@historymuseum.ca

GUIDELINES

This section covers the essential elements for submitting a proposal for the **Medium and Large investment streams**.

1.1 Overview

Managed by the Canadian Museum of History (CMH), the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) is a federally funded investment program that helps build digital capacity in Canadian museums and heritage organizations and gives Canadians unique access to diverse stories and experiences. Funding is available for modest to ambitious bilingual online products with interpreted content and an engaging user experience.

The Medium investment stream provides funding of \$50,000 to \$150,000. The Large stream provides funding of \$150,000 to \$250,000. The total investment for these two streams in any call for proposals is up to \$2,000,000.

There is an annual call for proposals. All proposals (proposal form and support documents) must be submitted [online](#) by the deadline of October 28, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time. Only proposals that meet the eligibility requirements are evaluated by the VMC Advisory Committee on a competitive basis. Agreements are signed with institutions awarded an investment.

For the 2020 Call for Proposals, institutions are invited to submit a proposal for an online product on the subject of their choice. This type of product provides a complete online experience for users; content can be consumed in any location, without specialized equipment. Examples include virtual exhibits, virtual tours, web-based games, web applications, educational resources, and more.

Online products that receive funding through the Virtual Museum of Canada investment program must be available online in both English and French for a period of five years following the launch of the product.

All online products must comply with the [VMC Technical Specifications](#).

2.1 Eligibility

Canadian museums and heritage organizations, including equivalent Indigenous peoples' organizations, are eligible to apply to the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) Investment Program.

To be eligible, the institution submitting the proposal must:

- Be administered in the public interest **for the primary purpose** of collecting, preserving, documenting, interpreting, exhibiting and disseminating physical collections and/or intangible cultural heritage. This includes artistic, scientific, cultural and historical material.
- Operate a permanent establishment or site accessible to the public.
- Be an aquarium, archive, art gallery, botanical garden, cultural centre, equivalent Indigenous peoples' organization, exhibition centre, historic house, historical society, library, museum, planetarium, preservation project or site, professional cultural association or group, zoo or other organization that meets these eligibility requirements.¹
- Be not-for-profit.
- *Not* be a member of the Canadian Heritage Portfolio.
- Have completed any previous Virtual Museum of Canada-funded projects *prior* to the deadline for this call for proposals, which is October 28, 2020.

IMPORTANT: The VMC reserves the right to request proof of eligibility at any time during the quick pitch, application and proposal review processes, and to make a determination on eligibility in certain cases.

Notes: Institutions can submit more than one proposal in a call for proposals. However, the VMC will not invest in more than one project at a time from any institution.

¹ According to the ICOM Statutes, adopted during the 21st General Conference in Vienna, Austria, in 2007: 'A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.'
This definition is a reference in the international community.

The VMC may reject a proposal if it determines that the institution's performance on another VMC contract was unsatisfactory or sufficiently poor to jeopardize the successful completion of a new project.

3.1 The Quick Pitch

For a 4-week period at the beginning of the call for proposals, institutions can complete a brief questionnaire outlining their project idea and submit it for feedback. Each project idea will receive one round of feedback only. The quick pitch is optional but recommended.

Note: The deadline to submit a quick pitch is **July 15, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time**.

To access the online questionnaire: [Quick pitch](#)

3.2 Quick Pitch Review Factors

When reviewing the quick pitches, VMC Advisory Committee members consider the potential degree to which:

- there is a fit between the subject, the story and the target audience(s)
- the user experience will engage the audience(s) and promote enjoyment and learning
- the digital tools and technologies fit the user experience
- the approach is creative and/or original
- the right people are on board to make the project a success

Comments focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the project, in relation to these factors.

Note: Feedback will be provided to the institutions by telephone **between August 12, 2020 at 9 am Eastern Daylight Time and August 25, 2020 at 4 pm Eastern**

Daylight Time. *Written summaries of the feedback, and the committee's comments are not provided.*

4.1 Proposal Evaluation Process

For each call for proposals, the total funding amount requested by applicants greatly exceeds the annual funding budget of the Medium and Large investment streams.

The VMC assesses all eligible proposals to ensure compliance with VMC requirements, including the mandatory criteria identified below. A proposal that meets these criteria is then evaluated by the VMC Advisory Committee against the rated criteria to determine if it will be recommended for investment. The VMC also prepares proposal summary information to assist the committee in its work.

The committee's evaluation process involves individual assessments and group discussions. At its annual meeting, the committee decides which proposals to recommend for VMC investment.

Once the call for proposals closes, the evaluation process takes six months, including the evaluation by the committee.

4.2 Advisory Committee

The Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) Advisory Committee is composed of a group of internal and external experts. The role of the committee includes reviewing and providing feedback on quick pitches, and evaluating proposals submitted for the Medium and Large investment streams. Their work takes into account the overall investment program outcomes, and specific review and evaluation criteria. The committee recommends to the Canadian Museum of History (CMH) proposals for VMC investment. For reasons of public accountability, the CMH reserves the right to reject the committee's recommendations.

After the committee's recommendations have been approved, the CMH signs an agreement with the institution receiving the investment that sets out project requirements and responsibilities.

4.3 Evaluation Criteria

Mandatory criteria are used to filter out ineligible projects *before* the institution starts preparing their proposal. The Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) Advisory Committee uses the rated criteria to evaluate eligible proposals. The committee reserves the right to refine the criteria as the VMC investment program evolves.

For the 2020 Call for Proposals, institutions are invited to submit a proposal for an online product on the subject of their choice. Examples include virtual exhibits, virtual tours, web-based games, web applications, educational resources, and more.

4.4 Mandatory Criteria

To proceed to the evaluation stage, proposals must meet the following criteria:

- The product described in the proposal will provide *a complete online experience* for users (content can be consumed in any location, without specialized equipment)
- The product will be produced in both official languages
- The application is received by the deadline of **October 28, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time**

Note: Following a preliminary review, institutions with incomplete applications will be contacted and given the opportunity to respond in a timely manner.

4.5 Rated Criteria

To facilitate the evaluation process, proposals must clearly respond to the criteria below.

Only those proposals that obtain a score of **65** points or more will be considered for investment.

Subject (8 points)

The proposal presents a clearly defined subject and main message that explore significant people, places, periods, events, activities, discoveries, practices, traditions, movements, issues, etc., past and/or present.

The proposal clearly explains how the project is relevant to the institution, the target audience(s) and the broader community.

More about *subject*:

The main message is the “big idea” you want to communicate about your subject, or the angle you want to take on it. One subject can have many different main messages. For example, an online product about Canada’s climates could look at how Canadians’ changing views about winter are impacting our sense of identity, or, how living in one of the planet’s most diverse weather systems is inspiring exciting technological innovations and artistic works.

Target Audience (12 points)

Target Audience

The proposal clearly defines 1-2 main audience(s) and, if needed, a secondary target audience for the online product.

More about *target audience(s)*:

One size does *not* fit all. Online products are more effective when they target specific audiences. Imagine a few types of users you intend to reach with your online product. Consider what they know about the subject, how they consume online content, and why they would engage with your product. Prioritize your audience types, so you end up with 1-2 main audience(s), and a secondary one, if needed. Keep these users in mind as you develop your proposal.

Research [LARGE (\$150,000 TO \$250,000) INVESTMENT ONLY]

The proposal presents key findings from research that validate the choice of target audience(s).

More about *research*:

Research can be original, like front-end evaluation, or from another source, like published reports and studies. Front-end evaluation is done at the beginning of a project to learn about a target audience's levels of awareness of, interest in, and knowledge about a subject.

Outcomes

The proposal articulates clear outcomes for the target audience(s). The main curriculum competencies are provided for school audiences.

More about *outcomes*:

Outcomes describe how the audience(s) will benefit from engaging with the online product. For example, will it: Inform them? Teach them a new skill? Connect them to other people? Inspire them to take action? Prompt a change in attitude? Surprise and delight them?

Evaluation

The proposal presents a clear plan to evaluate one or more aspects of the online product with members of the main target audience(s).

More about *evaluation*:

Formative evaluation is done with a sample of the main target audience(s), while a product is in development, to improve the final version of the product. There can be several cycles of testing and refinement.

Content (16 points)

The proposal identifies a range of content and explains how it supports the subject and audience outcomes.

The proposal indicates whether the content already exists or will be created.

Plans are included to collect and manage any user-generated content, and to consult with peoples or groups whose histories are represented in the online product.

More about *content*:

Content can take many forms, including physical sites, objects, specimens, images, documents, audio, video, other media, etc. Content may already exist or may need to be created for the online product. You may be able to repurpose some of the content you create for other uses, like on-site presentation. In this case, check eligible and ineligible costs for the VMC portion of your budget.

User-generated content includes activities like curating your own collection from a larger collection of objects, and contributing your own content - like stories or objects - to an online product.

In order to avoid misrepresentation, peoples or groups whose histories are represented in the online product should be consulted in a meaningful way.

User Experience (20 points)

The proposal explains how the content will be organized in the online product.

The proposal describes in detail a rich and engaging user experience that brings the content to life for the target audience(s). Aspects of the experience are different from, or not feasible in, the physical world.

Because design happens later in the process of making an online product, mock-ups and other demonstrations submitted with the proposal will not be evaluated.

More about the user experience:

Examples of user experiences that are different from, or not feasible in, the physical world: seeing under or zooming into the paint layer of a painting; travelling through time, to space or to the bottom of the ocean; visiting remote or geographically dispersed locations or communities; assembling many large-scale artifacts in one location; presenting and linking a collection in an attractive way; seeing inside a restricted building or area of a building; flying low over a landscape; etc.

Technology (12 points)

Technology

The proposal identifies specific digital tools and technologies and explains how they will enhance the user experience. There is a good fit between them and the audience outcomes.

More about *technology*:

Think of technology in terms of features and functionality, rather than specific software. If the technology has a mainstream name like *virtual reality* or *360-degree video* feel free to use it, but describing the behaviour is also acceptable. e.g. a website that involves an engaging scroll experience that triggers various animations and elements as the user journeys down the page.

Technical Specifications

The proposal demonstrates how the web content will be accessible to all users regardless of their abilities and the platform or technology they use to access it.

More about *technical specifications*:

Even if your online project is focused on immersive technologies and interactive media, think of how the content you are sharing with your audience can be made available to as many users as possible, regardless of their abilities, their bandwidth and the tools they are using to access the web. Without going into technical details, describe your proposed approach for making your content as accessible as possible and for implementing Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1).

Support and Hosting [LARGE (\$150,000 TO \$250,000) INVESTMENT ONLY]

The proposal demonstrates that the expertise needed to work with the digital tools and technologies, and the technical infrastructure needed to support them, will be in place during the development and post-launch stages.

More about *support and hosting*:

Try to demonstrate an awareness of what is required from the back-end to support your project. Show a good fit between the overall type and scale of infrastructure required and the experience you are creating.

Project Team (16 points)

The proposal demonstrates a clear understanding of the roles involved in delivering an online product.

The proposal presents a solid team drawn from the lead institution and other organizations with proven and/or recognized expertise and experience directly related to the content, user experience or technological approach of the online product. Peoples

or groups whose histories are represented in the online product are represented on the team.

More about the *project team*:

The project team is the group of people who fill the wide variety of roles needed to deliver an online product. This includes people from the lead institution, other organizations, and the wider community.

Project teams can experience a lot of change in the time it takes to do an online product. If your project is selected for investment, you will be asked to identify back-up people to cover key roles so your project can stay on track.

For projects where external technical expertise is needed, while you are not required to have selected a multimedia company by the time you submit your proposal, it is helpful to identify one or more companies you could work with to do your project.

Schedule and Budget (16 points)

Schedule

The schedule demonstrates a clear understanding of the tasks required to do the online product. The schedule is structured around the planned launch date, and the deliverables and VMC quality assurance reviews associated with each of the five product development phases. Tasks are assigned to people. Task durations are provided and are realistic.

More about *schedule*:

The five product development phases are: production plan, interpretive plan, preliminary version of the online product, developed version, and final version.

It takes 6 months from the call for proposals deadline to evaluate the proposals and notify applicants. Projects typically begin within a month of notification, and take between 1.5 and 3 years, depending on the scope of the project.

The VMC performs a quality assurance review for each project phase. In phase 1, the review period is up to 10 days; phase 2-5 reviews take up to 4 weeks. In most phases, two reviews are usually required in order to progress to the next phase. After each review, allow 2 to 4 weeks for your revisions and modifications. Include these tasks and timeframes in your schedule.

When preparing your schedule, consult your team members, and thoroughly review the deliverables and the VMC Technical Specifications.

Promotion [LARGE (\$150,000 TO \$250,000) INVESTMENT ONLY]

The proposal includes a high-level outline that presents key promotional strategies for the launch of the online product, and the five-year period post-launch.

More about *promotion*:

While the VMC investment doesn't cover marketing and communications expenses related to your online product, there is an expectation that you will tell people about it. Think about how you will promote the launch and make people aware of your product in the following years. Social media and other types of campaigns, e-newsletters, activities and presentations can be effective.

Budget

The budget identifies realistic costs for all the tasks in the schedule. The lead institution and organizations involved in the project cover some of the costs. Items in the VMC column reflect an understanding of the [eligible costs](#) and [ineligible costs](#). Notes that show how costs were calculated are provided. If available, quotes are uploaded.

More about *budget*:

Include costs for all the tasks described in the schedule. Indicate which costs will be covered by the lead institution, the VMC, and other organizations involved in the project. Refer to Eligible and Ineligible Costs when assigning costs to the VMC.

Under "notes" in the budget template, explain how costs were calculated (e.g. hourly rate x number of hours) and provide a description of services. Include any support documentation (e.g. quotes) to show that budget items have been calculated responsibly.

Use extra care when calculating technology-related costs. To avoid unexpected changes to the scope of technical work involved in developing the product, everyone involved in the development should become thoroughly familiar with the VMC Technical Specifications.

A Medium investment from the VMC will not exceed \$150,000 per project (excluding applicable taxes). A Large investment will not exceed \$250,000.

Support Letters (to validate information in the proposal)

Letters are provided from organizations involved in the project.

Letters confirm the type and (if applicable) value of the support, and align with the project description, schedule and (for financial or in-kind contributions) budget.

More about *support letters*:

Organizations can support your project in many different ways. For example, they can: give access to collections or the target audience, provide expertise or services, validate and evaluate content, contribute financially or in-kind, and more.

Letters should be provided to validate this support.

Make sure the details in the letter align with the project description, schedule and, for financial or in-kind contributions, the budget.

Use the [support letter](#) template provided.

5.1 Schedule

Create the schedule for your online product using the format of your choice. Make sure it aligns with your budget, project description and support letters.

The schedule needs to:

- be structured around the five project phases, the key deliverables and the quality assurance reviews described in Deliverables
- identify the durations and responsibilities for each task
- be formatted for all pages to print clearly and legibly on 11" x 17" paper, in landscape orientation
- be saved as a PDF

Tasks can include, but are not limited to:

- Planning
 - establish project team
 - validate schedule with team members and others involved in your project
 - finalize budget
 - hire/allocate project resources
 - manage resources and relationships

- establish and manage review committees
- activate and manage community involvement
- confirm contracts (research, curatorial, design, etc.)
- allocate time for project, schedule and budget monitoring
- establish testing and quality control protocols
- Content development and production
 - conduct content research
 - develop an interpretive plan
 - confirm availability of collections, artifacts and/or objects
 - secure all documents, images, visuals, audio, video and other material
 - arrange for copyrights clearance and licenses
 - write texts (interpretive, captions, alternative texts, transcriptions, information, metadata)
 - translate texts
 - edit texts in all languages
 - proofread texts in all languages
 - produce visuals (illustrations, maps, etc.)
 - digitize all required material
 - produce preliminary and final graphics for design/multimedia/animation/gaming/interactives
- Technical development and production
 - develop technical planning documents (information architecture, site flows, site maps etc.)
 - develop wireframes, design and layout
 - implement programming and production (frontend: HTML, CSS, jquery etc., backend: php, database, API)
 - ensure CMS customization
 - test that the online product meets the accessibility requirements outlined in the VMC technical specifications
 - conduct Quality Assurance and fix issues and bugs
 - perform integration and deployment
- Audience evaluation
 - conduct front-end evaluation of concept, content and/or design
 - conduct formative evaluation of content and/or prototypes

- communicate evaluation results
 - adjust and correct product
- Deployment, launch and maintenance
 - plan and develop promotional activities
 - produce final report and documentation
 - verify all links
 - gather and report on web statistics

5.2 Budget

Use the [budget template](#) (XLSX) provided to develop the budget for your online product. Make sure it aligns with your schedule, project description and support letters.

The budget needs to:

- include costs for all the tasks in the schedule
- indicate which costs will be covered by the lead institution, the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC), and other organizations involved in the project
- under “notes”, explain how costs were calculated (e.g. hourly rate x number of hours) and provide a description of services
- include any support documentation (e.g. quotes) to show that budget items have been calculated responsibly

Note: The VMC will not invest more than \$250,000 per project, excluding applicable taxes. Refer to [eligible costs](#) and [ineligible costs](#) when assigning costs to the VMC.

The following budget categories and items are identified in the Budget Template (XLSX):

- Coordination
 - project management/coordination
 - administrative services and supplies
- Training or skills development
 - training or skills development
- Content development
 - writing/research
 - development and presentation of content
 - educational content
 - rights
- Content/site production
 - digitization
 - graphics/design/illustrations
 - audio
 - video

- text
- photography
- online product development
- hardware/software
- Content evaluation
 - content review
 - evaluation/focus groups
 - advisory committee (Elders)
 - audience research
- Translation and editing
 - translation and editing into official languages
 - translation and editing into additional languages
 - comparative edit
- Travel
- Marketing
- Other

To avoid unexpected changes to the scope of technical work involved in developing the online product, everyone involved in the development should become thoroughly familiar with the [VMC Technical Specifications](#).

5.3 Eligible Costs

In calculating proposed Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) investment in an online product, the lead institution may include costs related to:

- research and preparation to develop and present content
- educational expertise (salary or contract)
- coordination
- salaries or contracts directly associated with the creation of content specifically for the VMC
- evaluation(s) involving identified target audiences
- digitization, including rights clearance and documentation
- product development (including media production; technical, web and accessibility development; and, technical integration and deployment)

- copyright
- content translation into the other official language and/or translation verification (see [Annex B](#), for guidance on estimating translation costs)
- translation into additional languages (may be eligible depending on the project)
- training or skills development, directly related to the project, that will provide longer-term benefit to the institutions and organizations involved
- up-front costs to cover setting up moderation functionality directly related to social technologies used to enhance the visitor experience
- travel, where costs are shown to be essential to the production of the online product
- software or hardware (e.g. digital scanners) directly related to the production of content for the VMC

Note: Costs incurred by other organizations involved in the project may be eligible when shown to be directly related and essential to the production of the online product.

Other proposed costs are considered on their merits in the context of specific proposals. The primary criterion is whether costs are directly related and essential to the production of the online product.

5.4 Ineligible Costs

The Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) does not invest in costs related to:

- creating institutional websites
- automating collections management records
- the development of native mobile applications
- computers, external hard drives, memory cards and servers
- printers
- DVD / CD-burners
- secondary materials (e.g. CDs, DVDs)
- mobile devices (e.g. cell phones, tablets) and data/service plans
- ongoing costs to maintain monitoring and validation of social technologies in products following their launch
- marketing and promotional expenses (including: Communications personnel)

- printed materials (e.g. educational materials like teachers' kits)
- creation of new artwork (excluding web graphics)
- office space rental
- website maintenance
- search engine registration
- domain name registration
- website hosting
- contingency, unexplained miscellaneous or overhead costs

6.1 Deliverables

Five deliverables submitted over five phases are required for online products created through the Medium and Large investment streams. Each deliverable is subject to at least one quality assurance review cycle by the VMC.

Phase 1 - First Deliverable - Production Plan

A kick-off meeting between the institution and the VMC must take place at the beginning of this phase.

The production plan includes:

- a revised detailed description of the online product, if required
- a revised schedule
- a revised budget
- as required, updated production plan(s) incorporating changes requested by the VMC after its review of the production plan

Note: Each Phase 1 VMC validation can take up to 10 working days.

- invoice for 30% of total investment, once the final update of the production plan is approved

Phase 2 - Second Deliverable - Interpretive Plan

The interpretive plan includes:

- a content grid - a clear and detailed plan of the content
- a messaging plan - main, secondary, and tertiary messages
- sample texts - sample of each type of text (title, intro, main body, captions, labels, descriptive transcript, interactive text, alternative text, closed captioning, etc.)
- a sample translation – 250 words of main content text, translated and edited into the second official language
- identification of the target audience(s) - with evidence that the content will be developed taking their needs into account
- an Information Architecture diagram (IA) – developed in collaboration with the technical team, a visual diagram that shows how all elements in the content grid will be organized
- a list of enhancements - a list of key features or functionality that will enhance the online product beyond pages of basic text and images. The list must describe the feature and how it should behave, and specify which technologies or products will be used to implement it
- as required, updated interpretive plan(s) incorporating changes requested by the VMC after its review of the interpretive plan

Note: Each Phase 2 VMC validation can take up to 20 working days.

- invoice for 15% of total investment, once the final update of the interpretive plan is approved

Phase 3 - Third Deliverable – Preliminary Version

The preliminary version includes:

- a functioning online prototype of the online product, based on the information architecture diagram and content grid provided in Phase 2. The prototype must include, at a minimum, in at least one language, the following sections:
 - main (home) page

- secondary page
 - three (3) other content pages
 - sitemap page
 - credit page
 - feedback page
 - VMC logo placement
 - evidence of Google Analytics implementation
 - all mandatory navigation elements
 - examples of each type of multimedia and interactive element outlined in the online product description
 - content identified in the previous phase (adjusted and additional content is acceptable)
 - links to placeholder content in second official language
- a formative evaluation report related to the preliminary version of the online product
 - as required, the updated preliminary version(s) of the online product incorporating changes requested by the VMC after its review of the preliminary version

Note: Each Phase 3 VMC validation can take up to 20 working days.

- invoice for 20% of total investment, once the final update of the preliminary version is approved

Phase 4 - Fourth Deliverable – Developed Version

The developed version includes:

- a fully functional unilingual developed version of the online product based on the approved interpretive plan and preliminary version, with all completed and working content and place holder content and working links in the other official language site(s)
- if required, a revised and edited version of the sample translation from Phase 2
- a minimum of three (3) promotional images

- the Preliminary Landing Page Creation form provided by the VMC, with associated images and project description
- as required, the updated developed version(s) of the online product incorporating changes requested by the VMC after its review of the developed version

Note: Each Phase 4 VMC validation can take up to 20 working days.

- invoice for 15% of total investment, once the final update of the developed version is approved

Phase 5 - Fifth Deliverable – Final Version

The final version includes:

- a fully functional bilingual (or multilingual) final version of the online product that meets all content and technical requirements (the final version is based on the approved unilingual online product delivered at end of Phase 4 with all completed and working content in all languages, incorporating the changes identified by the VMC after the review of the developed version)
- as required, the updated Landing Page Creation form provided by the VMC, with associated images and project description
- as required, the updated final version(s) of the online product incorporating changes requested by the VMC after its review of the final version

Note: Each Phase 5 VMC validation can take up to 20 working days

- a digital copy of the online product, in all languages, including the final source files
- the final report of expenditures. This report must be created from the revised budget submitted in Phase 1 and must show the projected and actual amounts spent by those involved in the project (VMC, lead institution, others)
- invoice for final 20% of total investment, once all of the Phase 5 deliverables are approved

6.2 Link to the VMC

A link from the online product to the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) is required to increase the search engine visibility of your product and institution.

The VMC links to your online product whenever its name appears on the VMC website. For search engines, these reciprocal links emphasize the relationship between your institution and the VMC, increasing your visibility on the Web.

6.3 Post-Launch Obligations

Online products that receive Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) investment must be produced in both English and French and be made available online for a period of five years following the launch of the product. During this period, the lead institution is required to:

- Conduct regular verifications of all hyperlinks, and correct as required
- Respond to public feedback in a timely manner
- Ensure that the online product infrastructure is managed and maintained (including payment of associated hosting service fees) on an ongoing basis for the duration of the agreement so the online product and its features experience little to no downtime
- Provide the VMC read-only access to the online product's Google Analytics account as well as respond to VMC requests for user stats when required

If the lead institution updates, changes or otherwise alters the online product in any way at any time during the five years it is online, they are strongly encouraged to:

- Reflect the update, change or alteration in both the English and French versions of the online product
- Work with a skilled writer, editor and translator to ensure quality of text treatment
- Respect the technical specifications of the original online product, unless a better *and equally accessible* solution is available
- Contact the VMC for approval and advice, as required

7.1 Annex A: Investment by Applicant Institution and Others

An institution submitting a proposal to the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) for investment in an online product is expected to demonstrate their own investment, as well as investment by others involved in the project. There is no fixed minimum for this type of investment; nor does it need to be direct financial contribution.

Valid investment includes:

- The value of staff, volunteer or other time dedicated to realizing the project (provided that these costs have not been included under VMC investment)
- The value of the intellectual property being made available to the public without charge. Guidance concerning the formula to be used in calculating the value of the funding is provided in [Annex B](#)

Note: This in no way implies transfer of ownership of intellectual property or exclusive use. The value assigned represents the fees that might have been paid if the material had been licensed to the VMC.

- The value to promote the online product through institutional newsletters, announcements or other promotional activities. To be eligible, the promotion must clearly credit the VMC investment program
- The value of in-kind contributions (e.g., equipment and services) by others involved in the project
- Financial contributions to the project by the applicant institution and others involved in the project

7.2 Annex B: Guidelines for Calculating Costs/Values

Editing and Translation

To ensure the highest possible quality of writing in both languages in the online product, and to be as cost- and time-effective as possible, it is strongly recommended that the original language version be reviewed and edited by a professional editor prior to translation. The translation should then be edited. Finally, a comparative edit of the two languages is recommended.

Editors tend to use an hourly rate. Translators establish their fees on either an hourly or a per-word basis.

Because editing and translation effort is tied directly to quality of writing, all estimates provided by translators and editors should be treated as approximations.

Editing rates:

Editing costs can vary between \$0.04 and \$0.11 per word, or between \$42.00 and \$55.00 per hour.

Translation rates:

Translation costs can vary between \$0.20 and \$0.35 per word.

When calculating costs, keep in mind that translation will be required for *all text*, including navigational text, alternative text, audio and video transcripts, metadata and keywords.

Intellectual Property/Copyright

As part of their contribution to the overall budget of the online product, the lead institution may claim credit for the value of the intellectual property which they are making freely available to the public. The following formulas for calculating this value are based on average commercial transactions.

Note: These formulas are not intended as guidelines for institutional negotiations with third parties to acquire rights from others. In such cases, rates negotiated with collective societies or individual rights holders should prevail.

Image formula

Based on the average licensing fee paid by multimedia developers for the use of an image in a multimedia product with worldwide distribution.

\$150 x estimated number of images to be included in the product

Text formula

Based on an average fee paid to writers through Access Copyright for transmission/reproduction rights for the Internet.

\$375.10 per 500 words estimated for product

Audio and video clip formula

Loosely based on average commercial licensing fees, acknowledging that rates for Internet use vary widely.

\$8.30 per minute (audio clip) \$30 per second (video clip)

Marketing

Although the Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) does not cover costs related to marketing and communications, the lead institution can increase the merit of its proposal based on the scope of marketing and communications efforts planned. The value of these efforts should appear in the budget under the contributions (in kind and/or financial) of the lead institution or any other organization involved in the project.

Suggested marketing and communications activities include, but are not limited to:

Online:

- search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
- sharing, engagement and promotion through social media
- promotion in e-newsletters (with hyperlinks)
- advertising banners on external sites

Offline:

- press releases and newsletters
- media advertising campaigns
- launch activities (ceremonies, receptions, etc.)

- creation and targeted distribution of promotional material
- presentations on VMC content in schools, at institution members meetings and to visitors and other groups
- sponsorships

A 70:30 distribution in favour of online activities is recommended. All activities should recognize and make the VMC visible.

SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Medium and Large Investment Streams

The deadline for receipt of proposals is **October 28, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time.**

The Quick Pitch

Get some guidance before you prepare your full proposal. For a 4-week period at the beginning of the call for proposals, institutions can complete a brief questionnaire outlining their project idea and submit it for feedback, one time only. The quick pitch is optional but recommended.

*The deadline to submit a quick pitch for Virtual Museum of Canada (VMC) feedback is **July 15, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time.***

For the 2020 call for proposals, Canadian museums and heritage organizations are invited to submit proposals for online products to the VMC. All proposals must be submitted [online](#) by the deadline of October 28, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time.

The total investment available for this call for proposals is up to two million dollars (\$2,000,000).

Online products that receive VMC investment must:

- be produced in both English and French
- be made available online for a period of five years post-launch
- comply with the [VMC Technical Specifications](#)

Institutions seeking investment:

- can request a Medium investment from the VMC of \$50,000 to \$150,000 per project (excluding applicable taxes), or a Large investment of \$150,000 to \$250,000
- can submit more than one proposal in a call for proposals

- must deliver and launch any VMC-funded project they are already working on *prior to* the closing date of the new call for proposals
- bear the sole responsibility of submitting their proposal(s) in a timely and correct manner prior to the closing date of the call for proposals

Notes: The Canadian Museum of History (CMH), who manages the VMC investment program, will not assume or have transferred to it those responsibilities. All risks and consequences of incorrect submission of proposals are the responsibility of the institution.

All proposals will be treated as confidential, subject to the provisions of the Access to Information Act (Canada) and Privacy Act (Canada) and any other relevant laws and regulations.

Institutions who are awarded an investment:

- enter into an agreement with the CMH, which includes the General Terms and Conditions in the [sample contract](#)

The CMH reserves the right to cancel and/or reissue the call for proposals at any time and for whatever reasons. If any addenda are issued prior to the call for proposals closing date, a notice will be posted on the website.

For more information, please contact the Virtual Museum of Canada at vmc.proposals@historymuseum.ca.

Note: The 2020 call for proposals for the [Small investment stream](#) (Community Stories) is open from June 17, 2020 to November 25, 2020.

Steps to Submit Your Proposal

Only online submissions will be accepted using our [online application portal](#).

Step 1 - Read through the program materials:

- [Program Guidelines](#)
- [Budget template](#)
- [Sample Contract](#) (PDF)
- [VMC Technical Specifications](#) (PDF)

Step 2 (Optional) – Get early feedback on your project idea

- identify subject, audience(s), storyline, desired visitor/user experience, possible technologies, potential project team - and why your project is important
- create a profile in our [online application portal](#)
- complete and submit a quick pitch by **July 15, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time**

Step 3 - Prepare your submission

- refine your concept
- gather content
- secure your project team
- obtain [support letters](#) from others involved in your project

Step 4 - Create and submit your proposal

- if you have not submitted a Quick Pitch, create a profile in our [online application portal](#)
- complete the proposal form for a medium investment (\$50,000 to \$150,000) or a large investment (\$150,000 to \$250,000)
- submit the completed proposal form, budget, schedule and any support letters through our [online application portal](#), by **October 28, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time**
- receive email confirmation from the Virtual Museum of Canada

Once the call for proposals closes, **the evaluation process takes six months**, including the evaluation by the VMC Advisory Committee.

Late Proposals

Proposals delivered after the call for proposals closing date and time will not be accepted.

Following a preliminary review, institutions with incomplete applications will be contacted and given the opportunity to respond in a timely manner.

Enquiries

All enquiries concerning this call for proposals must be submitted in writing to vmc.proposals@historymuseum.ca by October 21, 2020 at 5 pm Eastern Daylight Time.

To ensure consistency and quality of information provided to applicant institutions, general questions and answers will be posted on the VMC website without revealing the source of the enquiry. Answers to questions that are specific to an applicant institution's proposal will be sent to them and will not be posted on the VMC website.

Debriefing:

A debriefing will be provided to applicant institutions on written request only, and only if the request is received by the CMH within ten (10) days following receipt of the letter of regret. The debriefing will be conducted by telephone. Written summaries of debriefings, and evaluation scores, are not provided.