



**HOSPITALITY**  
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

**Request for Proposals**  
**Quality Assurance Market Readiness**

September 8, 2023

Issued by:

Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador

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## 1. Introduction

This Request for Proposals (the “RFP”) is an invitation by Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador (“Hospitality NL”) to submit proposals for the provision of professional services as further described in Section 4.2 Scope of Work and Deliverables.

Hospitality NL is the Tourism Industry Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, representing tourism/hospitality operators throughout the province in all sectors and regions. The mandate of Hospitality NL includes the responsibility to support the development of a professional workforce and improve the competitiveness, quality, and market readiness of the tourism industry.

Hospitality NL is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced suppliers to undertake an Accommodations Needs Assessment for Newfoundland and Labrador’s tourism industry.

### 1.1 RFP Contact

For this procurement process, the RFP Contact shall be:

**Juanita Ford, Chief Operating Officer**  
**Hospitality NL**  
**[jford@hnl.ca](mailto:jford@hnl.ca) | 709-722-2000**

Proponents and their representatives are not permitted to contact any employees, officers, agents, elected or appointed officials, or other representatives of Hospitality NL, other than the RFP contact or their designate, concerning this RFP. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in the disqualification of the Proponent and the rejection of the Proponent’s proposal.

### 1.2 Type of Contract for Deliverables

The selected proponent will be required to enter into an agreement with Hospitality NL for the provision of the professional services outlined in 4.2.

### RFP Timetable

Issue Date of RFP	September 8, 2023
Submission Deadline	September 29, 2023 @ 4:00 p.m. (NDT)
Anticipated Execution of Agreement	October 16, 2023
Anticipated Project Completion Date	December 31, 2023

## 2. Submission of Proposals

### 2.1 Proposals to be Submitted at the Prescribed Location

Proposals must be submitted at:

**Hospitality NL**  
**[jford@hnl.ca](mailto:jford@hnl.ca)**  
**Attn: Juanita Ford, COO**

## **2.2 Proposals to be Submitted on Time**

Proposals must be submitted to the email set out above on or before the Submission Deadline as indicated in Section 1.2. The Proponent is solely responsible for the submission of its proposal to the exact email location indicated in this RFP on or before the Submission Deadline. Hospitality NL does not accept any responsibility for proposals emailed or delivered to any other location other than those prescribed in Section 2.1. Proposals submitted after the Submission Deadline will be rejected. Hospitality NL's time clock will be deemed to be correct.

## **2.3 Proposals to be Submitted in Prescribed Format**

Proponents should submit their proposal containing one (1) electronic copy saved as a Portable Document Format (PDF) to [jford@hnl.ca](mailto:jford@hnl.ca). The file name on the electronic copy should include an abbreviated form of the Proponent's name. Unless specifically requested in this solicitation document, Proponents should not submit product catalogues or other marketing materials with their bid.

**Hospitality NL will not accept proposals submitted by facsimile or hard copies.**

## **2.4 Withdrawal of Proposals**

Proponents may withdraw their proposals before the Submission Deadline. To withdraw a proposal, a notice of withdrawal must be received by the RFP Contact by email before the Submission Deadline and must be signed by an authorized representative of the Proponent. Hospitality NL is under no obligation to return withdrawn proposals.

## **3. Evaluation of Proposals**

Hospitality NL will evaluate the proposals based on the Proponents responsiveness to weighted criteria outlined below and pricing. Hospitality NL reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any Proponent.
- Accept a proposal other than the lowest priced proposal; and
- Award a contract based on initial offers received, without discussion or request for best and final offers.

### **3.1 Rated Criteria**

The following is an overview of the rated criteria used for submission evaluations. Proponents who do not meet a minimum threshold score for a category will not proceed further in the evaluation of rated criteria and pricing.

<b>Rated Criteria Category</b>	<b>Weighting (Points)</b>	<b>Minimum Threshold</b>
<b>Work</b>		
Understanding of the Project Scope and Peripheral Problems	15 points	9 points
Proposed Approach and Methodology	15 points	9 points
Proposed Schedule	10 points	6 points
<b>Work Total</b>	<b>40 points</b>	<b>24 points</b>
<b>Staff</b>		
Proposed Project Manager	10 points	6 points
Proposed Personnel	10 points	6 points
<b>Staff Total</b>	<b>20 points</b>	<b>12 points</b>
<b>Company</b>		
Corporate Capacity	10 points	6 points
Corporate Experience	10 points	6 points
General Format and Appearance	5 points	2 points
<b>Company Total</b>	<b>25 points</b>	<b>15 points</b>
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>85 points</b>	<b>51 points</b>

**3.1.1 UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROJECT SCOPE AND PERIPHERAL PROBLEMS**

Provide a one to two-page summary of your understanding of the requirements defined in this RFP. Identify any potential challenges you foresee in delivering the scope of work. This content should be expressed in your own words and communicate your understanding of the services required.

**3.1.2 PROPOSED APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

Describe the approach and/or process you propose to address the RFP requirements. Include any notable methodologies, tools and techniques, and their respective suitability to this project. Briefly describe how the engagement proceeds from beginning to end.

**3.1.3 PROPOSED SCHEDULE**

Provide a project schedule that reflects your proposed approach/process and demonstrates your ability to meet the milestones within the project timeline. Itemize project milestones, deliverables, and engagement points throughout the project schedule.

**3.1.4 PROPOSED PROJECT MANAGER**

The successful Proponent will provide all the necessary project management needed to complete the services proposed in response to this RFP. Identify the Project Manager proposed for this project and describe their experience.

Include the Project Manager's resume. This should be structured to emphasize their relevant qualifications and experience successfully managing projects of similar size and scope to that required by this RFP. The resume should include at least two project references, including:

- Name of organization.
- Name, title, telephone number, and email of the contact for the organization; and
- A brief description of the scope, complexity, dates, and duration of the project.

### 3.1.5 PROPOSED PERSONNEL

The Proponent should be able to demonstrate that its proposed team as a whole meets or exceeds the RFP requirements. Provide individual resumes for each proposed resource. The resumes should be structured to emphasize their relevant qualifications and experience in completing projects of similar size and scope to that required by this RFP. Each resume should include at least two project references where the proposed individual served in a similar role, including:

- Name of organization.
- Name, title, telephone number, and email of contact for the organization.
- Brief description of the scope, complexity, dates, and duration of the project; and
- The role the proposed individual played in the referenced project.

### 3.1.6 CORPORATE CAPACITY

The Proponent should provide corporate information to demonstrate the company has sufficient human resources and facilities to complete the assessment on time and budget. The proponent should also provide corporate experience.

### 3.1.7 GENERAL FORMAT AND APPEARANCE OF THE PROPOSAL

Proponent responses to this RFP should reflect the professional nature of the services required and should effectively communicate how the consultant(s) will deliver on the requirements of this RFP as concisely as possible.

## 3.2 Pricing

Proposal evaluations will consist of scoring the submitted pricing of compliant proposals. Pricing is worth 15 points of the total score. Each Proponent will receive a percentage of the total possible points allocated to price for their proposal, which will be calculated by dividing that Proponent's price into the lowest bid price submitted.

For example, if a Proponent bids \$120.00 for the project and that is the lowest bid price, that Proponent receives 100% of the possible points for that category ( $120/120 = 100\%$ ). A Proponent who bids \$150.00 receives 80% of the possible points for that category ( $120/150 = 80\%$ ), and a Proponent who bids \$240.00 receives 50% of the possible points for that category ( $120/240 = 50\%$ ).

Lowest rate

----- x Total available points = Score for second-lowest rate  
Second-lowest rate

Lowest rate

----- x Total available points = Score for third-lowest rate  
Third-lowest rate

And so on, for each proposal.

Bidders should propose a financial model that clearly defines how they propose to be compensated for all the required services. **The maximum level of effort associated with this project is \$45,000, excluding applicable taxes.**

#### 4. RFP Particulars

##### 4.1 Project Background

The Government of Newfoundland & Labrador, in partnership with Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador and Destination Management Organizations, recently released a comprehensive vision for the province's tourism industry. *Transition, Transform, Thrive: A Tourism Vision and Strategy* (Vision 2026) outlined eight pillars to support the future growth and success of the industry. <https://www.gov.nl.ca/tcar/files/Vision2026.pdf>

Vision 2026 highlights the importance of tourism as an export sector for the economy of Newfoundland and Labrador. Generating approximately \$1.3B in total annual spending, the sector offers tremendous growth potential.

The fourth pillar focusses on quality assurance. The plan states, "High-quality, authentic, and market-ready experiences that are delivered throughout the entire visitor journey are paramount to achieving tourism goals. Products and experiences should be authentically reflective of Newfoundland and Labrador's brand of welcome and hospitality. Experience development priorities are clear and supported with policy and investment. There is a need to embed a regenerative lens on product development in ensuring consistency in the quality and market-readiness of the experiences offered throughout the province."

The purpose of this Quality Assurance and Market Readiness study is to determine the best and most effective means of evaluating the quality and market readiness of Newfoundland and Labrador's tourism operations and experiences.

Until recently, all licensed accommodators were required to participate in the Canada Select and Camping Select rating programs. This nationally recognized standard helped accommodations operators understand the needs of their target market and helped travelers choose the accommodations that met their needs. In April of 2023, The Tourism Accommodations Act was proclaimed replacing the Tourism Establishment Act. The requirement for Canada Select Grading is no longer a requirement of registration because of the legislative change.

The Tourism Assurance Plan (TAP) was initiated to ensure that Newfoundland and Labrador's tourism industry can remain competitive with other national and international destinations. TAP involves five common minimum standards that are aimed at promoting tourism organizations that provide quality travel experiences and assist tourism services and attractions improve the way they operate.

1. The ability to communicate and receive messages from customers by telephone, email and an online presence; and at a minimum, accept credit and/or debit card payment and respond to inquiries on a daily basis.
2. Possess and maintain valid licenses, permits and all other regulatory requirements to operate.
3. Maintain current and sufficient levels of liability insurance. Proof of insurance to be provided upon request.
4. Must deliver actual experiences or services being promoted and/or offered to the consumer.
5. Must be in good standing with Tourism Assurance Plan's complaints procedure.

The Tourism Assurance Plan was a significant step forward for the tourism industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. It will increase consumer/traveller confidence in the services and attractions we offer and contribute to the overall sustainability of our industry.

Additionally, Market-Readiness Guidelines have been developed to assist tourism operators in ensuring that their experiences, products and services are ready for the tourism market.

#### **4.2 Scope of Work and Deliverables**

Tourism experiences that meet market demands and reflect the needs and expectations of travelers are essential infrastructure for any tourism destination whose mandate is to grow and flourish. Hospitality NL is seeking the services of a qualified consultant to conduct an in-depth analysis and review of quality assurance / market readiness programs currently available in the market.

The successful proponent will undertake the following scope of work:

##### **Scope of Work**

- Complete a review of current quality assurance / market readiness approaches in NL.
- Work with Hospitality NL and its partners to refresh /revise the Tourism Assurance Plan including implementation, communications, planning, and governance.
- Develop a market-readiness program that qualifies operators for additional benefits who achieve this special designation of offering an "exceptional" experience. A complete program would detail criteria for experiences, branding, how experiences are validated, governance of the program, associated costs, and outlined benefits of the designation.