



The Corporation of the Town of Cochrane

on behalf of

Aventure Nord Ontario Partnership

Request for Proposal: Power Sports Tourism
Operator Readiness Training
Inquiry Number: 2017-27 (amended)

Terms of Reference

Aventure Nord Ontario Adventure Tourism Operator Readiness Training Project

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Program Description and Request for Proposal (RFP)

A. Introduction: Setting the Context

Aventure Nord Partnership Area

Northern Ontario has always represented the iconic experience that consumers look for when you mention Canada: the beautiful outdoors, unspoiled wilderness and diverse tourism products are indeed our strengths. Although times are troubled with tourism as a whole, we have great potential for industry expansion, new products and experiences as well as good value for the dollar. The aligning that has occurred with the Northern Strategy and the development of the new Tourism Region (13 RTO) has many partners working towards a common goal.

In 2016, the communities of Cochrane, Smooth Rock Falls, Kapuskasing, Hearst and Dubreuilville, embarked on an initiative aimed at targeting the Quebecois power sports riding market, which included developing a brand: Aventure Nord Ontario, and developing the off-road/off-trail power sports product: a touring map available in print and online in GPS download format. This endeavour was successful in pulling together our partners and allowed us to have a fulfillment piece for this untapped market. The five communities identified above create the Aventure Nord Partnership, herein referred to as the “Partnership”, and reflect the geographical area/boundaries of the Partnership at this time.

The Aventure Nord region is a geographical and iconic gem within the tourism framework of Northern Ontario and is large enough, alone, to market to the French adventure enthusiast, in this instance riders coming from Quebec. We must always remember that the destination for this market is the roads/trails they travel, not necessarily where they stop to lay their heads after a day of riding. In the stories they tell, this market talks about the people they meet, the beauty of the area and the twists and turns of the pavement or trail.

The partnership created among the communities within Aventure Nord, will indeed answer to the needs of the power sports touring rider, in terms of having the miles, the riding experience and the rugged natural beauty they look for when planning their rides. Nevertheless, there are certain requirements for accommodation, meals, facilities etc. that our businesses and stops must have for this consumer. With this in mind, we must move ahead and market to this consumer methodically. To this end, we require specific market readiness training to be delivered to ensure a more complete and standardised service within the second tier tourism service industry (accommodation, restauration, repair etc.) to cater to the power sport tourist.

B. Project Objectives:

- Assess and match consumer demands with local services provided
- Standardise tourism service industry within partnership area to cater to the French power sports rider
- Ensure there is a great match between our product and market demand
- Deliver appropriate training

C. Scope of Work & Project Deliverables:

Scope of Work

- Work must be completed in both official national languages.
- Work is to be completed within each community covering our geographic area and will require in person meetings from time to time
- Work within the criteria guidelines as developed by the partners to inventory power sports friendly business located in our five communities. These businesses will include accommodation, restaurants, gas stations, motorsports repairs, visitor centres for travel information and other businesses as designated by the partnership. (maximum of 25 total)
- Verify relative tourism elements, things to do and see while touring, and create listing and inventory as above. Sites must be inventoried according to location, ability to service the power sports consumer, ability to service French power sports tourist segment.
- Develop bilingual training module for businesses that cater to the power sports market with accompanying resources for the Partnership. This training module must be professionally translated in both national languages, French & English, and will act as a resource for the partnership to be implemented in other businesses in the future.
- Drawing as well from the development manual, ensure alignment and complimentary messaging from the development manual where it fits with our strategically located partners. Need to meet with tourism operators to ensure that there are no shortcomings between their service and our consumer's needs. To make positive consultant recommendations to operators to persuade them to adopting the power sports riding culture services.
- Implement developed training module at a maximum of 5 different business locations in each of the communities that comprise the partnership.
- Selected proponent will have access to prior work done with Aventure Nord should they require more background information

Deliverables

- Complete a specific inventory of tourism businesses and sites to see. This inventory should assess where businesses are in terms of being power-sports friendly and their market readiness for the power sports consumer; should identify the business' GPS coordinates. Guidelines identifying the level of service and how the inventory was graded should be provided.
- Bilingual print and electronic versions of developed training modules with accompanying instruction manual (print 50 manuals)
- A maximum of 25 businesses (maximum of 5 per community within the partnership) have gone through the developed training module
- Provide brief updates, tracking progress and outcomes. There should be at least an initial kick off meeting, an interim meeting and a final meeting. At the end the project, a brief summary report will be required that will provide:
 - An overview of the tasks undertaken throughout the project
 - Presentation of the summary, training module and guidelines in person once completed

No public communications will be undertaken without the expressed consent of all partners.

D. Applicable Consultant/Business Experience:

The successful company must demonstrate excellence in the following areas:

1. Extensive and proven experience in developing training, communications and engagement plans.
2. Knowledge of OTMPC, OTMPC Northern Office, the Aventure Nord Ontario region, and the geography of RTO 13 A.
3. Demonstrated familiarity with Northern Ontario, which should include barriers to success, i.e. distance of travel, tourism product mix, gaps etc. In particular, the consultant must demonstrate their understanding of the power sports market and how our area can meet the expectations of this demographic.
4. Provide 3 most current references for similar projects.
5. Ability to work in French and provide deliverables in French.

A brief description of the experience that the successful firm has that will support their ability to carry out the deliverables of this project should be provided.

E. RFP Requirements:

The following information must be provided in the response to this RFP:

1. A narrative describing why the consultant team is interested in this project.
2. An explanation of the firm's understanding of the scope of work, objectives and task requirements of the project, and a demonstrated ability to provide the project deliverables. This should also include an indication of how the deliverables will be implemented.
3. The consultant's team approach to accomplishing this project and innovative ideas to deliver the project.
4. A specific work plan detailing how the Proponent will undertake the work. This work plan should specify timelines, staff and additional resources that will be associated with each task. The work plan must specify the individuals who will work on the project, their roles in the project and their respective qualifications.
5. The contact responsible for project co-ordination should be identified. Furthermore, a description and outline of the anticipated communication process between the firm and the Aventure Nord Partnership, along with the co-ordination functions that will fall within the proposed budget must also be included.
6. A schedule listing the hourly rate for all project personnel and an estimate of the time each team member will spend on the project. This project has a budget of \$20,000.00.
7. Include schedule of per diem and hourly rates for all personnel. These will apply to work carried out beyond the scope of the RFP (all travel must be included).
8. If the Proponent comprises the association of more than one firm, specify the firm, the proposed role of each firm in the consultant team, the leads from each firm and the process for activating the appropriate service required by the Town of Cochrane.
9. Demonstration of past experience in working with the tourism industry in Northern Ontario, in particular in the area of adventure.
10. Detailed information to support the "Applicable Business Experience" section above including relevant tourism related experience.
11. Confirmation of "errors & omissions" and general business insurance.

F. Rights Relative to the RFP:

Aventure Nord Ontario reserves the right, at its sole discretion, and for its convenience, to accept and/or reject any proposal, in whole or in part, for any or no reason.

By making this RFP, Aventure Nord Ontario does not imply or give any assurance whatsoever that any proposal will be accepted. No contractual or other legal obligations arise on the part of Aventure Nord Ontario to any Proponent by this RFP until such time as a final, written agreement, if any, is subsequently entered into with a Proponent.

The Partnership reserves the right to re-issue the RFP in its original or revised form.

Aventure Nord Ontario reserves the right to disqualify any submission due to a conflict of interest. Each applicant must disclose any actual or potential conflict that may be occurring at time of bid, or may occur during time of project. If a vendor fails to disclose an actual or potential conflict or where such a conflict cannot be resolved, we have the right to terminate the contract.

G. Terms of the RFP:

Project Completion / Delivery date – February 20, 2018

H. Selection Process:

A selection committee will be comprised of the following: Aventure Nord Partnership, Strategic Partnership Coordinator OTMPC (Adventure) and others yet to be identified. The selection committee will review the RFPs based on a set of weighted criteria (found below).

Based upon the evaluation results of the RFP, the Partnership may require a presentation from any of, or all of the top three (3) highest scoring proponents, prior to awarding the contract. The presentation would form part of the final evaluation (grid to be provided at that time only). All such presentations will be at the bidder's expense. Any additional information may in no way materially alter or add to the submission originally proposed.

Selection Criteria:

- 1) **15%** - Demonstrated and long standing Northern Ontario tourism and marketing experience within the tourism industry credibility and experience
 - a. Knowledge of northern Ontario product (e.g., outdoor, adventure, marine?)
 - b. Past success with projects within Northern Ontario.

- 2) **30%** - Proven success with writing strategic marketing, communications and engagement plans as related to tourism, Northern Ontario Product and specifically the adventure product
 - a. *Please provide evidence to support your statements with samples and final results if applicable.
 - b. Implementation of successful tactics with similar deliverables.
 - c. Directly related prior business experience (see Applicable Consultants Experience).
 - d. If you have weaknesses/gaps related to the project, how will they be addressed?

- 3) **25%** - A clear understanding of the scope of the project: highlighting key project deliverables and proposed tactics

- 4) **20%** - Proposed work plan and time line
 - a. Include projected key tasks, associated staffing (staff expertise should be supported a brief explanation of their qualifications or an attached resume) and timelines.
 - b. Include a list of anticipated supports that will be required from the two partners

- 5) **10%** - Program Budget
 - a. The partnership has a total budget of \$20,000.00 for this project program.
 - b. A brief explanation of incremental costs associated the responsiveness of the project.
 - c. An anticipated payment schedule linked to the project deliverables is required.
 - d. Project costs must be inclusive of all travel costs.
 - e. Aventure Nord Ontario will **not** be responsible for costs above the stated budget.

I. RFP Process & Submission:

Responses to this RFP should be concise with a maximum of 5 pages with the detailed budget. Additional pages can include supporting attachments (i.e., resume of team members, examples of previous campaigns, etc.).

Proponents must register their intent to submit a proposal for this RFP with the undersigned. It is the Proponent's sole responsibility to do this, so that they remain informed of changes, addenda etc. during the RFP process.

RFPs should be received in PDF format by e-mail, or if sent by mail 5 memory stick copies. Links to or attachments of previous projects can be provided if appropriate to support statements of past business experience. Facsimile or telephone proposals will not be accepted.

Questions regarding this RFP will be received and accepted, by the undersigned, *in writing only*, up until Thursday, August 24, 2017.

All enquiries received via e-mail waive all rights of confidentiality of the enquiry in the method of transmission and the Proponent shall assume all risks of such methods of communication.

Submissions must be **received by confirmed e-mail**, to the undersigned, by **Monday August 28, 2017; 10:00 a.m. EST time**. RFPs received after that time will not be considered.

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