

# Request for Proposals

For the delivery, oversight, and operations of a new experiential retail storefront

**Issued:**

March 16, 2018

**Informational Meeting:**

March 29, 2018

**Responses Due:**

April 6, 2018



## **OVERVIEW**

The Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is seeking proposals from qualified individuals, businesses, or teams for the delivery, oversight, and operations of a new experiential retail storefront in Downtown Pittsburgh.

## **BACKGROUND**

In an effort to enhance Downtown Pittsburgh's retail offerings, the PDP will leverage regional producers, including craft businesses, maker enterprises, entrepreneurial artists, and design-build shops supported by Bridgeway Capital's Craft Business Accelerator (CBA), to curate an experiential storefront in Mellon Square on Smithfield Street. Downtown has been identified as a primary regional market in the CBA network and a storefront in Mellon Square will serve as a pilot for accelerating Pittsburgh area producers in a brick and mortar environment.

This highly curated and inclusive sales floor will act as an aggregator of products from producers in the CBA network who are poised to scale nationally. The storefront will be experiential in that visitors – be they residents, workers, developers, visitors, or other producers – can see and familiarize themselves with the production story and making techniques behind each producer and item for sale. Select producers will be invited to work in the space and programming will be established to educate the public about the CBA and participating producers. The store will operate under a single brand, footprint, and sales system.

The PDP is in search of an individual, team, or business (Operator) to establish this retail model and manage operations. The Operator's scope and general responsibilities may involve several different roles, including sourcing merchandise from the CBA producer network, creating new collaborative programming to complement sales activities, managing needs of physical space and its use, and outreach to constituencies and organizations to connect them with the space.

## **OPERATOR SCOPE & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Ideally, responsibilities of the Operator will include but not be limited to the following:

- Assist with creation and implementation of the retail establishment, including but not limited to operational planning and store buildout.
- Procure and integrate POS for business operations and develop bookkeeping practices in coordination with PDP staff.
- Cultivate relationships with CBA network of producers to merchandize retail environment.
- Coordinate producer participation in programming, networking events, and experiences that increase engagement of customers with CBA network and making process.
- Develop and implement consistent store brand with PDP and CBA partners.
- Manage relationships with CBA producers and establish consignment agreements for merchandise.
- Develop store standards such as marketing, visuals, cleanliness, signage, and safety with PDP staff and partners.
- Recruit, train, and manage qualified store staff to ensure proper sales coverage and profound knowledge of producers and CBA network.
- Develop marketing/advertising plan with budget and reach, including active social media and online presence.
- Cultivate relationships with existing and new partners identified as beneficial to the mission.
- Be responsible for all business and store maintenance, cleaning, and operations.

Interested applicants should have demonstrated expertise with product or service sales and merchandizing and the ability to adapt a retail environment based customer needs and sales trends. While the PDP will provide oversight, the selected Operator must be capable of working independently, entrepreneurially, and enjoy creating and implementing new initiatives. The business and storefront should be opened and operating by June 1, 2018.

## **FEE STRUCTURE**

The PDP is open to fee structures. Applicants may propose a flat fee for service, revenue sharing based on consignment of products, or a combination of these or other scenarios, including compensation for business planning and start-up. As the PDP is open to various models, we ask that applicants also be open to other ideas.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

A complete proposal will include:

1. Cover Letter
  - a. Name and contact information of principal applicant and all members of team, as applicable
2. Project Experience and Narrative
  - a. Description of applicant experience and qualifications related to Operator Responsibilities
  - b. Why applicant is interested in this opportunity
  - c. Unique skills, qualifications and/or relationships that will assist in successful operation
3. Proposed fee structure
4. References

Any individuals or groups submitting a proposal are encouraged to attend an informational meeting on Thursday, March 29 at 5:00 p.m. at the PDP's offices at 925 Liberty Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor. This meeting will include a tour of the retail space.

Please register your attendance for the informational session [HERE](#).

## **QUESTIONS**

Any questions regarding this RFP must be sent to [retail@DowntownPittsburgh.com](mailto:retail@DowntownPittsburgh.com), subject: RFP Questions, by end of business on Tuesday, March 27. All questions received will be presented along with answers at the informational meeting on Thursday, March 29.

## **SUBMISSION**

All submissions are due by email no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 6, 2018 to:

[retail@DowntownPittsburgh.com](mailto:retail@DowntownPittsburgh.com)

Subject: RFP Submission by [applicant name]

Late submissions will not be accepted.

This process is likely to result in a request for additional information from applicants, including individual meetings, and will be a collaborative process between you and the PDP. PDP reserves the right to consider alternatives and to reject any or all proposals.