



ACIPC

Australasian College
for Infection Prevention and Control

Request for Offer (RFO)

The provision of services to undertake an evaluation of the Australasian College for Infection and Control's Credentialling program for Infection Control Professionals.

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Schedule 1: RFO Details

Due Date

Offers will be accepted until **6 p.m. (AEDT)** on 5 February 2025.

Lodgement of Offers

Offers should be lodged via email to office@acipc.org.au. You will receive confirmation via email.

Format of Offers

All offers are to be submitted via email with both a PDF and a word document of your offer. Offers should be no more than 15 pages, excluding appendices

Offers must include the information in *Schedule 3: Information Required for Offers*. Offers may include additional information.

Evaluation of Offers

The College expects offers will be evaluated within four weeks of submission. Our evaluation will include interviews with shortlisted submissions.

Contracting the Successful Vendor

The College expects to contract the successful shortly after the evaluation has been completed and commence in February 2025.

Completion of the Review

The College anticipates a review will take 9 months from the signing of a contract and be finished by October 2025

Contact Officer

For questions relating to this RFO, please email:

Ben Thiessen
Executive Manager
ACIPC.

executive@acipc.org.au

Evaluation of Offers

ACIPC will consider the following criteria when evaluating offers.

- Scope
- Approach and Methodology
- Project Plan and Milestones
- Personnel

- Experience
- Cost

Schedule 2: Statement of Requirement

Introduction

The Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control (ACIPC) is the peak body for Infection Prevention and Control professionals within the Australasian region and operates as a not-for profit organisation. ACIPC is seeking to engage a qualified organisation to undertake an external review of the credentialing pathways for Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) professionals.

Credentialing provides an industry recognised pathway for IPC professionals to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and attributes. The purpose of credentialing is to provide an independent standard for assessing IPC competency and knowledge and understanding of the evidence for IPC within healthcare settings.

The aim of the requested evaluation is to determine whether the credentialing assessment framework and evaluation of applicants is contemporary and adequately recognises the skills, knowledge and expertise of all ACIPC members, through a process that is rigorous, transparent, and provide consistent outcomes throughout the application process.

This evaluation is needed to ensure that ACIPC is providing its members with industry recognition through its flagship program in the region. The credentialing assessment framework needs to provide recognition of the diversity of careers and breadth of the profession, by demonstrating recognition of the applicant's role and expertise, including the acknowledgement of diverse and specialist IPC roles. Further, recognition needs to encompass acknowledgment of contributions to the profession and different professional pathways, including leadership roles with an Infection Prevention and Control focus.

Background

The current pathway to employment as an IPC professional within Australia is variable, with no mandatory training or education requirements, no employment pre-requisites and no standardised job descriptions, professional development modules or evidence-based program designs, resulting in variability of skills and expertise of IPC professionals, and therefore variability in the provision of care and outcomes for patients/clients.

The current IPC credentialing pathway was developed to assess the experience, qualifications and professional practice of the applicants, through a peer reviewed process (Shaban and McBeth, 2024). Changing healthcare priorities, influence of sustainability, evolving expectations of the healthcare system, workforce shortages within the health profession as well as the emergence of infectious disease outbreaks has resulted in a more diverse workforce. ACIPC needs to be adaptable and agile to meet the needs of the profession and support its members in providing and demonstrating professional recognition.



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The influence of IPC professionals on improving patient outcomes has been demonstrated through the assessment and implementation of evidence-based practices and structured IPC programs, led by expert professionals. The knowledge and expertise in evaluating evidence-based practices requires skill and advanced education in a broad range of topics as indicated by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACHS), Preventing and Controlling Infections standard.

The current ACIPC credentialing program recognises applicants through a three-tiered framework as primary (P), advanced (A) or expert (E) credentialled professionals. The framework combines the requirements for experience, formal education and training together with peer reviews. All applications are reviewed by a panel (4 people). The current process however has a focus on reflection and peer review and many aspects in the contemporary IPC professionals' education and the diversity of the profession are not considered. The current pathway is also very restrictive as most Infection Prevention professionals not based in Australia are unable to be recognised at the primary level.

To date there are over a thousand ACIPC members and the number of credentialled members are 37 E, 24 A, 40 P.

The barriers to credentialling are unclear, and there are perceptions that credentialling offers very few tangible benefits in terms of recognition and remuneration, and that the requirements for higher education outweigh the consideration of years of service and expertise in the framework. Current professional benefits of credentialing are the delivery of a certificate and the entitlement to use the post-nominal associated with the credentialing award (CIPC-P, CIPC-A, CIPC-E). Further information on the credentialling and re-credentialling pathway can be found at:

<https://www.acipc.org.au/credentialling/>

Objectives

The objectives of this review are to:

- Determine the proportion of members eligible for credentialling within the current framework.
- Provide an evaluation of the current ACIPC credentialling framework, including comparison with international credentialling IPC bodies. And/or frameworks.
- Identify barriers and enablers for IPCs to be credentialled (including factors preventing access to credentialling).
- Identify ways for credentialled members to gain greater recognition from healthcare/community organisations in Australasia.
- Identify opportunities to improve transparency and efficiency of credentialling application evaluation processes.
- Identify opportunities for professional growth through credentialling

The outcomes of the review should provide recommendations on:

- Ideal structure for the management of the credentialling process
- Increasing industry recognition of IPC experience as a measure of knowledge and expertise



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- Processes to facilitate greater uptake of credentialling in all settings including international and veterinary infection prevention and control.

Scope

It is proposed that the credentialing pathway review will examine the following:

- Pathway for credentialling
- Relevance of peer reviews for credentialled IPC professionals
- Review and benchmark of credentialling processes for similar professions within Australia
- Review of credentialling and benchmarking for IPC professionals worldwide
- Barriers to credentialling for IPCs

Review Requirements

ACIPC will be responsible for supplying data or information required to undertake the credentialing process review. However, the vendor will be responsible for obtaining data for review outside ACIPC, and suitable information for the investigative review.

Services

The following are required:

- Project management of the review
- Provision of subject matter expertise to achieve the objectives of the review
- A detailed project plan, describing the chosen approach and methodology to conduct the review
- A review protocol and review tool
- Development of a data collection tool and validation of the data collection tool
- A data repository solution, including testing of the solution
- Analysis of the main review data
- Develop and deliver the following and with due dates included in the project timeline:
 - Commencement – March 2025
 - A review protocol - April 2025
 - Interim draft report and presentation of findings - August 2025
 - Draft final report – September 2025
 - Final report – November 2025
- Regular progress meetings and project reports



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Schedule 3: Information Required for Offers

- Include the following information in your offer
- Offers may include additional information
- Offers should be no more than 15 pages, excluding appendices
- Supply both a PDF and a word document of your offer

Item	Required
Organisation	Organisation name: Postal address:
ABN	ABN: CAN/ARBN (if applicable):
Contact Person	Name: Position title: Telephone: Email:
Approach and Methodology	A detailed description of the proposed approach and methodology proposed to meet the objectives and scope.
Project Plan and Milestones	A detailed project plan with timelines and dependencies, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stakeholder engagement ○ Main review phases ○ Key milestones ○ Briefings to ACIPC
Personnel	Details of the project leader, highlighting the relevant experience and skills that make them suitable to lead this project. Details of project team members, highlighting the relevant experience and skills that make them suitable team members for this project. Project team members' availability for the duration of the contract and coverage arrangements from other staff, if required. Include details of proposed backup personnel.
Experience	Provide examples of previous experience and performance on comparable projects that indicate the respondent's experience, capacity, and quality of work. Provide summaries of comparable projects.
Referees	Provide professional referees from previous contracts, including the referees' name, organisation, project name, and contact details
Conflicts of Interest	Include details of any conflicts of interest, including any potential conflicts that may arise.
Insurance	Include details on insurance policies held including workers' compensation, public liability, and professional indemnity.



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Cost	<p>Provide a total fee for the offer. The fee must be inclusive of all expenses that are required to successfully complete the offer, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travel, travel time, and transport fares• Software and communications costs• Accommodation and meals• Costs incurred in collecting and analysing information• Document reproduction• Document delivery <p>The offer must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A breakdown of costs showing various stages, components and work times of personnel engaged in undertaking the project.• Proposed payment schedules
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Schedule 4: Terms and Conditions for the RFO

Prospective vendors are agreeing to the following terms and conditions when submitting an offer.

1. The Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control (ACIPC) is seeking offers for the provision of the services described in the Statement of Requirement.
2. Prospective vendors can submit offers that address the Statement of Requirement Required and include the Information Required for Offers.
3. ACIPC, at its discretion, may discontinue this RFO, decline to accept any offer, decline to issue any contract, or satisfy its requirement separately from this RFO process.
4. Each prospective vendor agrees that participation in any stage of the RFO is at their sole risk and cost.
5. If selected by ACIPC, a prospective vendor agrees to enter into a contract to provide the services in accordance with the RFO. The contract will include clauses covering intellectual property rights, privacy, confidentiality and managing information provided by ACIPC.
6. Acceptance of an offer will occur only when a contract is executed.
7. No commitment or contract exists until a contract is executed.
8. Each prospective vendor agrees to include all actual or potential conflicts of interest in their offer.
9. Each prospective vendor agrees to notify ACIPC immediately if new actual or potential conflicts of interest arise after they have submitted an offer.
10. Each prospective vendor warrants their offer has not been prepared with the assistance of employees or office holders of ACIPC without being declared in their offer.

