



Request for Proposals

For

A Study to Determine Growth
Potential of
Convention Business in Support
of an Expanded Conference
Centre

Released on September 27, 2019

Closing date

October 18, 2019 at 2:00 pm PST

**Destination Greater
Victoria**

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Destination Greater Victoria (DGV), previously Tourism Victoria, is a not-for-profit organization and the official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the Greater Victoria region, which includes the City of Victoria.

Member-based and governed by a Board of Directors, DGV is responsible for tourism marketing for the Greater Victoria Region within Canada, the United States and in selected international markets. DGV promotes tourism within several industry sectors including leisure tourism, meetings and conventions (business events), travel trade, festivals and events, sports and media relations. The organization is also responsible for sales and marketing of the Victoria Conference Centre, managing Victoria's downtown visitor information centre, tourism research and plays an advisory role in destination development for the Greater Victoria region. The organization's main office is in Victoria but also has representation in Vancouver and Ottawa.

DGV is a member-based organization representing more than 950 tourism partners and receives stable revenue through a destination marketing program (DMP), membership fees, partnership programs and government funding.

The Victoria Conference Centre (VCC) opened in 1989 at a cost of \$22.2 Million. Funds were contributed equally by Federal, Provincial and Municipal levels of government. In response to demand for contiguous space for conferences, in 2008 the City of Victoria took on a long-term lease of the Crystal Garden as an expansion space for the VCC and received a \$2 million upgrade through the Canada-B.C. Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund to refit this space. In 2014 the City and the Province of BC concluded a deal which enabled the City take on ownership of the Crystal Garden asset.

As a founding member of Convention Centres of Canada, the VCC has benchmarked its activity annually and has built a solid base of association-related conference business that is augmented by trade and consumer shows as well as single-day events.

1.2 Invitation

DGV and its partners at the City of Victoria and the Fairmont Empress are inviting qualified tourism consulting firms to submit proposals for "A Study to Determine the Growth Potential of Convention Business in Support of an Expanded Conference Centre".

Potential proponents should submit their complete proposal before 2:00 pm PST on Friday October 18, 2019.

All interested firms planning to submit a proposal must inform DGV via email to both Paul Nursey at paul.nursey@tourismvictoria.com and Graham Wallace at graham.wallace@tourismvictoria.com on or before October 4, 2019 confirming their intention with a bidder interest notice.

1.3 Important RFP Dates

Issue of the RFP	September 27, 2019
Bidder interest notice	October 4, 2019
Submission of questions and clarifications	October 11, 2019 before 5:00 pm PST
Due date for final proposals	October 18, 2019 before 2:00 pm PST
Notice to preferred proponent	November 1, 2019
Project start date	November 25, 2019
Initial review of client engagement findings	January 20, 2020
Review of 1st draft of study	February 26, 2020
Final study submitted	March 25, 2020

1.4 Q&A Instructions

Questions and/or clarifications must be submitted by email to both paul.nursey@tourismvictoria.com and graham.wallace@tourismvictoria.com before 5:00 pm on October 11, 2019.

Submitted questions will be answered to the best of DGV's ability. Questions and answers will be made available to all firms having submitted a bidder interest notice to DGV.

1.5 Relevant Documents Available

DGV will supply the preferred proponent with the following documents:

- Destination Greater Victoria's Annual Reports
- Destination Greater Victoria's Annual Business Plan
- Meetings & Conventions Strategic Plan
- Victoria Conference Centre specifications and performance statistics
- Victoria Conference Centre Sales & Marketing Plan
- Hotel inventory chart
- Historical annual occupancy and visitation statistics
- Conference Board of Canada Quarterly Indicators

2. Submission Instructions

2.1 Submission and Required Format

Interested firms are required to submit their complete proposals to DGV before 2:00 pm PST on Friday October 18, 2019 to the attention of:

Paul Nursey, CEO, Destination Greater Victoria

Email: paul.nursey@tourismvictoria.com

and

Graham Wallace, Manager, Governance, Research and Evaluation, Destination Greater Victoria

Email: graham.wallace@tourismvictoria.com

It is the responsibility of the proponent to seek any clarifications regarding the RFP before submitting. DGV will not be responsible for any misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the RFP requirements.

2.2 Proposal Format

Proposals must be submitted in electronic format (PDF) in English and include the following:

- 2.2 Letter of introduction signed by an officer of the company.
- 2.3 Description of the firm and its expertise, including details of a minimum of three similar projects completed within the last three (3) years.
- 2.4 Identification of individual team members to be assigned to the project, including their expertise and experience (CVs / resumes to be included in annex).
- 2.5 Three references and descriptions of projects involved with within the last five (5) years.
- 2.6 Understanding of the project.
- 2.7 Proposed work plan, methodology, stakeholder engagement plan and corresponding timelines.
- 2.8 Detailed budget and attributable hours.

3. Project Scope and Deliverables

3.1 Project Mandate

The Victoria Conference Centre (VCC) is a public conference centre that is managed by the City of Victoria through a long term lease with the Fairmont Empress. However, in 2017 Destination Greater Victoria assumed sales and marketing responsibility for the VCC. Since then DGV has launched “Cities in Sync” along with Saskatoon and Saint John’s, who look to cooperate on both lead generation and multi-year booking initiatives. DGV has also established a business events Customer Advisory Board (CAB) to inform

and help steer business events strategy for the destination. These initiatives and a concentrated sales and marketing effort have increased confirmed conventions and meetings bookings by 51%, leading to more than 30 city-wide events each year. On the heels of this success, Victoria was ranked within the top 10 up and coming global meetings destinations by Smart Meetings, as well as #2 Best small city in the world by Condé Nast. Victoria continues to gain significant profile and popularity as a convention destination with both Canadian and US-based associations and corporations. As demand continues to increase it will soon exceed the VCC's existing space capacity, which significantly limits the number of potential conferences available to solicit.

Anticipating ongoing growth in business events, Destination Greater Victoria and Victoria Conference Centre, in partnership with both the City of Victoria and the Fairmont Empress, are in the process of reflecting on possible expansion or rebuild of the VCC. In order to plan this process properly, and also ensure there is sufficient business potential to warrant such an investment and generate acceptable ROI, it is necessary to evaluate potential levels of business demand.

Therefore, DGV is calling for an expert consulting firm to conduct a study that analyzes and determines the potential growth of the convention and meetings market (business events) for Victoria over the next ten (10) years. The study should adopt a two-phase approach to analyzing the potential growth of this market for Victoria:

- 1- Growth under the present level of hotel inventory and conference centre size.
- 2- Growth with twice the current conference centre space and potentially additional hotel rooms.

3.2 Study Format and Deliverables

The final study should include the true potential of business events for Greater Victoria under present capacity, but focus primarily on growth potential if an expanded conference centre was developed. The study should be concise with projected growth based on market segments and geographic origins.

The study should be formatted in the following manner:

- 3.2.1 Executive summary
- 3.2.2 Introduction
- 3.2.3 Situational analysis and destination footprint (including historic annual increases in # of conventions hosted, delegate count and delegate spending; lost business data; etc)
- 3.2.4 Competitive set analysis
- 3.2.5 SWOT analysis
- 3.2.6 Business events trends and best practices for convention centres
- 3.2.7 Client engagement research
- 3.2.8 Lost business analysis
- 3.2.9 Identification of potential geographic markets, including national and international
- 3.2.10 Demand generators by segment (association, corporate, trade shows, events)
- 3.2.11 Demand projections per segment and delegate spend over ten (10) years
- 3.2.12 Recommended overall size of facility (including total square feet) based on optimal market demand and ideal conference space/hotel inventory ratio
- 3.2.13 Breakdown of space and room types (meeting; exhibit; ballroom; auditorium; lobby/public)
- 3.2.14 Timelines for implementation

4. Qualifications of Proponent

4.1 Mandatory

Proponents choosing to submit a proposal for this RFP should possess the following qualifications:

- Minimum of five (5) years as a tourism industry consultancy.
- Broad-based experience working with tourism businesses.
- Previous experience working with DMOs and strategic planning.
- Strong experience in the business events segment and marketplace.
- Experience with destination competitive analysis.
- Experience with stakeholder and client relations and consultation.
- Experience with timely, useable research trends in the tourism sector.
- Direct experience of three previous projects undertaken within the last five (5) years that demonstrate the experience and expertise required to lead this project.
- Three references (company, contact, title, contact information and related projects).

4.2 Desirable

Although not mandatory, knowledge and/or direct experience within the following areas will be taken into consideration when evaluating proposals:

- Understanding of markets in western Canada.
- Functionality of convention centre sales and marketing processes.
- Convention centre functionality.
- Tourism industry sales, marketing, media relations, destination development and international exposure.

5. Evaluation and Scoring

Criterion	Weight
Demonstration of knowledge of convention centre sales and marketing functionality and next generation understanding of business events trends (Knowledge).	20%
Demonstration of strategic planning qualifications, stakeholder experience, and expertise with new marketing models, supported by evidence from client references and including key staff qualifications related to similar projects (Experience).	30%
Quality of proposal and understanding of project and desired results (Methodology).	30%
Competitiveness of project fees and proposed timeline and work plan (Pricing).	20%

6. Terms of Reference

6.1 Confidentiality

Confidential information gathered by the proponent and/or acquired from DGV shall not be disclosed by the proponent or their affiliates at any time during or following completion of this project. DGV will require all proponents to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

6.2 Submissions and Rejections

DGV holds the right, by its own merit, to accept or reject in whole or in part any proposal submitted for any reason. By issuing this RFP, DGV does not imply or agree to any contractual obligation to any or all proponents submitting a proposal, and further does not give any assurance that any proposal will be accepted. DGV has no legal obligation to any proponent submitting a proposal until a formal written agreement has been signed by the parties.

DGV may or may not award this RFP at its sole discretion. DGV reserves the right to negotiate with proponents, ask for clarification and invite modifications to a proposal and/or alter parts of the RFP.

Proponents submitting a proposal do so at their own risk. If a proposal is submitted and selected and an error is detected by the proponent, the original submission will stand as submitted. Proposals may be withdrawn any time prior to the proposal due date and time. A proposal may not be amended or withdrawn after the proposal due date and time, except as otherwise provided by applicable law. If a proponent withdraws their bid for any reason, the proponent will not be entitled to any compensation of any kind.

The proponent's proposal and associated fees will be considered as a binding offer that is capable of acceptance and shall remain so until the conclusion and a final binding offer is signed and contracted. Any and all negotiations will occur in a timely and professional manner under the terms of the RFP. DGV holds the right to alter all or parts of the timeline of this RFP.

All proposals shall remain open for 90 days after the day of opening of proposals but DGV may, at its sole discretion, release any proposal which it deems as not being within the RFP's parameters. No proponent may withdraw their proposal during this period without written permission from DGV.

6.3 Incurred Costs

Proponents submitting a proposal do so at their own cost and do not hold DGV liable in any way for these costs. No compensation of any kind will be available for any reason if a proposal is not selected.

6.4 Sub-Contracting

Proponents may choose to submit a proposal with a sub-contractor(s) or in a joint association with another partner firm. If so, full disclosure of each sub-contractor and/or partner firm must be clearly identified within the proposal and comply with the same criteria listed.

6.5 Indemnification

The successful proponent shall indemnify and hold harmless Destination Greater Victoria, its Board of Directors, its officers and its partners from and against all actions, claims, demands, losses, costs, damages, suits or proceedings whatsoever which may be brought against or made 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.

6.6 Legal Jurisdiction

Any legal claims arising from this RFP and any work hereafter accomplished will be constituted under the governing laws of the province of British Columbia.

6.7 Non-Collusion and Non-Discrimination

By signing and submitting a proposal, the proponent warrants and certifies that the proponent did not engage in collusion or any other anti-competitive practices in connection with the preparation and/or submission of its proposal and must attest that there is no actual or potential conflict of interest with DGV or its affiliates.

6.8 Acceptance of Terms

By submitting a proposal, the proponent represents that they have read, completely understand and fully accept all terms and conditions of the RFP in entirety.

6.9 Insurance Requirements

The successful proponent will be required to maintain in good standing a liability insurance policy of minimum CAD\$1 million. As part of the final contract with DGV the proponent will supply proof of this insurance to DGV by way of an official insurance certificate.