

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AGRI-TOURISM ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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About Our Organization

The Similkameen Country Development Association (SCDA) is a non-profit society run by an enthusiastic volunteer board of directors. Our purpose is to increase awareness of the region's location, highlight tourism assets, encourage and develop business opportunities, maintain Chamber of Commerce services, and provide tourism and information services in the south Similkameen region.

We have ambitious goals to pursue an agri-tourism strategy with our local partners in agriculture, artisan culinary and beverage production, and take steps on the path to reconciliation with our Indigenous community. We believe that such a strategy will serve as a road map to economic growth, business sustainability, and destination development.

Purpose of the RFP

The purpose of this RFP is to identify a skilled consultant to research and develop an agri-tourism strategy, working with key partners in our region with a focus on determining what our region needs in order to support economic and communal success. We recognize that identifying and promoting our unique assets will drive economic development, build sustainable business growth in the area for many stakeholders and organizations, and contribute to the health of our community.

Our communities are rooted, literally and figuratively, in many aspects of agriculture: farming, ranching, fishing, iconic fruit and vegetable stands, artisan beverage (wine, cider, spirits) production, culinary experiences, farm stays, historical agriculture activities, and much more. The general area is recognized as the Organic Capital of Canada. The culture of our First Nations has much to share. These are small businesses, arts and cultural organizations, a wine trail, small non-profit societies, community builders, hospitality businesses (restaurants, shops, place-to-stay, tour companies, farm experiences) that, if they work together within a strategic plan, will have greater economic success.

Project Goals

The development of this strategy aims to:

- Identify agri-tourism assets and potential partnerships;
 - Create an inventory of current assets
 - Create a list of current and future partners
- Determine iconic agri-tourism products, and analyze the potential for agri-tourism product development;
- Work collaboratively with local and regional organizations, associations, government, and businesses;
 - Conduct surveys and/or interviews with key stakeholders
- Develop a multi-year strategy that includes S.M.A.R.T. goals and a general timeline for implementation.

Proposal Submissions

Please submit your proposal via email to admin@similkameencountry.org no later than **4 PM** on **December 22nd, 2023**, in PDF form, no longer than five pages.

We want to ensure every applicant is treated fairly; if you require any support in the submission process, please contact the SCDA as indicated below.

Proposal Format and Structure

Proponents are requested to structure their proposals as follows:

- Cover Letter
- Executive Summary that includes:
 - Methodology proposed to complete the project
 - Prior relevant experience
 - A clear understanding of agri-tourism
 - Demonstrated knowledge of economic development
- Proposed Timeline and Milestones
- Budget and Cost Proposal; the budget cannot exceed \$18,000 (CAD) and should include applicable taxes and estimates for expenses

The contract duration will be a maximum of 12 months.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by a committee based on the following criteria:

- Experience and expertise in similar projects
- Understanding of project objectives
- Proposed timeline
- Cost-effectiveness and budget
- Clarity and comprehensiveness of the proposed approach and methodology
- Qualifications and expertise of the proposed consultant or consultants

Contact information for at least one reference is expected. Proponents are welcome to apply as individual consultants or together with identified partners. We are looking to work with a consultant, or group of consultants, who are experienced, and can demonstrate a familiarity with the Similkameen region and the communities we serve. Shortlisted candidates may be invited for an interview.

Contact

Questions regarding this RFP are welcome by **December 15th** to:

Vanessa Schwoegler-Abbott
Executive Administrator
admin@similkameencountry.org

Proposals received by the deadline will be acknowledged as received. The awarding of this RFP is expected by **January 15th, 2024**. All information provided in the proposals will be treated as confidential and used solely for the purpose of evaluation and selection.

Similkameen Country Development Association

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