**Hamilton/Burlington Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (HBSPCA)**

**Request for Proposal**

# External Audit Services

**RFP Number:** **RFP2026-AUD01**
**Date of Issue:** September 1, 2026
**Proposal Due Date:** 11:59pm on October 30th, 2026

FISCAL YEAR END – March 31st

## Contents

# A. INVITATION & GENERAL INFORMATION

## A.1 Invitation to Proponents

The Hamilton/Burlington SPCA (HBSPCA) invites qualified public accounting firms to submit proposals for the provision of external audit services for our charitable not-for-profit organization.

The selected firm will be engaged to perform the annual independent audit of the organization's financial statements and provide associated audit-related services in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standards (CAS), applicable accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNPO), the requirements of the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), and applicable provincial legislation.

The HBSPCA is seeking a firm with demonstrated experience serving charitable and not-for-profit organizations, a strong understanding of governance and regulatory requirements within the sector, and a commitment to providing high-quality, responsive, and value-added service.

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## A.2 Proposal Submission Deadline

Proposals must be received no later than: **11:59pm on October 30, 2026**

Late submissions will not be accepted.

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## A.3 Inquiries and Communications

All inquiries must be submitted by email to: **Shelley May, ExecProgramAsst@HBSPCA.com**

Questions must be received by: **11:59pm on October 10, 2026**

Responses will be issued to all registered proponents.

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## A.4 Proposal Delivery Requirements

Electronic submissions in PDF format are preferred.

Submit proposals to: **Shelley May, ExecProgramAsst@HBSPCA.com**

Subject Line: R**FP2026-AUD01**

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## A.5 Proposal Format Requirements

The proposal shall include:

- cover letter
- executive summary
- table of contents
- proponent qualifications
- service team
- audit methodology
- references
- fee proposal
- required declarations

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## A.6 Contract Term

The HBSPCA anticipates:

- Three (3) year term, with a 120-day notice period to cancel by either partner
- **Start date: December 1st 2026.**

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## A.7 Terms and Conditions

The HBSPCA reserves the right to:

- amend or cancel this RFP
- reject any or all proposals
- accept a proposal other than the lowest-priced submission
- request additional information from any proponent
- conduct interviews with shortlisted firms
- negotiate scope, fees, and contract terms
- award no contract if deemed appropriate

All costs incurred in preparing a proposal are the responsibility of the proponent.

All materials submitted become the property of the HBSPCA.

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### A.8 HBSPCA Partnership Investment Requirement

The successful proponent will be required to make an annual charitable contribution in support of the HBSPCA's **Unleash Love** campaign. As a community-based charitable organization, the HBSPCA seeks to develop partnerships with service providers who share its commitment to animal welfare and community impact. The required contribution will form part of the contractual agreement with the successful proponent and will be finalized during contract negotiations.

While this contribution is not an evaluation criterion and will not influence the assessment of proposals, proponents should acknowledge their willingness to support HBSPCA's mission and fundraising efforts as a valued community partner.

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## B. BACKGROUND

### B.1 Organization Overview

The HBSPCA has served the Hamilton and Burlington communities for almost 140 years and is one of Ontario's leading animal welfare organizations.

The HBSPCA provides a broad range of animal welfare and community services, including:

- open-admission animal sheltering and care
- companion animal veterinary services
- provincial animal welfare system support and animal care
- animal adoption services
- foster care programs
- community cat trap-neuter-return initiatives
- humane education programs
- volunteer programs
- community outreach and wellness initiatives

- pet retention and support services
- emergency animal housing and care
- training and enrichment programs

The HBSPCA is a registered charitable organization governed under Ontario legislation and funded through donations, grants, service revenues, fundraising activities, and community support.

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## B.2 Governance Structure

The HBSPCA is governed by a volunteer board of directors consisting of up to twelve (12) directors.

The board operates through standing committees that provide oversight of governance, finance, risk management, audit, strategic planning, and organizational performance.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FARC) provides direct oversight regarding financial reporting, audit matters, enterprise risk management, and internal controls.

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## B.3 Finance and Administration Team

The HBSPCA maintains an internal finance function responsible for:

- financial reporting
- budget development and monitoring
- accounts payable and receivable
- payroll oversight
- banking and investments
- internal controls
- regulatory compliance

The finance team operates under the leadership of the president and CEO and reports regularly to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee.

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## B.4 Financial Systems and Operations

The HBSPCA currently utilizes:

- QuickBooks accounting software
- Payworks payroll platform
- Raiser's Edge donor management system
- Microsoft 365 business applications
- banking and investment platforms supporting operational requirements

The successful proponent should demonstrate experience auditing organizations utilizing similar financial and donor management systems.

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# C. SCOPE OF SERVICES

## C.1 Audit Services Overview

The successful proponent will provide independent external audit services in accordance with:

- Canadian Auditing Standards (CAS)
- Accounting Standards for Not-for-Profit Organizations (ASNPO)
- applicable CRA requirements
- applicable Ontario legislation

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## C.2 Annual Financial Statement Audit

The successful proponent shall:

- Conduct an Interim and Final Audit in the second and third year, a Final Audit in the First year.
- evaluate accounting practices and internal controls (to be fully discussed)
- review significant accounting estimates and disclosures
- prepare audited financial statements and audit opinion
- present findings to the CEO
- present audit results to the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
- attend board meetings, if requested
- attend the Annual General Meeting, if requested

Results of the final Draft Audit for approval and discussion is required no later than Jun 1st

Submission of Documents may be added at that time T3010. Etc.

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## C.3 Management Letter and Internal Controls

The successful proponent shall provide:

- annual management letter
- internal control recommendations
- risk observations
- compliance findings
- operational improvement recommendations
- follow-up reporting regarding prior-year recommendations
- Creation and Submission of T3010

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## C.4 Additional Professional Services

The HBSPCA may request additional services including:

- tax advice
- CRA compliance matters
- regulatory reporting
- internal control consultation
- financial policy consultation
- accounting standards guidance

## C.4 Special Project Additional One Time Cost

The HBSPCA will request a onetime CRA Preparation Audit PREP - Review:

1. **Donation receipting:** Receipts should be supported by donor records, gift details, dates, fair market value documentation where applicable, and required receipt information.

2. **Books and source documents:** General ledgers, bank records, invoices, payroll records, grant agreements, contracts, and financial statements should be complete and accessible.
3. **Restricted funds and grants:** The organization should be able to show whether restricted donations or grant funds were used for the intended purpose.
4. **T3010 and annual filings:** Amounts reported to CRA should agree with the accounting records, financial statements, and supporting schedules.
5. **Governance and oversight:** Board minutes, approvals, conflict-of-interest records, and financial review practices help demonstrate accountability.

Detailed Listing:

- Monthly bank reconciliations are complete and reviewed.
- All donation receipts are supported by donor and gift documentation.
- Restricted funds, grants, and program expenses are tracked separately.
- Payroll remittances and employee records are organized.
- Invoices, receipts, and approvals are filed in a consistent system.
- Board minutes show approval of budgets, major expenses, and financial statements.
- Conflict-of-interest matters are documented and managed.
- T3010 information agrees with accounting records and working papers.
- Prior CRA correspondence, if any, is retained and easy to access.
- A staff member or advisor is assigned to coordinate audit-response requests.

# D. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

## D.1 General Requirements

Proponents shall clearly demonstrate their qualifications, experience, methodology, and ability to meet the HBSPCA's requirements.

## D.2 Evaluation Framework

| Evaluation Criteria | Weight |
|---|---|
| Experience with Not-for-Profit Organizations | 20% |
| Proposed Engagement Team | 15% |

| Evaluation Criteria | Weight |
|---|---|
| Audit Methodology and Approach | 20% |
| Risk Assessment and Internal Controls Expertise | 10% |
| Client Service and Responsiveness | 10% |
| References | 10% |
| Fees | 10% |
| Value-Added Services | 5% |
| **Total** | **100%** |

## D.3 Proposal Content Requirements

Proposals should address:

**Firm Overview**

- Firm history
- Ownership structure
- Number of partners and staff
- Ontario office locations

**Relevant Experience**

- Experience with charitable organizations
- Experience with organizations of similar size and complexity
- Relevant not-for-profit audit engagements

**Engagement Team**

- Engagement partner

- Audit manager
- Field staff
- Specialist resources

**Audit Methodology**

- Risk assessment process
- Planning approach
- Internal control testing
- Technology and data analytics utilized

**References**

- Provide three references from charitable or not-for-profit clients

**Independence**

- Disclose any real or perceived conflicts of interest

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## D.4 Financial Proposal Requirements

Provide:

**Audit Fees**

Annual fixed fees for:

- FY2027
- FY2028
- FY2029

**Hourly Rates**

Provide hourly rates for:

- Partner

- Manager
- Senior accountant
- Staff accountant
- Specialist services

**Additional Costs**

Disclose:

- Administrative fees
- Travel costs
- Disbursements
- Other expenses

All pricing shall be quoted exclusive of HST.

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# E. EVALUATION PROCESS

## E.1 Evaluation Methodology

The Evaluation Committee will include representatives from:

- Finance, Audit and Risk Committee
- President & CEO
- Director of Finance (or designate)

The Evaluation Committee may:

- review and score submissions
- interview shortlisted proponents
- conduct reference checks
- request clarification or supplemental information

Recommendation of the preferred proponent will be made to the board of directors for approval.

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# F. NEGOTIATIONS AND AWARD

## F.1 Negotiations

The HBSPCA reserves the right to negotiate with the preferred proponent regarding:

- scope of services
- fees
- staffing
- deliverables
- contract terms

Failure to reach mutually acceptable terms may result in negotiations with an alternate proponent.

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## F.2 Contract Award

Final award is subject to approval by the HBSPCA Board of Directors.

No contractual relationship shall exist until a written agreement has been executed by both parties.

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# G. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

## G.1 Supporting Documents

The following documents will be made available to proponents upon request or as an attachment package:

- most recent audited financial statements
- organizational chart
- current risk management documentation
- relevant governance policies
- additional financial information deemed appropriate by the HBSPCA

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