

Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership, Inc. (DWSP)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

EVENT MANAGEMENT FOR

5th Annual Salute! North Carolina Wine Celebration

Contact Information:

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Section 1. PURPOSE AND INVITATION TO PROPOSE

The Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership (DWSP), a 501 (C) 6 non-profit downtown development and advocacy organization, is requesting proposals from professional firms and independent contractors to manage, promote and secure corporate sponsorship(s) for the 5th Annual Salute North Carolina Wine Celebration. The contract period would be for a one-year period, renewable for an additional three (3) year period by mutual agreement. The primary purpose of this RFP is to select a qualified firm with which the DWSP can contract to provide comprehensive Festival Management for the Salute North Carolina Wine Celebration to be held on May 8, 2010.

This invitation to propose is extended to all qualified firms.

Section 2. BACKGROUND AND GOALS

The DWSP founded and began producing the Salute North Carolina Wine Celebration in 2006 and the one-day event has grown in scope and attendance each year since. It was selected as a "Top 20 Events in the Southeast" in 2008, and has received significant national and regional media attention. The event has established corporate and media sponsor relationships, and the DWSP has built a strong network of supportive community partners. The one-day event has been managed by DWSP staff with assistance from a volunteer Event Management Team.

The main goals of Salute are:

- To promote downtown Winston-Salem as a weekend entertainment destination for out of town visitors
- To increase business for downtown hotels, restaurants, galleries, shops and entertainment venues
- To generate revenue for DWSP programs

The most recent annual Salute Wine Celebration was held in downtown Winston-Salem along Fourth Street on May 9, 2009 from 12 noon until 6 pm. The event was attended by 7,500 attendees, had 180 volunteers, and 32 participating North Carolina wineries. Ticket prices were \$20.00 in advance and \$25.00 the day of the event. The festival features sample tastings at participating North Carolina wineries where ticketholders can meet and talk with the Winemakers and their staff. Attendees may also purchase wines from the wineries at special festival prices. Programming also includes the popular "North Carolina Wine University," a fun and educational presentation area that aims to "de-mystify" the wine and food pairing process for attendees. There are various entertainers and numerous specialty food vendors throughout the festival footprint, including a large music production with two bands playing during the event, and the Salute "After Party" from 6pm-10pm. Ancillary events include collaborations between local downtown restaurants and participating wineries, resulting in well-attended Winemaker Dinners and overnight bookings at downtown hotels.

Section 3: SCOPE OF SERVICES

The successful candidate will possess a proven track record and demonstrated abilities in marketing, promoting, developing, coordinating and managing public events of similar scope and magnitude.

The selected entity must demonstrate their event management experience, and their capabilities to dedicate the time and talent needed to produce the festival and perform the following functions:

- Secure local, regional and national corporate sponsorships
- Solicit in-kind contributions and pursue partnership agreements for services
- Establish production and marketing timetables for coordinating all pre-event and day-of event logistics
- Establish communication framework for timely reports and updates with DWSP Staff and Board
- Book and manage musical entertainment and sound production company
- Develop, manage and execute marketing plan and promotion campaign to ensure maximum exposure for the event

- Coordinate and oversee all logistics related to producing the event, including equipment rentals, winery relations, NC Wine University, on-site food vending and merchandise vending, and any ancillary events prior to main event
- Collaborate with the DWSP and Salute Event Management Team to accomplish the following functions:
 - Logistics planning/implementation
 - Sponsorship retention
 - In-kind media relationships
 - Interface with City of Winston-Salem departments and service providers
 - Day-of event set up and protocols
 - Volunteer recruitment program
 - Monthly/weekly festival planning meetings

Section 4. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTAL

One original and five (5) unbound copies are requested with each proposal addressing the following:

- A. Description of firm, including locations of offices, persons responsible for contracting services, and location where work will be performed.
- B. Statement of understanding of the services requested, including a narrative and work plan outlining an approach for addressing the requirements of the RFP.
- C. Statement providing the firm's qualifications as they relate to the scope of services, and resumes of key staff.
- D. Description of prior experience in delivering the type, scope, and magnitude of services solicited under this RFP.
- E. List of at least three (3) professional references that are familiar with your firm's ability to provide the required services. Include contact names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- F. Additional information that the firm deems appropriate to assist in evaluating the proposal submitted.

Section 5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Responses to this Request will be evaluated on:

- A. Experience with producing events of similar scope
- B. Experience with running effective sponsorship campaigns
- C. Demonstrated communication skills and capabilities to develop strong relationships with the North Carolina wine industry, businesses within downtown Winston-Salem, and stakeholders within the Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership, Inc.
- D. Strength of references

Section 6. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

All proposals must be received by the DWSP no later than **5:00 p.m., Friday, August 14, 2009** in order to be considered.

An electronic presentation sent via e-mail is acceptable to the e-mail address below or a hard copy can be sent to the address below.

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Section 7. ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

The DWSP reserves the right to reject any and all proposals when such rejection is in the best interest of the DWSP or the proposal contains major irregularities. Minor irregularities of the proposal may be waived by the DWSP. The DWSP also reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time and/or to solicit and re-advertise for other proposals. The cost of preparing any responses to the RFP shall be borne by the respondents and shall not be reimbursed by the DWSP.