



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Election Services Provider

Issue Date: September 15, 2026

RFP Reference No.: RFP26.10.003

COWLITZ

INDIAN TRIBE

1055 9th Avenue
Longview, WA 98632



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Submission Details

Submission Instructions

Interested consultants must submit a complete proposal that includes the following:

1. Elections Cycle Approach

- A comprehensive explanation of how the consultant will approach each election cycle, including a detailed breakdown of the methodology, engagement strategies, and a proposed structure for both regular elections and any special election. The response should demonstrate how the consultant will translate the scope of work into a cohesive, actionable plan.

2. Floor voting and motions

- A comprehensive explanation of how the consultant will approach each Tribal Council meeting that includes motions and floor votes in person and electronically.

3. Proposed Timeline

- A timeline outlining key phases, milestones, and deliverables for the duration of the project.

4. Cost Proposal

- A detailed price quote for all services proposed, including a breakdown of fees, travel costs (if applicable), and any other anticipated expenses. Please provide a bundled cost as well as break-out cost if applicable.

5. Relevant Experience

- A portfolio of past election work, particularly with Indigenous communities, governments, or organizations. Include any experience with hybrid and electronic voting.



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6. References

- A list of at least five professional references from past clients, including contact information.

7. Tribal Experience

- Evidence of experience working with Tribal governments, communities, or organizations. Cultural competency and understanding of Tribal sovereignty are highly valued.

8. Team Composition (if applicable)

- Names, roles, and qualifications of all team members who will be involved in the project.

9. Conflict of Interest Statement

- A brief statement disclosing any potential conflicts of interest.

10. Submission Format and Deadline

- Proposals must be submitted in PDF format by **November 16, 2026, at 5 p.m. PST.**
- Submit proposals via email to: electionboard@cowlitz.org
- Subject line: **Election Services Provider RFP – The Cowlitz Indian Tribe**

11. Questions and Clarifications

- All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Election Board at electionboard@cowlitz.org and a physical copy to Longview office by October 15, 2026, at 5 p.m. PST. Responses will be shared with all interested parties.

Background

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe (“CIT” or “the Tribe”) has been a federally recognized sovereign nation since February 14, 2000. The Tribe is seeking an experienced consultant to provide comprehensive support to the Tribe’s Election Board, and Tribal Council. This support is crucial to ensure the integrity and efficiency of our electoral processes.

The Tribe is an emerging and influential force in Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, King, Pierce, Skamania, and Wahkiakum Counties, a region that has been home to the Cowlitz people since time immemorial—long before the establishment of the United States and the state governments of Washington and Oregon.

The Tribe is a federally recognized sovereign government exercising its inherent right of self-



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determination and self-governance. As a fundamental condition of this procurement, the Tribe shall not waive its sovereign immunity from suit or any other sovereign rights, privileges, defenses, or protections. Any proposal, contract form, stand terms and conditions, or other submission that requires, contemplates, or conditions performance upon a waiver of sovereign immunity or other sovereign rights shall be rejected as non-responsive and shall not be considered for award.

Scope of Work

Objective:

The objective of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to identify and contract with a qualified and experienced Election Services Provider to support the Cowlitz Indian Tribe in conducting fair, secure, and transparent Tribal elections and floor motions. The selected provider will work in collaboration with the Tribal Election Board and Tribal Council as needed to ensure that all election processes—from voter registration and ballot distribution to vote tabulation and certification—are carried out in accordance with the Tribe's Constitution, Election Ordinance, and applicable policies. The goal is to uphold the integrity of the electoral process while ensuring accessibility and trust among Tribal members.

The Contractor shall provide comprehensive election administration services, including but not limited to:

- **Election Planning & Coordination**
 - Collaborate with the Tribal Election Board and Tribal Council as needed.
 - Develop an election timeline and communication plan.
 - Ensure compliance with Tribal Election Code
- **Voter Services**
 - Manage voter registration and verification.
 - Provide absentee and mail-in ballot services.
 - Provide robust help support for members who do not receive ballots and work with Tribal Enrollment Department to update member information.
- **Ballot Design & Printing**
 - Design ballots in compliance with Tribal requirements.
 - Print and distribute ballots securely.



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- **Election Day Services**

- Set up and manage polling locations in person.
 - Include amount of time necessary to notify your company to be available onsite
 - Pricing as a whole and broken out for Balloted elections and meeting votes
- Provide trained election staff or support.

- **Vote Counting & Certification**

- Securely collect and count ballots and/or floor and electronic votes as appropriate
- Provide certified election results and post-election reporting
- Provide robust reporting for balloted elections
 - Provide weekly report of undeliverable ballots and ballot resend requests
 - Report number of mail in ballots at delivery to poll site
 - Report number of mail in, person votes and invalidated ballots at end of vote count to validate results prior to certification
 - Provide tabulation of votes for each ballot item for certification of election results
 - Provide report of voters by zipcode
 - Provide a report of voting by age brackets in generational increments with outline of each generational age range
 - Provide specific metrics around percentage of accuracy (waiting for language from Tyler)
- Provide robust reporting for floor motions
 - Provide number of floor votes and electronic votes per motion
 - Provide number of registrations in relation to number of votes
 - Provide number of in person registrations and number of electronic registrations

Hybrid Integration

- **Seamless coordination of vote-by-mail and electronic voting records.**



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- **Mechanisms to ensure no duplicate voting occurs.**
- **Clear protocols for final tabulation that combine both formats.**

Electronic Voting Platform

- A secure, user-friendly electronic voting system compatible with Tribal governance needs
- Voter authentication measures (e.g., PIN, multi-factor verification)
- Platform must be accessible via desktop and mobile devices
- Data encryption and real-time monitoring
- Offline capability for use in low-connectivity areas (if feasible)
- End-to-end auditability and voter-verifiable ballot tracking

Security & Compliance

- Ensure data privacy and election integrity.
- Comply with Tribal, federal, and applicable election standards

Information Sharing and Confidentiality Agreement

Upon execution of a Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality Agreement, the selected consultant will be granted access to information necessary to fulfill the scope of work. This may include sensitive, proprietary, or culturally protected materials.

The consultant agrees to:

- Treat all information received from the Tribal Nation as **strictly confidential**.
- Use such information **solely for the purpose** of completing the scope of work outlined in this RFP.
- Take all reasonable and appropriate measures to **safeguard the confidentiality** and integrity of all data, documents, and communications.
- **Not disclose** any information to third parties without prior written consent from the Tribal Nation.

All data, materials, and deliverables generated during the course of this project shall remain the **property of the Tribe** and must be returned or destroyed upon request.

Terms and Conditions



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The selected consultant shall begin services as soon as practicable, but no later than 30 days from the date of award. The engagement is expected to span a one-year period (subject to change), unless extended or modified by mutual agreement between the consultant, the Election Board, Tribal leadership, and designated Tribal staff.

There may be opportunities for continued work beyond the initial term. The Tribe reserves the option to extend the engagement for subsequent years, subject to satisfactory performance, availability of funding, and mutual agreement.

The consultant will:

- Provide regular progress updates to the Election Board.
- Submit monthly reports (or more frequently, as needed) summarizing work performed, key findings, and any recommended adjustments to the Scope of Work.
- Submit monthly invoices for services rendered, payable on net 30-day terms, subject to Tribal approval.
- Comply with all applicable Tribal, federal, and state laws and regulations. Failure to comply may result in immediate termination of contract services.
- Maintain confidentiality of all information received or generated during the engagement, as outlined in the Confidentiality Agreement.
- Acknowledge that all deliverables, data, and materials produced under this contract are the property of the Tribe.
- Participate in kickoff and closeout meetings, and attend additional check-ins as requested by the Election Board or Tribal leadership.
- Attend Election Board meetings as required date and times to vary, include amount of notice you need to attend.

The Tribe reserves the right to:

- Modify the Scope of Work based on evolving needs.
- Terminate the agreement with written notice if performance expectations are not met.
- Request additional documentation or clarification related to deliverables or billing.

The Tribe will evaluate proposals and select an elections services provider based on the following criteria:

- **Demonstrated experience in creating, implementing, and managing election processes in Indian Country.**



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- **Proven track record of working with small to mid-sized Tribal, local, or state governments.**
- **Experience working in Indian Country**, with an understanding of Tribal sovereignty, culture, and governance structures.
- **Strong knowledge of Tribal government operations**, election procedures, and legal and regulatory compliance.
- **Positive references or testimonials from previous Tribal or public sector clients.**
- **Cultural competency** and a demonstrated willingness to tailor the approach to the Tribe's unique needs, values, and challenges.
- **Ability to meet all requirements outlined in the Scope of Work.**
- **Transparency in use of subcontractors**, including disclosure of all subcontractors and their relevant experience working with Tribes.
- **Cost-effectiveness and clarity of the pricing structure for proposed services.**
- **Quality and clarity of the proposal**, including organization, completeness, and responsiveness to the RFP.

During the evaluation process, The Election Board and Tribal Council may contact vendors with questions or requests for clarification regarding the contents of their proposals. The Tribe reserves the right to conduct interviews or request presentations from top candidates as part of the selection process.