Discover Halifax

1809 Barrington St #1004
Halifax, NS B3J 3K8

Introduction

Discover Halifax is issuing this request for a proposal to secure consulting services to support the organization's role in event development.

Administrative Requirements

For tendering, legal, and billing purposes, the client is Discover Halifax.

Eligibility

Prospective proponents may not be eligible to submit a proposal if current or past interests may, in the opinion of the Board of Directors or Executive of Discover Halifax, give rise to a conflict of interest in connection with this project. While not considered mandatory, preference may be given to Halifax-based proponents.

Enquiries

All enquiries related to this RFP are to be directed to Mark Teeple, VP Festivals and Events, using the contact information below. Information obtained from any other source is not official and may be inaccurate. Enquiries and responses may be recorded and distributed to all proponents at the option of Discover Halifax.

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About

Discover Halifax is a non-profit, aiming to maximize economic and social benefits resulting from the tourism industry for the benefit of the people who live, visit, and invest in our region.

We showcase the best of our region to the world and, alongside our industry partners, we seek to shape the future of tourism through good planning, investment, and design.

Our vision is to be globally recognized as the favourite city in Canada.

Project Outline

Discover Halifax seeks proposals from qualified consultants to conduct a review of existing governance structures and practices, and facilitate a strategic retreat focused on roles and responsibilities within the festival and event attraction, development, management, and evaluation ecosystem in Halifax. This retreat will encourage open dialogue, enhance efficient partnerships, and ensure strategic alignment among all four partner organizations – Discover Halifax, Halifax Regional Municipality, Events East, and Events Nova Scotia (the Province of Nova Scotia.) The need for this clarity was highlighted in the 2019 STAT Pro Report, which recommended the establishment of defined roles, responsibilities, and governance structures to enhance the strategic and tactical aspects of event bidding and hosting in Halifax.

Background

Halifax is a vibrant city known for its rich cultural heritage and robust sporting community.

In recent years, Halifax has solidified its reputation as a premier destination for national and international events, showcasing its capacity to host large-scale, diverse gatherings that attract participants and spectators from around the globe. The city's successful hosting of events such as Canoe 22, the 2023 North American Indigenous Games (NAIG), and the 2024 Juno Awards has demonstrated Halifax's readiness and capability to manage events of significant scope and scale. The recent Canada SailGP event further cemented Halifax's standing as a vibrant, welcoming city capable of delivering world-class event experiences on a global scale.

Recognizing the need to build on these successes, the 2019 STAT Pro report for Halifax highlighted the importance of establishing clear governance structures, roles, and responsibilities in event bidding and hosting. The report emphasized the need for a more strategic and coordinated approach to enhance Halifax's event-hosting capabilities and maximize its potential as a dynamic hub for event tourism.

Equally important to Halifax's success is the close-knit, collaborative nature of the organizations and individuals involved in event planning and hosting. The partners share strong relationships characterized by informal communication, mutual respect, and a deep commitment to working together. This collaborative spirit is ingrained in our very DNA, and the collective goal of positioning Halifax as a leading event destination is always at the forefront.

As part of our ongoing efforts to address the findings of the STAT Pro report and further develop Halifax as a prime destination for cultural and sporting events, Discover Halifax, in partnership with the Halifax Regional Municipality, Events Nova Scotia, and Events East, is undertaking a new project that aims to clarify and streamline the roles and responsibilities within the festival and event ecosystem. The goal is to foster greater collaboration, efficiency, and strategic alignment among all stakeholders, ensuring that Halifax continues to thrive as a leading destination for major events.

Proposed Scope of Work

1. Discovery and Capture of Current Scope of Work and Practices

   Engage with each partner organization (Discover Halifax, Events Nova Scotia, Halifax Regional Municipality, and Events East) to develop a thorough understanding and documentation of the current scope of work, practices, and responsibilities as it relates to event bidding, development, attraction, execution, funding, and evaluation. This discovery phase should include both document and process review, as well as a virtual engagement session with each partner. The insights can be used to identify overlaps, gaps, and areas of improvement, as well as inform retreat discussions and determine actionable ways forward.

2. Pre-Retreat Planning Discussions

   Conduct at least two virtual pre-retreat meetings with the project principals to align on goals, objectives, and desired outcomes, and agree on the retreat agenda and content.

3. Facilitation of Retreat

   Facilitate a single-day in-person retreat tentatively scheduled in late October in Halifax, involving up to 25 individuals from all four partner organizations. The retreat should address the strategic alignment of roles and responsibilities and be designed to solicit input, feedback, and buy-in from all levels of the partner organizations.

4. Final Report

   Deliver a comprehensive report that includes:

   i. Summary of Discovery Findings: A detailed overview of the current scope of work, practices, and responsibilities of each partner organization, highlighting any identified overlaps, gaps, and potential areas of improvement.
   ii. Retreat Discussions: A summary of the key discussions, decisions, and directions identified during the retreat.
   iii. Gap Analysis: Based on the discovery and retreat discussions, provide a gap analysis that outlines specific areas where current practices may be lacking. This may include actionable suggestions for addressing these gaps, both in the immediate term and through future strategic planning.
   iv. Governance Framework Suggestions: Proposals or suggestions for establishing a governance framework that ensures clear roles, responsibilities, and collaboration among all stakeholders.
   v. Path Forward: Outline a strategic path forward for all partner organizations, ensuring ongoing collaboration, efficiency, and alignment in event bidding, development, execution, and evaluation.

5. Closing Presentation

   Upon delivering the final report, conduct a virtual meeting and presentation with the project principals to review and discuss the findings, suggestions, and proposed path forward.

Timing

- **Proposal Submission**
  Proposals will be considered on a rolling basis until September 16, 2024, or until the contract is awarded. Early submissions are encouraged.
- **Shortlist Interviews**
  Shortlisted candidates will receive meeting requests on a rolling basis beginning Tuesday, September 3.
- **Award Decision Deadline**
  The contract will be awarded by September 20, 2024.
- **Pre-Retreat Discussions**
  Scheduled for early October.
- **Retreat Date**
  Monday, October 28, 2024 OR Thursday, October 31, 2024 (Tentative)
- **Final Report**
  Submission within three weeks following the retreat.

The retreat is currently tentatively scheduled for Monday, October 28 or Thursday, October 31. This will be held in person in Halifax. Should these dates conflict with the overall project timeline, alternatives will be sought.

The final report should be delivered within three weeks of the retreat or on an agreed alternative project timeline.

In alignment with our overall strategy development initiatives, the selected consultant must complete all aspects of the work by **December 20, 2024**.

The consultant is expected to provide a draft schedule as part of their proposal, detailing how they intend to meet this completion date. Discover Halifax and its partners are committed to supporting the selected consultant throughout the project duration to ensure successful and timely completion.

Method of Submission

Closing Date: Submissions must be received by 3:00 pm, local time, on Monday, September 16, 2024.

Electronic Submissions: Submissions via email will be accepted up to the deadline. Submissions must be made in a single PDF file attached to an email sent to mteeple@discoverhalifaxns.com with "RE: Festivals and Events Retreat RFP" in the subject matter.

Hard Copy Submissions: Hard copy submissions will not be accepted.

Proposal Structure

Evaluation of proposals is made easier when proponents respond similarly. The following format and sequence should be followed to ensure consistency in proponent response and guarantee that each proposal receives full consideration. All pages should be consecutively numbered.

- **Introduction Letter:**
  A one-page letter identifying the proponent, signed by the person authorized to sign on behalf of and bind the proponent to statements made in the proposal.
- **Detailed Proposal:**
  - **Approach:** Outline your approach to conducting the pre-retreat activities, facilitating the retreat, and preparing the final report.
  - **Experience & Qualifications:** Detail your relevant experience and qualifications.
  - **Additional Support:** If applicable, provide information on any additional team members who will assist with the retreat.
  - **Timeline & Availability:** Confirm your availability for the pre-retreat discussions, retreat, and report submission. Include a project timeline for completing the required deliverables.
  - **Budget:** Provide a detailed budget breakdown for all project phases. This should include any travel and associated workshop expenses related to the retreat. Hard costs of the retreat should not be included (Venue, AV, Catering, etc.)
- **Additional Information:**
  Include any additional information that highlights your firm's unique qualifications for undertaking this project.

NOTE – a copy of the 2019 STAT Pro Report is available at this link:
https://discoverhalifaxdmo.com/dashboard/initiative-16/

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee comprised of representatives from each partner organization: Discover Halifax, the Halifax Regional Municipality, Events Nova Scotia, and Events East. The committee's decision to award the contract is at its discretion, based on a holistic approach that considers all evaluation criteria and alignment with strategic objectives.

The following criteria will be used to guide the evaluation and decision-making process and are presented in priority order.

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION
Approach	**Quality and Clarity:** Evaluation will focus on the thoroughness and practicality of the consultant's approach to each key activity, including discovery, facilitation, and reporting. Creativity and alignment with project goals will also be key factors.
Fit and Personality	**Cultural Fit and Collaboration:** Assesses how well the consultant's style and values align with the collaborative culture of our organizations. Ability to manage group dynamics and engage stakeholders effectively will be important.
Experience and Qualifications	**Relevant Experience:** Focuses on the consultant's track record within a similar space or similar work – particularly in connection with festivals, events, cultural organizations, the arts, sports, or similar. Previous success in similar projects and ability to work with diverse stakeholders is important.
Budget	**Cost-Effectiveness:** Evaluates the transparency and justification of the budget. Considers whether the costs are realistic, aligned with the scope of work, and provide good value for the services proposed.

Interview Process:
Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed to further assess their approach and fit. This will include discussions on methodology, challenges, and alignment with our expectations and working styles.

Interview Process

Shortlisted candidates will be provided an opportunity to meet to further assess their approach and fit, and provide the opportunity for questions and clarification. One or more members of the committee will participate. While relatively unstructured, is expected that these conversations will last no more than one hour.

Additional Notes on Evaluation:

- **Rolling Consideration:** Proposals will be reviewed as they are received, with feedback provided to candidates on a rolling basis. The final decision will be made by September 20, 2024.
- **Holistic Evaluation:** While the weighted criteria guide the evaluation, the decision will also consider the overall potential of the consultant to deliver a successful outcome that aligns with our strategic objectives.

Thank you for considering this project. Discover Halifax endeavours to be a haven for high performers, and in doing so, we seek to live our values daily. We are seeking a partner equally excited and engaged with this vision.