REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Economic Value of Canada's Circular Economy – Phase 1

Prepared for Circular Innovation Council (CIC) | Issued October 30, 2026

Closing Date and Time: November 30, 2026

Tentative Award Date: December 10, 2026

1. Invitation

Circular Innovation Council (CIC) invites proposals from qualified economic consulting firms, research organizations, academic teams and/or consortia to undertake a rigorous national and provincial analysis of the economic value generated by circular-economy activities in Canada. The successful proponent will combine Canadian economic-impact modelling expertise with a strong understanding of circular economy systems, resource recovery, extended producer responsibility (EPR), material flows and industry data.

2. Background

Canada has significant economic activity associated with recycling, resource recovery, producer-responsibility systems and other circular activities, but these activities are not consistently defined or quantified as an integrated part of the Canadian economy. CIC is undertaking a phased research program to establish a credible evidence base on the economic impact and broader value of circular activity across Canada.

Phase 1 will focus principally on regulated and non-regulated recycling/resource-recovery systems, with national and province/territory-level results beginning with packaging and printed paper and deposit-return system, with additional streams added as CIC confirms them. The work is intended to support evidence-based public policy, investment, industry strategy and future expansion of the analysis into value-retention processes and resource-intensive sectors.

3. Study Objectives

i. Establish a transparent and replicable definition and accounting framework for the circular-economy activities included in Phase 1.
ii. Quantify the direct economic impact of included activities and estimate associated indirect and induced effects.
iii. Produce national and provincial/territorial estimates, to the extent supported by reliable data.
iv. Quantify key indicators including output/revenue, GDP, employment/FTEs, labour income and government tax revenues.
v. Identify data gaps and establish defensible methods for combining industry primary data with Statistics Canada and other authoritative sources.
vi. Avoid double-counting across material streams, EPR systems, collection, processing, brokerage and end markets.
vii. Develop a methodology that can be extended in future phases to reuse, refill, repair, refurbishment, remanufacturing and selected resource-intensive sectors.
viii. Produce results and communication materials suitable for government, industry, investors and the public.

4. Phase 1 Scope

Phase 1 will be delivered in stages, beginning with packaging and printed paper EPR and deposit return systems. Proponents must price each stream separately.

i. Packaging and printed paper EPR and deposit-return systems, including plastics as a distinct material category where data permit;
ii. Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), including IT/telecommunications and audio-visual equipment;
iii. Batteries;
iv. Scrap tires;
v. Hazardous and special products/wastes and lighting;
vi. Pharmaceuticals and sharps;
vii. Automotive-related recovery systems;
viii. Agricultural/farm stewardship and recovery systems;
ix. Food salvage and organics collection, processing and end markets;
x. Non-regulated industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) recycling/resource recovery.

5. Required Methodology

Proponents may propose the economic model and analytical architecture they consider most appropriate. However, proposals must explain in detail how the approach will address the following:

i. Canadian input-output modelling and/or an equivalent transparent economic-impact framework grounded in Statistics Canada data and primary data;
ii. National and inter-provincial/territorial economic linkages and provincial/territorial attribution;
iii. Mapping of circular-economy activities to NAICS industries, commodities and other Statistics Canada classifications;
iv. Direct, indirect and induced impacts, with clear definitions and assumptions;
v. Primary-data collection from PROs, recyclers, processors, reuse/resource-recovery operators, municipalities and other industry participants;
vi. Treatment of confidential or commercially sensitive data, including aggregation/suppression rules;
vii. Material-flow data and physical metrics (e.g., tonnes collected, processed, marketed) where needed to validate economic activity;
viii. Treatment of imports, exports, secondary material sales and end-market activity;
ix. Controls for overlap and double-counting between producer fees, service-provider revenues, material sales and downstream economic activity;
x. Uncertainty, sensitivity analysis, data-quality scoring and transparent documentation of assumptions;
xi. Approach to separately estimating or contextualizing avoided disposal, avoided virgin-material use, GHG/resource benefits or other non-GDP value without conflating them with conventional economic impacts.

6. Expected Deliverables

i. Project initiation memorandum, detailed work plan and data-request framework.
ii. Definition and classification framework for Phase 1 circular-economy activities.
iii. Data inventory, gap analysis and primary-data collection instruments.
iv. Interim methodology report documenting modelling assumptions, mappings and double-counting controls.
v. Preliminary national and provincial/territorial results for CIC review and stakeholder validation.
vi. Final analytical dataset/model outputs and reproducible calculation documentation, subject to licensing restrictions identified in the proposal.
vii. Final report presenting methodology, results, limitations, conclusions and recommendations.
viii. National and provincial/territorial summary tables/dashboard-ready data.
ix. Executive summary and presentation deck suitable for senior government and industry audiences.
x. Technical appendix sufficient to permit informed peer review and future methodological updates.

7. Project Schedule

CIC intends to complete the core Phase 1 analysis and final report by March 2027. Proponents should provide a detailed work plan that meets or improves on the following indicative milestones:

Milestone	Indicative timing
Contract award / kickoff	December 10, 2026
Methodology and data plan (6. i, ii, iii)	December 2026
Primary-data collection	Within 3 months of kickoff
Preliminary modelling/results (6. iv, v)	March 2027
Validation and revisions	April 2027
Final Phase 1 report and datasets (6. vi, vii, viii, ix, x)	May 2027

8. Proponent Qualifications

Proponent qualifications should include:

i. A named senior economist with demonstrated Canadian economic-impact/input-output modelling experience.
ii. A named circular-economy/resource-systems technical lead with demonstrable knowledge of recycling, EPR/resource recovery and circularity.
iii. Experience using Statistics Canada supply-use, input-output, labour, business and/or tax-related datasets.
iv. Demonstrated experience producing provincial/territorial or multi-regional economic results in Canada.
v. Experience with industry surveys, administrative/program data and confidential business information.
vi. Experience explaining complex quantitative results to government and senior decision-makers.
vii. For consortium proposals, clear governance, division of responsibilities and a single accountable project lead.

9. Proposal Requirements

Proponents must include the following elements in their proposal:

i. Executive summary and understanding of the assignment.
ii. Proposed methodology, including the model(s), datasets and classification/mapping approach.
iii. Detailed approach to data collection, validation, confidentiality, data security and double-counting.
iv. Work plan, schedule and team allocation.
v. Names, roles and concise biographies of key personnel.
vi. Three relevant project examples, preferably including Canadian national/provincial economic-impact work and circular/resource-sector analysis.
vii. Description of any proprietary models, software, data licences or restrictions affecting CIC's future use of the methodology/results.
viii. Risk register identifying key data and schedule risks and proposed mitigations.
ix. Fixed-fee or upset-limit budget by material stream, task and team member, including applicable taxes and travel/other disbursements. The budget should identify fixed costs versus incremental costs per material stream.
x. Identification of conflicts of interest, including current work for PROs, stewardship agencies, governments or sector organizations that may materially affect independence and proposed mitigation approaches, where appropriate.

10. Budget and Commercial Terms

The maximum available funding for Phase 1 is $250,000 for all materials streams identified in section 4, exclusive of applicable taxes. Proponents should recommend a budget commensurate with the proposed methodology and scope and provide a task-level breakdown. CIC is interested in achieving the highest analytical credibility and long-term methodological value while maintaining cost discipline. Consortiums should identify all subcontractor/academic partner costs separately.

11. Data Ownership, Transparency and Confidentiality

The proposal must clearly state ownership and licensing of all deliverables, models, code, datasets and calculation workbooks. CIC's preference is for transparent, reproducible outputs that can be updated in future phases. Any proprietary elements that cannot be transferred to CIC must be identified explicitly and the proponent must explain how CIC can independently reproduce or update the published results. The successful proponent will be required to protect confidential third-party data and comply with agreed aggregation and disclosure protocols.

12. Independence and Peer Review

The study is intended to establish a credible national evidence base. CIC therefore expects clear disclosure of assumptions, limitations, data quality and potential conflicts. Proponents should include an approach to internal quality assurance and should identify options for independent technical peer review of the methodology and final results. The study will be informed and supported by a Steering Committee and Research Advisory Committee.

13. Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Weight
Methodological strength, including Canadian I-O/economic modelling expertise, uncertainty/sensitivity analysis approach, and non-economic valuation approach	25%
Circular economy, EPR/resource-recovery and material-flow expertise	15%
Team qualifications and relevant Canadian project experience	10%
Method transferability, reproducibility and peer review	10%
Primary-data, validation, confidentiality, double-counting approach	10%
Provincial and territorial modelling and Statistics Canada expertise	10%
Work plan and ability to deliver by April 2027	10%
Value for money, including fixed costs and cost by material stream	10%

CIC may invite shortlisted proponents to an interview and may request clarification, a revised scope or a best-and-final price before award.

14. RFP Timelines

- RFP issue date: October 30, 2026
- Deadline for questions: November 10, 2026
    - CIC contact: Kurtis Layden, kurtis@circularinnovation.ca
- Proposal closing date/time: November 30, 2026 at 5:00PM ET
- Submission email/portal: info@circularinnovation.ca
- Anticipated award date: December 10, 2026
- Maximum proposal length: 15 pages, excluding annexes

15. Reserved Rights

CIC may amend, suspend or cancel this RFP; seek clarification from any proponent; negotiate scope and pricing; reject any or all proposals; and award all or part of the work. The lowest-priced proposal will not necessarily be selected. Costs incurred in preparing a proposal are the responsibility of the proponent.

CIC may, before or after selecting a proponent, reduce, stage, defer or otherwise amend the scope, deliverables, schedule and price of the work, having regard to program priorities, available resources, data availability and stakeholder input. CIC is not obliged to award the full scope described in this RFP. Where the scope is amended, CIC will discuss the changes with the selected proponent, and the price will be adjusted using the task-level pricing in the proposal. Where a change is material, CIC may request revised or best-and-final submissions from the proponents then under consideration. Work properly performed before an amendment will be paid under the agreed terms.

Appendix A – Preferred Analytical Outputs

- Output/revenue attributable to included circular activities.
- Gross domestic product (GDP/value added).
- Employment: jobs and, where possible, FTEs.
- Labour income/compensation.
- Federal, provincial, territorial and local government tax revenues where methodologically supportable.
- Direct, indirect and induced results reported separately and in total.
- National results plus province/territory results with clear treatment of suppressed/low-confidence estimates.
- Results by major material stream/system and selected functional activity (collection, processing, end markets, etc.) where reliable.
- Physical throughput indicators and economic intensity ratios where useful.
- Avoided disposal, avoided virgin-material use, GHG/resource benefits or other non-GDP value without conflating them with conventional economic impacts.
- Sensitivity ranges and data-quality/confidence indicators.

Appendix B – Questions Bidders Should Answer Explicitly

- How will you define the boundary of the circular economy for this study?
- How will you prevent double-counting across PRO fees, collection/processing revenues and commodity sales?
- Which Statistics Canada tables/models will you use, and at what level of industry/commodity detail?
- How will you estimate provincial/territorial impacts when program/business data are incomplete or reported on a multi-provincial/territorial basis?
- How will you reconcile financial data with tonnes/material-flow data?
- What elements of your model will CIC be able to update independently after project completion?
- What are the three largest methodological risks to producing a defensible national estimate by March 2027?