
Open Call for Continuous Improvement Consultants with Expertise in AI and Digital Transformation

The Western Regional Enterprise Network (Western REN) invites responses from qualified and experienced Continuous Improvement(CI) Professionals with expertise in AI and Digital Transformation. This program offers an exciting opportunity to lead innovation and efficiency improvements among businesses in the West Nova region.

About the Program

Our program pairs a CI consultant with a business in the West Nova region to conduct an introductory CI project. The goal is to engage 10–20 Small to Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to make a 5–10-day commitment to the CI program, focusing on integrating AI and digital transformation tools into their operations. It is expected that the CI consultants will have the ability to transfer a great deal of applicable knowledge and skills of CI theories, principles and applications in a short-term period.

The Project should result in tangible and demonstrated results for each participating SME, evidenced by measurable gains and change in processes or trend towards the same.

Key Objectives

1. Conduct an introductory CI project with the company to reduce waste and improve efficiency by leveraging AI-driven tools.
2. Train company personnel in CI management techniques, emphasizing digital literacy and AI integration.
3. Help companies identify opportunities where AI and automation can improve processes, reduce errors, and foster innovation.
4. Develop a strategy to help the company prepare for and implement new technologies in their operations.
5. Encourage team building within the operation, promoting employee empowerment with employees at the center of the initiative.

Key Deliverables

- **Project plan:** Define the scope, objectives and timeline of the CI project, including roles and responsibilities for both the consultant and the participating organization.
- **Detailed report:** Summarizing findings, advancements, and recommendations from the project, including a strategy to optimize AI and other advanced technologies.
- **Action plan:** Provide steps and assist in implementing recommendations, focusing on team building centered around digital adoption and continuous improvement.
- **Progress Reports:** Deliver detailed reports to the Western REN comparing expected progress with actual progress as well as evaluated outcomes.

- **Training Modules:** Provide training of productivity improvement tools including, but not limited to:
 - Identification of wastes (e.g., TIM WOODS)
 - Kaizen method
 - 5S's
 - Development of a technology implementation strategy
 - Cell design
 - Kanbans
 - One-piece flow
 - Lead time reduction
 - SMED
 - Value stream mapping and process mapping
 - Visual Standards
 - Team building
 - Error proofing
 - Work instruction
 - Managing and sustaining Productivity
 - Six Sigma (theory)

Experience

To be considered for this opportunity, interested consultants should have experience in continuous improvement and Lean manufacturing projects, with a focus on integrating AI or digital technologies into business operations. Proposals should demonstrate a proven track record of team-building. Your proposal should include:

- An overview of your consultancy, including your experience in providing continuous improvement and AI services.
- Description of similar projects you have successfully completed, highlighting measurable outcomes and client testimonials.
- Proposed methodology and approach for addressing our specific needs and achieving the stated objectives.
- A typical project timeline, with milestones and deliverables, for a 1-to-2-week project.
- Consultant team composition and qualifications, including relevant certifications or accreditations.
- Detailed budget, including all costs and expenses associated with the engagement.

Qualifications

- Extensive experience in process improvement, program management, and/or CI and Lean Manufacturing consulting (minimum of 2 years required).
- Significant experience in developing and implementing AI and advanced technology strategies.
- Can autonomously work through complexities and issues rapidly to identify appropriate actions
- Ability to build trust and credibility quickly with demonstrated strong relationship building skills at both senior management and employee levels

- Can work collaboratively with stakeholders, partners and businesses.
- Bias for action and results, operating with agility to deliver viable and meaningful business value in quick succession.
- Black Belt Certified in LEAN/ or Six Sigma from recognized organization.
- Experience managing in operations, manufacturing or production environment will be considered an asset.
- Bilingualism (French and English) will be considered an asset.

Submission Guidelines:

Submit proposals via email to kdentremont@westernren.ca with the subject line: "Continuous Improvement Program" with the following attached:

1) Executive Summary

The executive summary should provide a synopsis of the overall approach and key deliverables. team building, and at least three references of clients for whom you have provided similar services.

2) Experience, Reputation, Capacity and Resources

Provide sufficient information demonstrating your experience, reputation, capacity and available resources, including the ability to meet requirements of the program, qualifications and competencies, a description of similar projects you have successfully completed, highlighting measurable outcomes and client testimonials, description of significant experience in team building, and at least three references of clients for whom you have provided similar services.

3) Technical Information

- A detailed methodology describing the key elements and time requirements for the consultant's approach in undertaking this program.
- Step by step procedures, documentation and a schedule of activities indicating how the consultant proposes to meet the objectives of the project, including what will be expected of the Consultant, the Western REN with respect to each task, and how the tasks achieve the program's outcomes/objectives.
- A summarized schedule of all activities, including milestones, program meetings, progress reports and the final report required for this program.

4) Fees

A fee schedule should be submitted outlining hourly rates, expenses, and disbursements. Each client project is expected to range between 40 and 80 hours.

5) Proof of Compliance

- Confirmation of NS Workers Compensation coverage. Consultants not already having the appropriate coverage will be required to obtain the appropriate coverage prior to working with businesses.
- Confirmation of Required Commercial Insurances.

Evaluation of Submissions

All proposals will be evaluated for their alignment with the program's goals and compliance with the Western REN's requirements. Evaluations will focus on the overall value provided, considering factors such as quality, service, price, and expertise in Continuous Improvement (CI) and AI integration. Successful applicants will be added to the CI Program Consultant Roster, allowing SMEs to select their preferred consultant partner. Reference checks may also be conducted by the Western REN.

Consultants on the existing roster need not reapply but are asked to submit any changes or additional information to supplement their original proposal.

DEADLINE:

Submissions must be received by **end-of-day January 2, 2025**.

We would like to thank all those that submit a response, but only those considered will be contacted.