



THE **BLACKSBURG** PARTNERSHIP

Request for Proposal Strategic Planning Process and Facilitation

Posting Date: February 7, 2019

Proposal Submission Deadline: February 28, 2019

Purpose of the RFP

The Board of Directors of The Blacksburg Partnership is launching a strategic planning process for the organization that will define its direction for the next five years. The successful consultant will review existing materials and provide recommendations, as noted in the scope of services.

The anticipated budget for the process is expected to range between \$10,000 and \$15,000, and the process is expected to take six months, starting in April 2019.

The Blacksburg Partnership

Founded in 2003, The Blacksburg Partnership is a non-profit, independent economic development organization focused on projects that attract visitors and retail prospects. Partnership projects include the development of property, revitalization of retail districts, special events and community arts endeavors such as Gobble de Art, Humans of Blacksburg and the Collaborative for the Arts. The Partnership is also known for three signature events that take place every year: Blacksburg Fork & Cork, Blacksburg Brew Do and the Virginia Cheese Fest.

Scope of Services

The Blacksburg Partnership will conduct an inclusive process to develop its next 5- year strategic plan. The planning process is expected to take approximately 6 months from kick-off in April 2019. A fully developed plan will be presented to the Board of Directors in October 2019.

The Blacksburg Partnership seeks an experienced and highly engaging consultant to facilitate a process that enables the strategic planning committee to take a hard look at priorities and strategic direction while also being fun, stimulating and meaningful for all the stakeholders involved. The Partnership envisions a strategic planning process that is inclusive of a broad array of stakeholders, including Partnership investors, staff, and the business, Town and University communities. The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) will consist of 8-10 of the organization's top leadership, board members and investors.

The Blacksburg Partnership has dedicated staff who will manage the strategic planning process and assist with various implementation tasks. The Partnership is looking to partner with a strategic planning consultant who will help design and guide the process and lead certain strategic planning tasks, as noted in the scope of services.

The contractor shall provide services as indicated below:

- Background Document Review, to gain a historical perspective of the organization;
- Benchmarking Analysis with similar organizations;
- Mission and Vision review and recommendations for any needed updates;
- Assessment of the Governance Structure and Funding Model;
- Strategic Planning Workshop with strategic planning committee and the Blacksburg Partnership investors;
- Final Reports and Presentations
 - A five-year work plan which provides direction to the Partnership for the next five years. The plan should include:
 - Updated Mission and Vision
 - Recommendations for governance changes
 - Review and recommendations of the program of work
 - Recommendations for financial sustainability

Deliverables

A detailed work plan laying out the specific deliverables and timeline for the strategic planning process will be developed within the first 30 days of engagement.

How to Submit a Proposal

All proposals shall be submitted electronically to: info@blacksburgpartnership.org. The subject line shall include: *Proposal for Strategic Planning Process*. Deadline for submission of proposals is February 28, 2019 no later than 5:00pm ET. Hard copy proposals will not be accepted. Responses become the property of The Blacksburg Partnership, and may be subject to disclosure as requested upon completion of the process. Proprietary information that you wish to remain confidential should not be included in your response materials.

Questions related to this RFP should be submitted by e-mail to info@blacksburgpartnership.org no later than 5:00 pm ET on February 14, 2019. The subject line item shall include: *Questions about Strategic Planning RFP*. Answers to all questions received will be posted on The Blacksburg Partnership website (www.stepintoblacksburg.org) as an addendum to this RFP no later than close of business February 20, 2019.

Proposal Requirements

Responses to this RFP shall include:

1. Cover Letter

The cover letter must include a point of contact address, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address. The cover letter should briefly describe:

- Firm's qualifications
- Qualifications and roles of any partners, and
- Any exceptions your firm takes to the scope of work or required deliverables.

2. Technical Approach

Detailed description of your technical approach/methodology to the requirements found in the scope of work including, but not limited to, specific planning and facilitation tasks to achieve each of the objectives in the scope of work. A description of your strategic planning philosophy and preferred planning techniques should be detailed to clearly demonstrate how the firm engages stakeholders (including investors and staff) in the planning process. The technical approach should also address expected roles and responsibilities and include a project management plan and timeline for project deliverables.

3. Expertise/Experience

This section should identify the project lead and/or team members and their relevant qualifications and resumes. It should also provide a description of recent experience in facilitating strategic planning processes of similar size, scope and complexity.

4. References

Provide the contact information for three professional references that can speak to your performance on completing a strategic planning process similar in size, scope and complexity.

5. Conflicts of Interest

Disclose any possible conflict(s) of interest with The Blacksburg Partnership. Any previous research or support provided to The Blacksburg Partnership must be discussed.

6. Price

The price proposal should include total costs for performing all tasks proposed in the technical approach. Price shall be broken out by major task and planned deliverable(s) and shall include proposed labor categories their hourly rates and number of hours. Any other cost, such as travel, etc. should also be provided. Price proposals shall be submitted in a separate attachment and not included in the same attachment as the above items. The price proposal should describe all underlying budget assumptions.

Basis of Award

The Blacksburg Partnership reserves the right to determine which bidders have met the base requirements of this RFP. In addition, The Blacksburg Partnership may reject, in whole or in part, any and all proposals, waive minor irregularities in proposals, allow an offer or to correct minor irregularities and negotiate with all responsible efforts in any matter deemed necessary to serve the best interest of The Blacksburg Partnership.

The Partnership reserves the right to reject any and all proposals when such rejection is in the interest of The Blacksburg Partnership, to reject the proposal of a bidder who has not met the prerequisites of the bid proposal or who has previously failed to perform properly or complete on time contracts of a similar nature, and to reject the proposal of a bidder who is not in the sole opinion of The Blacksburg Partnership, able to perform the contract to the sole satisfaction of The Blacksburg Partnership. Information contained within your proposal in response to this RFP will be evaluated by The Blacksburg Partnership and will be considered confidential.

The Blacksburg Partnership also reserves the right to waive any informalities and technicalities in the bidding. The Blacksburg Partnership reserves the right, however, to award the contract in accordance with its best interest and will not be required to accept the lowest bid. The Blacksburg Partnership may, upon its discretion, establish a competitive range of qualified proposals for award consideration. The Blacksburg Partnership will not conduct discussions or negotiations with firms not within the competitive range and those firms will not be considered for award.

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Technical Approach and Methodology:** The proposal is complete and demonstrates strong technical capability and a sound understanding of The Blacksburg Partnership' mission. The proposal sets out a logical approach/methodology to conducting a strategic planning process that is consistent with the proposed scope of work.

- **Expertise and Experience:** The firm demonstrates a background in strategic planning, effectively engaging stakeholders, and employing planning techniques that meet the needs of the organization’s culture and mission. The firm demonstrates a proven track record in facilitating strategic planning processes with mission-driven organizations of similar size.
- **Past Performance:** The firm has recent successful past performance that is relevant to the proposed project in terms of scope and complexity.
- **Price**

Summary of Key Dates

Request for Proposal Posted	February 7, 2019
Questions submitted	February 14, 2019
Questions and answers posted to Blacksburg Partnership website	February 20, 2019
RFP Responses Due	February 28, 2019