Call for Expressions of Interest

Working Group: Independent Review of the SDRCC's Mandate, Service Delivery and Sustainability

The Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC) wishes to strengthen access to timely, fair and credible sport dispute resolution, improve cost predictability and administrative efficiency, and assess how its governance and expertise can better serve the Canadian sport system. The review covers its subsidized national mandate, non-subsidized or cost-shared services, prevention activities, complementary services and potential partnerships or new jurisdictions.

The review will compare feasible options objectively, without a predetermined conclusion, while preserving the SDRCC's independence and expertise. Recommendations may address changes within the SDRCC's authority and changes requiring government action, including legislative amendments. The result must support Board decisions and, where appropriate, proposals to government. Findings must distinguish verified evidence, stakeholder views, assumptions and limitations.

To guide this review, the SDRCC invites expressions of interest for seven positions on its nine-member Working Group, including the Chair. Two seats will be held by members of the SDRCC's Board of Directors. The Working Group will bring together substantial sport experience and complementary expertise in dispute resolution, governance and organizational leadership.

Members will be asked to exercise independent judgment on the findings and options presented, examine the foundations of current models and assess the implications of proposed changes. Supported by a consultant and the SDRCC staff, the Working Group will develop recommendations for the Board of Directors, together with priorities and the conditions required for their implementation.

Mandate and Organization of the Work

The Working Group will guide a process of consultation, comparative research and analysis of the SDRCC's services and governance across the six workstreams summarized in the Appendix. It will help identify questions requiring further examination, review the findings and assess proposed scenarios against the SDRCC's mission, users' needs and the resources required to implement them. Priorities will be determined in agreement with the SDRCC's project lead and within the consultant's contracted scope of work.

The Working Group's recommendations must enable the Board to assess the relevance and feasibility of the options, their implications and the steps required for implementation. Recommendations must clearly distinguish between changes within the SDRCC's authority and legislative, ministerial or institutional changes requiring government action. The Working Group has an advisory role; the Board retains decision-making authority within the SDRCC's mandate.

The consultant will carry out most research, consultations, analysis and preparation of deliverables and remains responsible for the quality and independence of the analysis. The Working Group will contribute the expertise and judgment needed to examine the findings, identify options and formulate recommendations. Material differences between the consultant's findings and recommendations and the Working Group's opinions will be recorded. The SDRCC staff will support the Working Group, and the SDRCC's project lead will manage contractual obligations related to the consultant. The Working Group functions in an advisory capacity and cannot authorize services, fees or expenditures.

The Request for Proposals for the consultant will be launched alongside this Call for Expressions of Interest. Consultant selection and Working Group appointments are separate processes.

The Working Group will report to the SDRCC's Board of Directors. Sport Canada's participation as an observer is being considered, outside the Group's nine-member composition.

Composition and Profiles Sought

The Group's composition will bring together complementary skills and a thorough understanding of the realities of sport. The two Board members will contribute expertise in governance and in organizational transformation, change management and service models, respectively.

The seven Working Group members recruited through this Call for Expressions of Interest will be selected to represent a range of professional backgrounds, expertise and perspectives, based on the profiles outlined below. Expertise may overlap; applicants should identify their primary profile and other aspects of the mandate where their experience could be useful. All members will contribute to the full review and recommendations, drawing on their particular expertise.

Composition and Profiles Sought

Working Group Chair	An individual with extensive sport experience, established credibility in Canada and internationally, and experience leading complex collective work. Their background must demonstrate an ability to examine institutional issues, advance discussions involving different perspectives and translate conclusions into precise recommendations. The Chair will lead discussions, encourage members' contributions and maintain coherence across the work. The Chair will work with the SDRCC's project lead to organize discussions and consolidate the Group's feedback, including material differences in views. An individual outside the SDRCC's current Board of Directors is preferred.
Athlete	A current athlete, or an individual with recent high-performance sport experience, whose background includes responsibilities in collective representation, governance or athlete advocacy. This individual must be able to connect participants' experiences with the institutional and procedural choices examined by the Group. Their contribution will address access to dispute resolution mechanisms, parties' ability to participate and the effects of processes on their sporting careers. They will participate in all aspects of the work and recommendations.
Sport Organization Leadership and Governance	An individual who has held significant leadership or governance responsibilities within a national sport organization, a multisport organization, or a major games organization. Their experience must enable them to assess sport organizations' needs and the effects of proposed models on their operations. Broad knowledge of the Canadian system, its funding mechanisms and relationships across its different levels will be particularly relevant.
Sport Dispute Resolution in Canada	An individual with substantial experience in sport arbitration in Canada, practical experience in mediation and facilitation, and thorough knowledge of other dispute resolution methods. Their background must enable them to assess current mechanisms, parties' needs and expectations, and difficulties encountered in practice. They will contribute to examining jurisdiction, access, procedural safeguards and the appropriate use of early intervention, consensual approaches and arbitration. Their practical knowledge must also inform the analysis of process proportionality, costs, timelines and the respective responsibilities of the institution, professionals and parties.
International Sport Dispute Resolution	An individual whose practice and responsibilities demonstrate thorough knowledge of international sport dispute resolution mechanisms. Their experience should enable them to assess the institutional and procedural choices of different models, their safeguards for independence and operating conditions. They will help identify lessons relevant to the SDRCC and the conditions under which its expertise could contribute in other settings.
Leadership and Management of Dispute Resolution Services	An individual who has held leadership or administrative responsibilities in a dispute resolution institution or service, with experience designing or improving dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms and a sound understanding of the sport context. Their experience should include service design and delivery, case and resource management, and the conditions supporting service quality and viability. They will help assess intake and referral arrangements, the connections among resolution methods, proposed service models, their operational and financial requirements, and the division of functions among staff, professionals and partners.

Composition and Profiles Sought

Dispute Prevention and Education	An individual with substantial experience developing, delivering and evaluating education, training or capacity-building programs and services, together with a sound understanding of the sport context. Their background must enable them to assess how information, practical tools and support for organizations and participants can strengthen capacity and help prevent disputes. They will contribute to assessing the Resource Centre and identifying priorities for future development, including target audiences, content, delivery methods and potential partnerships. Their experience will also inform the assessment of accessibility, use and effectiveness, and the connections between prevention, education and dispute resolution services.

Expected Contribution and Selection

Members will participate in their personal capacity, based on their expertise and independent judgment. They will not represent or act as spokespersons for their employer, affiliated organization or professional community within the Group. This also applies to the individual from the sport organization community. Selection will consider the quality of applicants' backgrounds and how well their qualifications and experience complement those of other members of the Group. The selection committee will examine:

- the depth of expertise and its relevance to the issues to be addressed;
- responsibilities held and achievements demonstrating the proposed contribution;
- knowledge of sport and the needs of the Canadian sport system;
- the ability to examine existing models independently, consider different perspectives and contribute to collective recommendations;
- availability to actively participate throughout the mandate.

Recognition in Canada and internationally will be particularly sought for the Chair and international profile. Selection will also consider complementary professional experience and diverse perspectives relevant to governance, service delivery and access. Applicants must be able to contribute to the English-language work described below.

Conflicts, Confidentiality and Participation Agreements

When submitting their expression of interest, individuals must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, including current or recent engagements, roles or relationships that could reasonably affect, or appear to affect, their independent contribution. Examples include relationships involving the SDRCC, Sport Canada, organizations or service providers assessed, relevant proceedings, and any interest in the parallel consultant RFP. Applicants must describe proposed safeguards. The SDRCC will determine whether a disclosed circumstance can be managed, requires mitigation or makes an applicant ineligible. Disclosures may be provided confidentially to the SDRCC.

Selected members must promptly disclose any new or changed conflict and follow the agreed safeguards. They must protect non-public information obtained through the Group during their participation and after completion or termination of their appointment. Participation agreements will set out the confidentiality and conflict arrangements.

Participation agreements will specify rights in materials prepared for the Working Group, including the SDRCC's rights to use, reproduce, share with Sport Canada, translate and publish the Group's reports, recommendations and related materials, subject to confidentiality and disclosed pre-existing or third-party rights. Members must identify relevant rights or restrictions affecting materials they contribute.

Participation Terms and Schedule

Work is expected to begin during the week of November 23, 2026, following appointments and signed participation agreements. Meetings will take place approximately every three weeks, mainly virtually. One or two in-person meetings may be organized with the SDRCC's prior approval.

Members must allocate time between meetings to read documents, review analyses and prepare their contribution to discussions. The work plan and detailed schedule will be confirmed at kickoff.

Working Group activities and documents will be in English. Members must be able to contribute to discussions and review documents in that language while understanding the realities and needs associated with both official languages in Canada. Consultations undertaken for the review must accommodate participation in English and French.

Members of the SDRCC's Board of Directors will not receive remuneration for their participation in the Working Group. For other members, a flat honorarium of CAD 2,000 is planned for the full agreed mandate, except for the Chair, whose total honorarium is CAD 4,000. Pre-authorized expenses such as travel for approved in-person meetings will be covered by the SDRCC in compliance with its Financial Administration Policy.

Milestone	Expected date
Application deadline	November 12, 2026, 4:00 p.m. ET
Member selection and signed agreements	By November 19, 2026
Kickoff and confirmation of the work plan	Week of November 23, 2026
Final report and recommendations	March 2027 target March 31 deadline for current project funding

Participation Terms and Schedule

As outlined in the parallel consultant RFP, current project funding must be used by March 31, 2027, in line with the anticipated completion of the final report and recommendations. The schedule may be adjusted as the work progresses; members will be informed promptly of any proposed change to the mandate's duration or expected commitment. Any extension or modification of honoraria and expense arrangements is subject to prior approval by the SDRCC and written agreement with the affected Working Group members. Funding beyond March 2027 is not guaranteed.

Applications

Interested individuals are invited to submit, in the official language of their choice:

- a curriculum vitae outlining their background, relevant experience and contact information;
- a letter of interest of no more than two pages explaining their motivation, the profile or profiles they wish to contribute to and the experience supporting that contribution.

The letter must also state the applicant's availability for the mandate, including meeting preparation and participation, and interest in serving as Chair, if applicable. The applicant must include the conflict disclosure described above either in the letter or as a separate statement.

Submit applications by email in PDF or Word format to: applications@crdsc-sdrcc.ca
Applications must be received by November 12, 2026, 4:00 p.m. ET.

Email subject: SDRCC Working Group

Selection Process and Information

A committee of the SDRCC Board members and staff will review applications and select the members, taking account of the criteria above and the complementary expertise needed across the Group. The SDRCC may interview applicants, request references, contact references provided and seek additional references reasonably known to the SDRCC to assess relevant experience and suitability.

Applicants will be informed of the outcome. Selected members will sign a participation agreement setting out the mandate, expected commitment, honorarium, authorized travel arrangements, confidentiality, conflict safeguards and rights in materials prepared for the Group.

All Working Group members, including the Chair, will undergo a criminal record check in accordance with the SDRCC policies before participating in the Group's work.

The SDRCC reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to amend, suspend, cancel or reissue this call, extend the application deadline and decline any or all applications. Issuing this call does not obligate the SDRCC to appoint any applicant. Appointments are subject to the SDRCC's approvals and signed participation agreements.

Application materials will be retained by the SDRCC and will not be returned. Identify any proprietary or confidential material and explain the requested protection. Application information will be used to assess candidacies and administer selection and appointments.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The SDRCC is committed to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion and welcomes expressions of interest from individuals with diverse backgrounds, identities, perspectives and lived experiences. We particularly encourage expressions of interest from individuals belonging to groups that have historically been underrepresented.

Applicants are invited to voluntarily self-identify as members of equity-deserving groups or to share any relevant lived experiences or perspectives they wish to highlight. Self-identification is entirely voluntary, and choosing not to disclose this information will not negatively affect an application.

Information voluntarily disclosed will be treated confidentially and considered only in connection with the selection process.

Contact

Francis Ménard
SDRCC Chief Executive Officer

Questions and requests for accommodations to submit an application may be sent to applications@crdsc-sdrcc.ca, for the attention of Francis Ménard.

A detailed project description is available upon request. Individuals interested in joining the Working Group may obtain a copy by emailing applications@crdsc-sdrcc.ca.

Appendix — Scope of the Review

1 Needs assessment, access and current operations

Review existing data related to inquiries, cases, timelines, costs, jurisdiction and procedural barriers of the SDRCC. Identify the data required for the review, recommend an appropriate period of analysis and highlight any gaps or limitations that may affect the findings. Consult a proposed and justified sample of current, former and potential dispute resolution services users, sport organizations at national, provincial, territorial and community levels, roster members, counsel and relevant partners. Include athlete perspectives and clearly identify the scope and limitations of the consultation sample. Consultations must enable users and athletes to contribute independently of their sport organizations. Assess unmet needs, barriers to accessing services, reasons why inquiries do not become cases, and differences in the needs and experiences of users accessing subsidized and other services. Access to case information and consultation data is subject to availability and applicable confidentiality safeguards.

The proposed sampling approach and participant profiles will be reviewed with the Working Group and approved by the SDRCC's project lead within the agreed scope of work and budget. Within the agreed sample and where evidence is available, consider experiences involving completed proceedings, withdrawn matters or informal resolutions, as well as situations in which individuals did not initiate or continue a process because of perceived barriers.

2 Service delivery, procedures and sustainability

Assess the SDRCC's intake, triage, mediation, arbitration and simplified dispute resolution processes, including circumstances requiring more formal procedures and the respective responsibilities of staff, including case managers, and roster members. Examine jurisdiction and access rules, procedural fairness, confidentiality, publication practices and unauthorized disclosure. Evaluate roster expertise, selection, diversity and specialization. Identify practical improvements and their potential impact on participant access, independence, service quality and administrative capacity.

Examine alternative fee structures, including flat fees, cost-sharing arrangements and remuneration models, while considering which services should remain free of charge. Assess operational costs, funding and revenue sources consistent with independence and access. For prioritized scenarios, estimate implementation and recurring costs, resource needs and potential revenues. Clearly identify assumptions regarding demand, case volumes, staff and roster involvement, and assess how changes in these assumptions could affect viability and affordability. Distinguish estimates supported by available evidence from those requiring further validation.

Assess differentiated, shared or pooled service delivery models, including facilitation, referral and early intervention. For simplified processes, identify the services included, proportionate procedural parameters, criteria for moving to fuller procedures, and arrangements for cost control and predictable billing. Identify any broader changes to the Canadian Sport Dispute Resolution Code needed to support the proposed models, taking account of parallel review work.

Appendix — Scope of the Review

3 Governance and institutional framework

Assess the SDRCC's framework under the Physical Activity and Sport Act, distinguishing statutory obligations from voluntary standards and recommended practices. Consider applicable governance requirements for national sport organizations and multisport organizations, the Canadian Sport Governance Code and other relevant best practices as points of comparison, while recognizing the SDRCC's distinct institutional role. Examine appointment processes, Board composition and terms of office, independence, athlete representation, diversity, committee structures, Board evaluation and accountability. Identify the authority and processes required to implement proposed changes, clearly distinguishing measures within the SDRCC's authority, those requiring amendments to ministerial guidelines and those requiring legislative amendments.

Consider relevant sport system reforms, including the work and recommendations of the Future of Sport in Canada Commission, as available, and parallel work identified by SDRCC staff. Assess how proposed changes could improve coordination among sport organizations and across national, provincial, territorial, local and community levels, and reduce fragmentation of dispute resolution mechanisms.

4 Prevention, complementary services and partnerships

Assess the Dispute Prevention Resource Centre, practical tools, training initiatives and support services for sport organizations. Explore opportunities to offer complementary expert services such as governance and policy reviews, vetting and discipline and appeal process reviews, as well as professional partnerships, including pro bono and lower-cost service models. Define the purpose and intended users of selected services; assess demand, added value, quality, pricing, responsibilities and resource needs. Identify considerations relating to professional expertise, confidentiality, conflicts of interest and liability, and recommend appropriate safeguards to maintain a clear separation between advisory and adjudicative functions. Examine how roster expertise could support these services under SDRCC oversight, including through mandates from Sport Canada or direct contracts with organizations, and assess their added value compared with existing private-sector services.

5 Specialized services and other jurisdictions

Explore opportunities to establish specialized chambers and provide dispute resolution or tribunal administration services to other sports, bodies or jurisdictions within Canada or abroad. Assess potential demand, mandate compatibility, organizational capacity, financial viability, independence and applicable recognition requirements. Identify which opportunities should be pursued, deferred or declined, providing evidence-based justification for each recommendation. Conduct a more detailed assessment of priority opportunities, as agreed upon with the Working Group and confirmed by the SDRCC's project lead within the approved scope of work and budget. Identify any further feasibility or legal reviews needed before implementation.

Appendix — Scope of the Review

6 Comparative models, scenarios and recommendations

Examine a justified selection of relevant Canadian and international models in sport and other sectors. Compare prioritized scenarios with the current model of the SDRCC across legal, financial, operational and institutional implications, including resource needs, risks and potential impacts on current and prospective users. Explain the relevance of each model and identify any limitations to its applicability within the SDRCC's context. Develop practical, evidence-based recommendations and a phased implementation roadmap, outlining priorities, estimated costs, responsible parties, dependencies, decision-making authorities, potential partners and required government approvals. Assess the likely effects of each scenario and recommendation on accessibility, timeliness, procedural fairness, independence and affordability for current and prospective users. For dispute resolution services, also assess users' ability to obtain an effective remedy. Identify potential implementation steps beginning in 2027–2028 and beyond, along with appropriate measures to monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.

The assessment may draw on parallel work identified by the SDRCC, including the review of internal appeal mechanisms and focused revisions to the Canadian Sport Dispute Resolution Code, while avoiding duplication of those activities.