Discover Halifax
Request for Proposal (RFP)

Corporate Website Development

Date Issued:

December 23, 2019

Submission Deadline:

January 17, 2020

DISCOVER HALIFAX

1809 Barrington Street, Suite 708
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada
B3J 3K8
discoverhalifaxns.com

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About this RFP

Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to set forth requirements and seek proposals from potential vendors to develop a corporate web presence for Discover Halifax. The launch of the site will be aligned with the launch of a five-year tourism master plan, and will serve as a platform for reporting on measurements and goals within the plan, as well as other corporate reports and work.

This document sets forth the requirements and evaluation criteria for proponents.

Administrative requirements

For tendering, legal, and billing purposes, the client is Discover Halifax. Submissions in response to this RFP assumes acceptance of all the terms described herein.

Eligibility

Vendors must be registered companies, with the legal authorization to conduct business in the Province of Nova Scotia. The vendor consultants, proposed for this project, must be legally entitled to work in Canada.

While not considered mandatory, preference may be given to Halifax-based proponents.

Project location and facilities

Discover Halifax anticipates that there will be a requirement that the successful vendor may need to attend select meetings, undertake presentations and / or participate in activities in-person, at Discover Halifax's offices, as the project evolves.

Enquiries

All enquiries related to this RFP are to be directed to the following individual. Information obtained from any other source is not official and may be inaccurate. Enquiries and responses may be recorded and may be distributed to all proponents at the option of Discover Halifax.

Monica MacLean
Communications director

Discover Halifax
1809 Barrington Street, Suite 708
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3K8

Phone: (902) 401-2308
Email: mmaclean@discoverhalifaxns.com

About Discover Halifax

Discover Halifax is an incorporated company, created in partnership between the Halifax Regional Municipality, the Hotel Association of Nova Scotia and participating industry members. Its mandate is to increase visitor yield to Halifax on a year-round basis. The organization is responsible for promoting both business and leisure travel from external markets. Discover Halifax is a non-profit, destination marketing organization (DMO) for the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Discover Halifax has created and supports a Visitor Experience program and resources such as their own Official Halifax Highlights Visitor Guide, Halifax maps and an in-room hotel visitor channel. As well, Discover Halifax provides a membership program to nearly 500 members and works to attract meetings and conventions to select Halifax as its destination-of-choice for events.

Currently, Discover Halifax employs a full-time staff of 18 people with expertise in marketing and communications, sales and general administration. The company is organized into four (4) divisions: Administration, Group Sales, Marketing and Visitor Experience and the Senior Leadership Team.

Scope of work

Discover Halifax is seeking support in the design and development of a new corporate website that will continue to build on its trusted brand; help position it as a leading DMO; and, an authority on the visitor economy for the Halifax region.

The project requires support managing the project, including collaboration with key partners and staff to develop a site that is responsive to their information needs. In addition to project management, Discover Halifax's needs include: content development and copywriting; visual design and illustration; coding requirements; mobile optimization; search engine optimization; accessibility audit; quality assurance and testing; and, training for ongoing updates.

Based on this, the RFP has been divided into two main (2) components with the bulk of the work relating to the development of the website, which will include dashboard capabilities. The dashboard will reflect Discover Halifax's values on transparency and education on the value of the visitor economy for the primary audience of the members; partners; key stakeholders and the general public. The second component relates to ongoing, secure website hosting and support services in the current IT environment.

New website objectives

In Fall 2019, Discover Halifax began the development of a Tourism Master Plan. The ultimate objective for this five-year plan is to assist in the prioritization of efforts and investments which will lead to wealth creation and economic growth from the region's tourism economy. Some outputs of the successful project, as it relates to the corporate website development, will include a shared vision for the development of the tourism economy in the region; identification of leading opportunities, challenges and priority; and, a well-defined action plan.

The corporate website will be a hosting site for this master plan, as well as appropriate corporate information which may include, and is not limited to: corporate press releases, policies, reports as well as research and data related to the tourism industry in the Halifax region. The site should also allow people to ask and submit questions about the industry.

The content should help Discover Halifax tell the story of how the tourism industry is important in creating wealth for the Halifax region and the province, by linking data to success stories.

Target audiences:

The target audiences for Discover Halifax's corporate website is distinct from it's current website (discoverhalifaxns.com) which focuses on potential and current visitors. The corporate website will primarily be focused on:

- Municipal government and staff
- Provincial government and Crown corporations
- Business improvement districts
- Discover Halifax members and potential members
- Local chambers and business associations
- Potential meetings and convention clients
- Other destination marketing jurisdictions
- Residents throughout Halifax Regional Municipality
- Media

Additional requirements and functionality

This website will serve a very distinct purpose from the existing Discover Halifax website (discoverhalifaxns.com), which targets members and travellers. The corporate site should complement the existing corporate brand guidelines, in addition to adhering to best practices and legislative requirements in terms of privacy, security and assessibility. Specifically, it should meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) with a minimum compliance level of AA.

Proponents should identify the recommended website platform and Content Management System (CMS) to meet Discover Halifax's objectives in their responses. This should include an explanation for the recommended platform, and how it can support interactive elements such as maps, videos, animated graphics as well as remain responsive to mobile and desktop users. In addition, Discover Halifax staff should be able to access and update content as required.

Web examples

- Tourism Nova Scotia
- One Nova Scotia Dashboard
- Halifax Partnership
- Tourism Alberta
- Destination Canada
- Nestle (Global corporate site)
- Shopify Economic Impact Report

Ongoing Technical Support Services

These support services would include:
o Webhosting, security monitoring and maintenance.
o Training and onboarding for staff to maintain site.
o Respond to requests for troubleshooting and resolving technical support issues.
o Monthly reporting that includes analytics reporting and KPIs, any unresolved incidents, as well as recommendations for improvements.
o Ongoing optimization of website for search performance.
o Ability for sign up to corporate news and information.
o Link to corporate social media accounts as determined.
o Ad-hoc design requests and support.
o Other support services that may arise outside of the list of services above.

Schedule Summary

RFP Issued	December 23, 2019
Closing Date	January 17, 2020
Submission Compliance Review & Evaluation of Proposals completed	January 24, 2020
Notification of Proponent(s)	January 29, 2020
Presentations (if required)	January 30 - February 4, 2020
Contract	February 7, 2020
Site completion	May 13, 2020

Closing Date

Two (2) complete copies of each proposal must be received by 12:00 pm, local time, on Friday, January 17, 2020. Proposals and their envelopes should be clearly marked with the name and address of the client (Attention: Monica MacLean), and the project title: "Corporate website development".

In an effort to reduce our impact to our environment, submitted proposals should be free of binding, covers, or other materials. Pages should be printed on 8.5"x11" paper and assembled with a single staple.

Late proposals will not be accepted and will be returned to the proponent unopened.

Addendum or modifications can be made before the Closing Date, but will not be accepted after that date.

Proposals may be withdrawn by respondents at any time after submission.

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated and weighted according to the table and criteria below. If a proposal does not meet these requirements, it will be rejected and no further evaluation of the proposal will take place.

The following outline required elements to be included in the RFP response. Note that the RFP submission should not be more than 12 pages (minimum 10 points with 1" margins, excluding pricing):

- About your firm:
  - Overview of proponent agency/firm
  - Three (3) examples or case studies of similar website projects undertaken in the past 3 years. These projects should have included a client dashboard. Although not required, examples within the DMO/Tourism/Destination space should be prioritized.
  - Outline of proposed team (name, titles, short bio, and expected time spent on this project). The team outline should include technical, supervisory, creative, and project management functions.
  - Three (3) client references from website projects (please prioritize similarly scoped project references).
- About your solution:
  - Proposed website platform/content management system with rationale
  - An outline of your proposed dashboard
  - Proposed timeline that outlines major tasks/expected approval gates/milestones
  - Outline of expected project risks and risk mitigation (can include risks associated with completion, deployment, and subsequent maintenance/issues)
  - Proposed ongoing maintenance, issue resolution, and process post launch
- Pricing (please include as separate document within the submission package):
  - Project budget/pricing based on proposed gates/timeline outlined above.
  - Proposed cost for ongoing maintenance.
  - Proposed value adds and associated costs
  - Proposed payment and budget terms

Evaluation

Discover Halifax will judge all accepted RFP submissions that meet deadline and content requirements as follows. Note that submissions that do not meet deadline and/or content requirements will not be scored or considered.

Note that while pricing is an important factor, the lowest price bid will not necessarily determine the winning proposal. As such, review of proposed budget will occur separately.

o   Was the RFP response provided within the allowed timeframe?

o   Was the RFP response presented in a professional manner?

o   Is the RFP response clearly written and error-free?

o   Does the RFP response address all website design requirements stated by Discover Halifax?

o   Is the website proposal within the project's budget?

o   Does the website proposal follow the project's timeline, if not, is a new timeline proposed?

Proposal Scoring Rubric:

Points:	Area:	Details:
20	Overall RFP Document	Is the proponent's proposal clear, concise, and professionally presented? Based on the response, does the proponent clearly identify and articulate the challenges associated with this project and recommend paths to successful completion?
40	About the Proponent	- Proponent overview - Case Studies and relevant examples - Proposed Team - Client references
40	The Solution	- Proposed platform & rationale - Proposed timeline - Risk Assessment - Post-Launch plan
100	TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE	

Notification of Proponents

A winning proposal, whether in full or in part, will be selected and the submitting respondent will be invited to participate in contract negotiations and finalization.

Discover Halifax may contact individual respondents during this process for clarification or elaboration of proposal elements. Selected proponents may also be expected to meet with Discover Halifax and orally present their proposals during the time period identified in the Schedule Summary (page 6).

Contract

Discover Halifax reserves the right to award contracts for website design / development and ongoing hosting and maintenance separately.

The winning respondent(s) will be invited to participate in contract negotiations, starting with a proposed Scope of Work which has been submitted with their proposals. This will lead to the execution of a contract to provide/undertake the support services/special projects described in this RFP. Note that this may entail one or more contracts.

In the event that a contract agreement cannot be successfully reached, Discover Halifax reserves the right to cease discussions with the winning respondent and either choose another respondent or pursue another avenue to fulfill their requirements.

Schedule and Availability

Discover Halifax expects that, upon endorsed contract, support services will begin immediately. A workback schedule will be developed to help track project milestones and key deadlines.

Fee Structure

Proponent proposals must include a breakdown of fees and rates as follows:

Services	Commitment	Fee Type	Terms
Website design and development	Contractual Quotation		30 days net, billable monthly.
Ongoing technical support services (12 months)	Contractual Quotation	Monthly retainer fee	30 days net, billable monthly.

All fees should be quoted in Canadian Dollars, excluding HST and should be guaranteed for 90 days following submission of proposals.

Value Add

Respondents are invited to include in their proposal any service(s) or component(s) that add(s) value to their sumission or which provide(s) a unique offering not included in this RFP. This will include a description of the service/component/offering and associated cost (if not included in the requested breakdown of fees and rates).