

Regional Tourism Organization 7

Request For Proposals

For

Festivals & Events
Regional Strategic Planning

Release Date:

August 19, 2013

Deadline For Submissions:

September 4, 2013

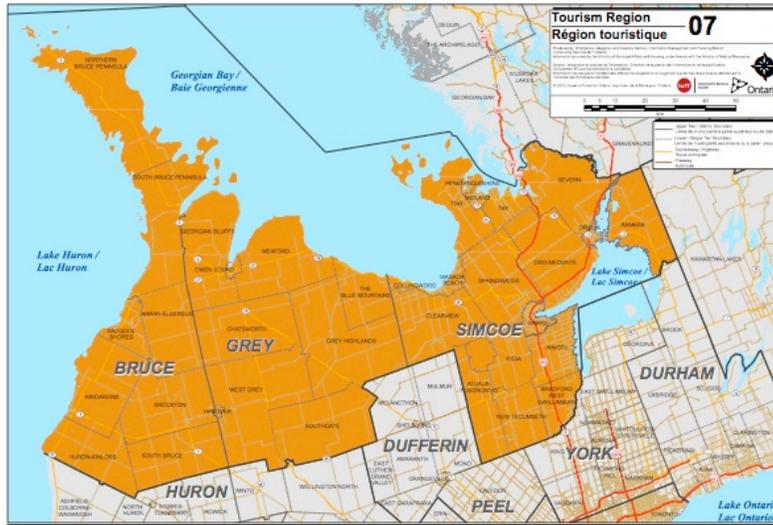
Introduction

Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RTO7) invites proposals for strategic research and planning with respect to development of regional and collaborative strategies and tactics to better support BruceGreySimcoe festivals & events.

RTO7 is an independent, board-led, not-for-profit corporation funded by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport with a mandate to provide strategic leadership and work collaboratively with tourism partners and stakeholders to enrich the region's tourism industry.

For further information about:

- RTO7: www.rto7.ca and www.BruceGreySimcoe.com
- Ontario's tourism regions: www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/regions/regions.shtml



About this RFP

This request for proposal (RFP) document consists of the following:

1. Terms of reference
2. Terms and conditions
3. Submission requirements

Please read this document in its entirety and respond to all requirements.

Procurement process & milestone dates:	
Aug 19/13	RFP released
Aug 26/28	Deadline for submission of questions/publish responses
Sep 4	Deadline for RFP submissions
Sep 17	Finalist interviews
Sep 23	Selection completed (not later than)

Intention to submit proposal / questions

To ensure you are apprised of any additional information as may be provided, please confirm your intention to submit a proposal upon receipt of this RFP. Reply to:

Cindy Strong
Administrative Coordinator
Regional Tourism Organization 7
cstrong@rto7.ca

Written questions (only) may be submitted to the e-mail address above. One consolidated response to all questions (without attribution) received prior to the deadline specified above will be published to all proponents who have declared intent to submit a proposal.

1.0 Scope of work

Festivals & events have and continue to play an important role in BruceGreySimcoe tourism. These events, whether primarily local in orientation or produced for tourist appeal, play important roles in attracting visitors to destinations across the region and encourage both day and overnight visitation.

An assay conducted by RTO7 (2010) revealed that there are in excess of 600 event days occurring across the region each year. These include events that enjoy sufficient tourism appeal to act as primary trip motivators – e.g., Collingwood’s Elvis Festival, Owen Sound’s Summerfolk, Orillia’s Mariposa Folk Festival, and programming at Blue Mountain Village. Many more unique festivals & events draw appreciable audiences, and have potential to expand their appeal, while still others play an important role in animating the region and supporting its authentic, welcoming brand promise.

RTO7 has enlisted the expertise and support of key stakeholders to develop strategies and tactics that are informed by best practices, to better support BruceGreySimcoe festivals & events through regional and collaborative efforts.

1.1 Objectives

1. Evaluate available data and identify research methodologies to better inform ongoing and future festivals & events planning:
 - a. Consumer research
 - b. Economic impacts
 - c. Data collection and sharing
2. Identify needs and opportunities and to build capacity, sustainability, and net revenues:
 - a. Planning and operational models
 - b. Industry and hospitality engagement/partnerships
 - c. Shared procurement and resourcing
 - d. Funding
3. Recommend approaches to increase the effectiveness of festivals & events marketing to increase event attendance and receipts, and day, overnight, and repeat visitation:
 - a. Collaborative opportunities (e.g., co-branding, marketing assets)
 - b. Cooperative advertising approaches for mass and niche markets
 - c. Packaging opportunities

1.2 Desired outcomes

1. Engagement and consultation of festivals & events operators and partners
2. Assessment of available marketing and attendance data, and gap analysis to identify ongoing/future research priorities
3. Recommendation of criteria, based on product inventory, to support multivariate approaches to festivals & events planning, development, marketing and promotion
4. Recommendation of specific strategies and tactics and implementation considerations, including roles and responsibilities and resourcing and funding considerations (i.e., RTO, public and private stakeholders, organizers, etc.)

1.3 Key deliverables and timing

Following completion of procurement, the project will commence in October 2013 and will be completed not later than March 31, 2014.

On or about:	Deliverable:
Oct 4/13	Initial planning meeting
Oct 15	Detailed project plan/engagement terms finalized
Nov 15	Progress report
Dec 15	Progress report
Jan 31/14	Preliminary findings
Feb 28	Refinement and validation of recommendations
Mar 31/14	Project completion/final report due

Note:

- Subject to mutual agreement and scheduling, interim reports may be accomplished via in-person meetings or remote conferencing
- Progress and preliminary findings reports to be provided in presentation (PowerPoint) format
- Final report should be appropriately detailed and include an executive summary, detailed narrative outlining project methodology, findings, recommendations and supporting exhibits
- All reports to be provided in electronic format (MS Office / PDF)

2.0 Terms and conditions

2.1 General terms and conditions

Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RTO7) reserves the right, at its sole option, and for its convenience, to accept and/or reject any proposal, in whole or in part, for any or no reason. By making this request for proposals (RFP) RTO7 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 RTO7 to any proponent by this RFP until such time as a final, written agreement, if any, is subsequently entered into with a proponent.

RTO7 may or may not award the business that is the subject of this RFP to any proponent or proponents at RTO7's sole discretion. RTO7 reserves the right to negotiate with proponents, seek clarification from proponents regarding their proposal responses and invite modifications to the proposal responses submitted.

RTO7 retains the right to withdraw or modify this RFP at any time without notice and without obligation to proponents. RTO7 may waive compliance with the requirements of this RFP and consider a proposal response that does not meet all of the requirements of this RFP.

Your proposal is submitted at your own risk. If, prior to the deadline for submission of proposals you fail to notify RTO7 of an error and your proposal is selected, you shall not be entitled to any compensation or time by reason of the error or its later correction.

No part of this RFP will become part of any final agreement between RTO7 and the provider unless specifically incorporated into a final, written agreement. Any or all contents of your proposal may become part of the final agreement.

Your proposal response, including fees, shall constitute a binding offer capable of acceptance in whole or in part by RTO7, and if selected will remain valid until such time as a final agreement is negotiated and executed.

RTO7 shall not be in any way responsible for or liable for any costs associated with your proposal and you shall not make claim to RTO7 for any such cost or expenses. By submitting a proposal response, you agree to waive any right to claim damages against RTO7 for any reason, cause, or thing arising out of the RFP process.

If you are selected you may be required to provide satisfactory proof of maintenance of relevant insurance coverage (including commercial, professional, general liability and automobile insurance).

2.2 Potential for conflicts of interest

Each proponent, in their proposal submission, shall declare all conflicts of interest or any situation that may be reasonably perceived as a conflict of interest that exist now or may exist in the future. Failure to comply with this requirement will render the proposal non-compliant and will cause the proposal to be rejected. RTO7 reserves the right to disqualify from further consideration proposals that in RTO7's opinion demonstrate a conflict of interest.

Any contract awarded as a result of this RFP will be non-exclusive. RTO7 may, at its sole discretion, purchase the same or similar services from other sources during the term of the contract.

2.3 Termination

In the event that the successful proponent, in the opinion of RTO7, fails to satisfactorily perform the services in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract including the instructions to proponents, terms of reference and any other documented terms and conditions, RTO7 reserves the right to terminate services. RTO7 further reserves the right to terminate the contract without showing cause, prior to its conclusion, upon giving at least ten (10) days written notice to the successful proponent.

2.4 Terms of payment

Payment will be made in response to invoices in accordance with the final executed contract, provided the invoices are based on work/deliverables described in the scope of the project and are consistent with the timetable of each negotiated deliverable, are completed to RTO7's satisfaction, and provided there exists no defaults of obligations.

2.5 Subcontracting and assignments

It is understood and agreed that the successful proponent will be an independent contractor. Any proposed subcontracting agreements must be approved by RTO7 and will not release you from any obligation with respect to the performance of your obligations.

2.6 Errors and omissions

RTO7 shall not be held liable for any errors or omissions in any part of this RFP. While considerable effort to ensure an accurate representation in this RFP, the information contained in the RFP is supplied solely as a guideline for proponents. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in the RFP is intended to relieve proponents from forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in the RFP.

2.7 Indemnification

The Successful proponent shall indemnify and hold harmless RTO7, its Board of Directors, its officers and partners from and against all actions, claims, demands, losses, costs, damages, suits, or proceedings whatsoever which may be brought against or made and against all losses, liabilities, judgments, claims, suits, demands or expenses which may sustain, suffer or be put to resulting from or arising, out of the successful proponent's failure to exercise reasonable care, skill, or diligence or omissions in the performance or rendering of any work or service required hereunder to be performed or rendered by the successful proponent, its agents, officials and employees.

2.8 Confidentiality

Performance shall not at any time before, during or after completion of the project, divulge any confidential information communicated to or acquired by you or disclosed by RTO7 in the course of carrying out this project.

2.9 Acceptance of terms

By submitting a proposal you represent you have read, completely understand, and accept all terms and conditions of the RFP in full.

3.0 Submission requirements

3.1 Proposal guidelines

Your proposal must:

1. Be submitted electronically (PDF preferred). Your submission should not exceed 20 pages in length.
2. Be accompanied by a cover letter / e-mail certifying the accuracy of all information contained in your submission and acknowledging your offer of services according to (a) the terms of reference as set out in Section 1.0; and (b) the terms and conditions as set out in Section 2.0.
3. Include responses to all questions in Section 3.2. Please cite each question in framing your responses and provide clear and concise answers.

3.2 Questionnaire

1. Provide a brief overview of your company including legal name, address and URL. Identify the representative authorized to negotiate on behalf of your company and include full contact information.
2. Provide a brief history of your company including years in business, describe its ownership and management structure, and its lines of business.
3. Provide a representative client list. Identify any past or current relationships with organization(s) located within BruceGreySimcoe.
4. Identify project lead and key team members. Outline their roles and responsibilities and provide brief bios.
5. Provide a minimum of three references from organizations that can speak directly to your expertise with respect to festivals & events. References should be able to speak to experience with proposed project personnel. Include name, title and full contact information.
6. Describe your relevant qualifications and expertise with festivals & events development, planning, execution and marketing and assignments of a similar nature. Highlight experience with strategic tourism planning on a regional scale and/or in a multi-stakeholder environment.
7. Outline your proposed approach to delivery referencing the objectives and desired outcomes set out in Section 1.0. Specify any assumptions.
8. Provide a proposed work plan to support your response to Question #7. Identify tactics, resource requirements, milestones and deliverables. Specify any assumptions.
9. Provide a quotation to support your response to Questions #7 and #8. Clearly document your quotation basis and provide a cost breakdown by phase / task. Specify applicable hourly rates and any assumptions.
10. What do you see as critical success factors in the formulation of the key deliverables of this initiative? What principal obstacles or challenges do you foresee in the execution of this project, and how would you overcome them?
11. Provide any additional information you believe will be helpful in assessing your capabilities.

3.3 Evaluation criteria

Criterion	Weight
Credentials, professional knowledge and expertise	30%
Demonstrated experience and ability to meet requirements as evidenced in proposal responses and work samples	40%
Demonstrated qualifications and expertise as supported by quality of client references	20%
Competitiveness of proposed fees and thoroughness of proposal	10%

3.4 Submission

It is your responsibility to seek clarification of any matter that you consider unclear before submitting your proposal by the deadline specified herein for submission of written questions. RTO7 is not responsible for any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of this RFP document or requirements.

Deadline for proposal submission is: 5:00 pm, Wednesday September 4, 2013.

Proposals must be submitted electronically (only) to:

Cindy Strong
Administrative Coordinator
Regional Tourism Organization 7
cstrong@rto7.ca