



Nova Scotia Highland Village Society

Request for Proposal Strategic Planning Consultant Services

February 1, 2019

Proposals will be received until Monday, March 4, 2019 at 4 pm.

1.0 - INTRODUCTION

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society is seeking proposals from qualified consultants to lead in the development of a new comprehensive strategic plan that will guide its priorities and direction over the next 4 years (2019/20-2022/23).

2.0 - OVERVIEW OF ORGANIZATION

The Nova Scotia Highland Village Society is a non-profit registered charity and the local management group that operates Baile nan Gàidheal | Highland Village living history museum and Gaelic folklife centre in Iona, on behalf of the Nova Scotia Museum.

The Society, which was established in 1959, has led the development and growth of the Highland Village site, its programming and outreach over the past six decades. In 2000, the Highland Village became a part of the Nova Scotia Museum, with the physical assets of the site transferred to the Crown in 2005. Today, the Society continues to operate the site in partnership with the Nova Scotia Museum.

The current mission and vision of the Society (adopted in 2017) are as follows:

- *Our vision is to be the leading Gaelic folklife centre, recognized in Nova Scotia, nationally and internationally as an essential institution for continuing development and representation of a vital and sustainable Gaelic community.*
- *Our mission is to grow as a Gaelic folklife centre that bilingually nurtures, communicates and celebrates the heritage and cultural identity of Nova Scotia's Gaelic community.*

The Highland Village has a operating budget of \$1.1 million and welcomes over 25,000 visitors per annum. Reporting to a volunteer board of trustees, elected from its membership, the Society has a staff of three full time year round and 28 seasonal positions. The Highland Village has 13 interpretive buildings (including dwellings, church, store, school, barn, carding mill and forge) and 15 support structures, all located on a 43 acre site overlooking the Bras d'Or Lake (UNESCO Biosphere Reserve). The Highland Village hopes to embark on a 3-year \$3.6 million site revitalization project starting later in 2019.

Our programs and services include:

- Offer a daily first person interpretation program for Nova Scotia Gaelic folklife, culture and identity, through the living history museum medium;
- Offer both on-site and in-class programming for schools;
- Offer a four day Gaelic folk life school for advanced Gaelic learners;
- Offer immersive programs for children and youth;
- Offer special storytelling tours and other immersive experiences;
- Offer special interpretive programs, feast days, concerts and other special events;
- Offer workshops, lectures, and other special programs on various aspects of Gaelic folklife;
- Publish annually, *An Rubha*, the Highland Village Gaelic folklife Magazine;
- Conduct research on various aspects of the Gaelic Nova Scotia story and related folklife;
- Manage the collections and material culture that supports interpretation, and/or are part of the Provincial Collection at the Highland Village;
- Provide genealogical research services;
- Conduct a maintenance program to support the buildings, grounds and other assets of the Highland Village;
- Operate a gift shop with retail and limited food service offerings;
- Offer hospitality service to cruise ships and other group tours;
- Partner with other organizations on Gaelic, heritage, tourism, and community related projects;
- Provide community outreach and support to the Gaelic cultural community; and
- Provide Gaelic folklife content on-line through the main Highland Village website, other Gaelic related portals, and social media.

Highland Village is recognized regionally and internationally for the work it is doing with first person interpretation and cultural presentation of Gaelic Nova Scotia language, culture and identity, and for its outreach and leadership in support of community capacity building in the Nova Scotia Gaelic community. In 2018, Highland Village received Trip Advisor's Hall of Fame, from five consecutive years of overwhelmingly positive visitor feedback.

3.0 - DESIRED OUTCOMES/DELIVERABLES

The purpose of this RFP is to develop a new four-year strategic plan to guide the Society over the next four years (2019/20 to 2022/23). The following outcomes/deliverables are expected from the consultants as part of the planning process and final strategic plan:

- An analysis of the Highland Village operation and operating environment;
- One-on-one interviews with key Highland Village stakeholders (10-12);
- Three community engagement sessions (Iona, Sydney and Mabou) to seek input from community stakeholders;
- A report to inform the participants of the planning retreat with findings from the environmental review, interviews and engagement sessions;
- A planning retreat with Highland Village board and staff to undertake an environmental scan; review existing vision and mission statements and organizational objectives; identify a mandate statement and organizational values; identify strategies to support the plan; explore the current social impact of the museum and potential future social impact.

- An analysis of the current staffing structure and skills to support the Highland Village moving forward including this strategic plan;
- A draft report for review by the Planning Committee and Management Team;
- A follow up session with Highland Village Planning Committee and Management Team to review draft report and prioritize goals and objectives;
- A final report for internal use, and an executive summary to be shared with community stakeholders and partners. The final report will include: a synopsis of the planning process; any recommended amendments to the mission and vision statements; the new mandate and values statements; identification and definition of strategic directions; identification of key strategies to support the plan; and a proposed organizational chart and staff succession planning strategies.

4.0 - SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following are the services expected under this RFP:

- Expert advice & facilitation;
- Develop critical path with key tasks/timeframes
- Conduct an environmental scan and other related research
- Create and execute stakeholder engagement plan inclusive of:
 - Community (3 -2 hours sessions in Iona, Sydney and Mabou)
 - Stakeholders/Partners (10-12 telephone interviews)
 - Board and Staff (1-2 day planning retreat)
- Structure & facilitate meetings/discussions
- Create a comprehensive strategic planning document for approval

5.0 - STRUCTURE AND COMPONENTS OF PROPOSAL

- Cover letter
- Detailed CV reflecting experience/skills
- Three examples of successful projects of similar scope
- High level outline of resources required
- A list of client references
- A quote and budget outline (inclusive of all taxes and expenses)

All items listed above must be addressed in a proponent's proposal. Failure to address any portion of these sections will render the proposal non-compliant and the proposal will receive no further consideration. Please note ownership of collected information rests with the Society.

Conflict of Interest: Candidates shall declare any real or perceived conflict of interest which exists or could arise. The nature of the conflict will be evaluated and may not inevitably result in exclusion.

To apply: Proposals must be electronically submitted by 4 pm on Monday, March 4, 2019 to Rodney Chaisson, Director, Nova Scotia Highland Village Society at rodney.chaisson@novascotia.ca