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ANCIENT SPIRIT, MODERN MIND

Request For Proposals

Kiiḡin (National Historic Site) Research and Development Project

Statement of Work

The Huu-ay-aht First Nations (HFN) seeks proposals from qualified consultants to evaluate Kiiḡin, a traditional Huu-ay-aht village and National Heritage Site of Canada, as a sustainable tourism business.

The purpose of this Request For Proposal (RFP) is to complete a plan that will conduct research, development work, and analysis to determine whether Kiiḡin could operate as a standalone sustainable business or be a sub-offer value-added product within an overall HFN's tourism portfolio under the Huu-ay-aht Group of Businesses (HGB). Also, provide strategic recommendations for sustainable operations for its smooth transition to Huu-ay-aht Group of Businesses.

This study will also explore the feasibility of utilizing experiential technologies to minimize physical visitor impact on the site while enhancing the historical experience. Additionally, the consultant will assess HGB's internal capacity to manage the tours during peak seasons and provide strategic recommendations for sustainable operations for its smooth operation under Huu-ay-aht Group of Businesses.

Background Information

Huu-ay-aht First Nations is a self-governing, modern treaty Nation whose lands are located in the Barkley Sound region on the west coast of Vancouver Island, at the entrance to Alberni Inlet. The lands and waters making up our traditional territories (*ḡahuuli*, pronounced "ha-houlthee") have been occupied by us since time immemorial. Today, Huu-ay-aht citizens number close to 900 and primarily reside around the village of Anacla, the Nation's principal community close to Bamfield, as well as in Port Alberni, the closest population centre. The balance of our citizens live across Vancouver Island, in the Vancouver area, and beyond.

Huu-ay-aht First Nations is a member of the Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council and one of the five First Nations signatories to the Maa-nulth Final Agreement, the first modern-day treaty to be concluded on Vancouver Island. The treaty came into effect on April 1,



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2011, when the five Maa-nulth First Nations' laws came into effect, marking a new era of ownership and self-government. As a result of the treaty, Huu-ay-aht First Nations has full ownership and jurisdiction over more than 8,200 hectares of land within our territories and continues to have rights throughout our *hahuuli*.

With full control over these undisputed lands owned in fee simple, our Nation is able to govern the lands under our own laws. Seeking to leverage this strength, Huu-ay-aht First Nations Council and Hereditary Chiefs (*Hawiih*) have been actively seeking opportunities to engage in responsible and sustainable economic development in order to forward the Huu-ay-aht vision of working together to establish a healthy, prosperous, and self-sustaining community.

Maintaining their historic role as caretakers of the lands, waters, and resources of their *hahuuli*, the Huu-ay-aht *Hawiih* work closely with Elected Council to ensure that all development considerations are informed and guided by the long-held principles of *?iisaak* (respect), *?uu?aluk* (taking care of), and *hišuk ma c'awak* (everything is connected). Furthermore, Huu-ay-aht citizens themselves contribute to the governance of the Nation through regular People's Assemblies, which employ a "direct democracy" model.

Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

This RFP and all related materials are to be treated in strict confidence. Any proposal received will be evaluated to ensure there is no apparent or actual conflict of interest.

Scope of Work

The consultant will be responsible for the following tasks:

1- Market Evaluation:

- Analyze the potential market demand for Kiiḡin tours as a standalone business versus a value-added product or a part of tourism package.
- Identify target audiences by segment (Tourists, educational tours, research, others) and marketing strategies for each segment.

2- Feasibility Analysis:

- Evaluate the financial feasibility of Kiiḡin tours as a standalone business vs a value-added product.



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- Evaluate the feasibility of incorporating technology to offer a virtual historical experience of Kiiḵin.
 - Assess the environmental impact of increased tourism and propose measures to mitigate any negative effects.
- 3- Capacity Building:
- Assess HGB's current capacity to manage and operate Kiiḵin tours.
 - Identify the Human Resources required to effectively operate the site.
 - Identify training and development needs for HFN staff to ensure efficient tour operations during peak seasons.
- 4- Review of Past Feasibility Studies & Financials:
- Analyze previous feasibility studies and compare their findings with current conditions.
 - Identify changes and challenges that have arisen since the last studies were conducted.
 - Review the past few years financials related to the operations of Kiiḵin
- 5- Strategic Recommendations:
- Provide a comprehensive plan for running Kiiḵin tours efficiently, whether as a standalone business or integrated within HGB's existing tourism businesses.
 - Provide a summarized operating plan which will outline visitation but prioritizing site preservation, site security and continued research at the site.
 - Outline both opportunities and the challenges, visitation limits of the site associated with the National Heritage Site of Canada designation.
 - Provide a complete five year proforma, including the required capital, to operate Kiiḵin as a stand alone tours or as a value added tourism product.
 - Develop a proposed strategy for a smooth operations and transition of the business to the Huu-ay-aht Group of Businesses, which manages all HFN enterprises including existing tourism businesses.

Deliverables

The consultant is expected to deliver the following:

- 1) an Inception Report outlining the approach, methodology, and timeline for the feasibility study;
- 2) a Market Evaluation Report providing a detailed analysis of market potential and target audiences for Kiiḵin tours;



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- 3) a Feasibility Analysis Report assessing technology implementation and environmental impact mitigation strategies;
- 4) a Capacity Building Report evaluating HFN's current capacity and offering training recommendations for staff;
- 5) a Comparative Analysis Report reviewing and comparing past feasibility studies with current conditions;
- 6) a Strategic Plan with actionable recommendations for the efficient operation of Kiiḵin tours; and
- 7) a Final Comprehensive Report compiling all findings, analyses, and strategic recommendations into a single, cohesive document.

Term of Contract

September 30, 2024 – March 31, 2025.

Payments, Incentives, and Penalties

The payment schedule would be monthly which would include an invoice and report submitted on the 1st of each month with payment within 30 business days.

Contractual Terms and Conditions

The successful candidate will have experience in understanding the political arena of the Federal and Provincial Governments. Strong understanding of working through iterative and sensitive issues at a government level.

They will have a working knowledge of Huu-ay-aht First Nations, its history, successes, and challenges and understand the importance of the return to self-government to Huu-ay-aht as a result of the Maa-nulth Treaty coming into effect. Or subsequently, have working knowledge of a Modern-Day Treaty.

Requirements for Proposal Preparation

Proposals should be prepared with the following in mind:

- A briefing of professional experience including examples of other public relations support provided.
- Include the experience working with First Nations and experience in cultural and heritage tourism.



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- Knowledge of the Huu-ay-aht and the return to self-government because of the Maa-nuth treaty.
- Total services costs including travel and contingency.

Evaluation and Award Process

Proposals will be evaluated based with the following criteria:

- 40% demonstrated successful experience working with FNs, documentation will be needed (working with Huu-ay-aht will be an asset),
- 40% demonstrated relevant professional experience, documentation will be needed.
- 10 % for sample work
- 10% for communication (written)

Huu-ay-aht First Nations will make every reasonable effort to conclude a legally binding service agreement with a successful proponent as soon as practicable after Tuesday, September 2, 2024.

Contact

Please send proposals or questions to Piyush Pushkarna, Economic Development Officer at piyush.p@huyuayaht.org by 4:00 P.M., Monday, September 2, 2024.