**Request for Proposals (RFP)**

**Library Coffee Shop or Café - Missoula Public Library (MPL)**

**Introduction**

The Missoula Public Library Board of Trustees (the “library”) seeks proposals for the operation of a coffee shop or café in the new library at 455 E Main St, Missoula, MT, 59802.

Missoula Public Library’s 455 E. Main Street facility was designed by Minneapolis-based MSR Design in association with the Missoula office of A&E Design. The $38M project was funded with a $30M construction bond, passed by voters in 2016; and $8M in private and corporate donations and partner contributions. Dick Anderson Construction broke ground in 2018, and the library opened in May of 2021.

Known internationally for its innovative approach to promoting collaboration, engagement, and accessibility with a building that highlights our unique landscape and Missoula’s cultural heritage. The facility also houses Families First Learning Lab, MCAT, spectrUM Discovery Area, and the UM Living Lab, a partnership based on the Scandinavian kulturhuset concept of integrated community services and lifelong learning. In 2022, Missoula Public Library was named “best new library of the year” by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)/Systematic.

There are 30,000-35,000 visitors to the library each month, including tourists and individuals and groups that host events in the library’s meeting rooms. The library has 66 two-hour free parking spaces available.

# Submission

Proposers must submit a digital copy of the proposal to:

Slaven Lee

Executive Director

[Slavenl@missoulapubliclibrary.org](mailto:Slavenl@missoulapubliclibrary.org)

Proposals are due by 5:00pm, Monday, December 11, 2023.

The proposals will be reviewed by a selection committee comprised of library staff and members of the Library Board of Trustees or their designees. After reviewing the proposals, the selection committee will forward a recommendation to the Trustees, who will either approve or deny the recommendation.

# RFP Timeline

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| Activity | Date(s) |
| RFP Issued | Wednesday, November 1, 2023 |
| Pre-Proposal Conference | Thursday, November 10, 2023 |
| Vendor questions due to Library | Monday, November 20, 2023 |
| Answers to questions distributed to vendors | Tuesday, November 28, 2023 |
| Proposals due | Monday, December 11, 2023 |
| Proposals reviewed and finalist selected | TBD |
| Finalist interviews conducted, if needed | TBD |
| Contract negotiation with Library Director and Board President | TBD |

*This represents the optimal proposal and review schedule. The library reserves the right to deviate from the schedule as circumstances warrant.*

# Pre-Proposal Conference

A mandatory pre-proposal meeting of interested contractors will be held online to address questions about the RFP, but also, any other questions that arise.

# Proposer Questions

Any questions or requests for further clarification or interpretation of the RFP must be addressed in writing to Slaven Lee, Library Director, slavenl@missoulapubliclibrary.org on or before 5:00pm, Monday, November 20, 2023. For purposes of this RFP, “in writing” consists of communication via email. Questions must include:

* Company name and address
* Contact information, including name and telephone number
* Clear reference to section, page and item in question

The library will provide answers by 5:00 pm, Tuesday, November 28, 2023 to all contractors who attended the pre-proposal conference.

# Project Background

The new Missoula Public Library is a vibrant community-gathering place. People visiting libraries today expect not only the latest in technology, information, instruction, and materials, but also a place to read, relax, refresh, and take refuge from the world outside.

The mission of the coffee shop or café is to provide reasonably priced, high-quality food and beverages to the broad base of the library patrons. The facility is also a convenience to library visitors, some of whom may spend hours using the library’s materials and services. The food and beverages offered in the facility should complement the welcoming, multi-faceted environment that encourages spending time at the library and participating in the programs of its partners.

The library wants a stable relationship with a contractor who seeks to be part of this community fabric.

# Library Hours of Operation

# The library operates according to the following schedule:

Monday - Wednesday 8:00am - 8:00pm Thursday - Saturday 8:00am - 6:00pm Sunday 1:00pm - 5:00pm

Closed on all legal holidays and other days as approved by the Board of Trustees.

# Location

The coffee shop or café will be located in the NW section of the first floor of the library and will occupy approximately 525 sq. ft.

# Type of Services

General. The selected vendor shall operate a coffee shop or café under a lease with the Missoula Public Library Board of Trustees. Cooking will be allowed on site in accordance with local health regulations.

Type of Service. The MPL prefers the following:

1. A high quality variety of hot and cold beverages such as coffee, tea, smoothies and other drinks.
2. High quality prepared food items such as pastries, fruit, sandwiches, soup, and other coffee shop fare. Items that require heating in a microwave, on a stove, in crockpot, or in another cooking device are allowable.
3. Food and beverages in covered containers allowed throughout the library except in areas with technology equipment.
4. Hours of operation to be established by the vendor and Library Director. MPL prefers that the coffee shop be open during the majority of library operating hours. The coffee shop may be open during private rentals of the public meeting rooms.
5. A coffee shop or café with excellent customer service. Employees should be competent, courteous, and professional.
6. A commitment to offering one to three items under $5, including a drip coffee option.
7. Design and aesthetic that complements the design of the new library.

# Scope of Services

The actual terms of the contract for operation of the coffee shop or café will be negotiated between the Library and the vendor whose proposal is selected. The provisions that follow will be incorporated into any contract. The basic services desired consist of operating a coffee shop or café located on the first floor of the new public library. Specific hours of operation are negotiable to accommodate the needs of the Library and financial feasibility for the contractor.

1. The Library will provide counter spaces and any built-ins. The successful contractor will be expected to provide all necessary equipment and supplies. There is an option to purchase equipment from previous contractor.
2. The contractor agrees to indemnify and defend any and all claims arising out of the contractor’s activity within the library, have knowledge of and comply with all health regulations, and obtain any permits and/or licenses necessary for operation. The contract will also contain a provision that the library is not responsible for damage, loss, or theft of property belonging to the contractor.
3. The minimum contract term will be for a period of three years with an option to renew annually for an additional 3 years. The renewal option will be based on satisfactory performance and the agreement of both parties to continue the relationship.
4. The contractor must maintain general liability coverage in the amount of $1,000,000 per occurrence and $2,000,000 in the aggregate with MPL named as an additional insured. Proof of worker’s compensation insurance will be required for the contractor’s employees.
5. The contractor will be responsible for cleaning the 525 sq. ft. of space and maintaining the area in a neat, clean, well-maintained condition, which will include regular busing and immediately attending to any spills or messes. The Library will provide regular custodial services and pay for utilities.
6. The contractor will be responsible for deliveries. The library will not accept or assume responsibility for any inventory of food, beverages, or supplies delivered to the library receiving area.
7. The contractor will provide at its own expense adequate trash receptacles and ensure that they do not become overfilled during public hours. Contractor boxes, cartons, barrels, or similar items must be stored out of the public eye.

# Proposal Contents

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP should be organized according to the headings below. Responses must include the following sections and should be limited to no more than eight pages.

1. Letter of interest - Provide a letter of interest to serve as an introduction to your RFP response. It should contain the name of your company and the name, address, telephone number, email address, and signature of the person authorized to represent your organization.
2. Describe your experience and background in providing a coffee and food service. If you have experience providing a coffee shop type service within an established business or institution, provide references, including contact information for the organization.
3. Provide a concept for operation of the coffee shop, including:
   1. List of proposed menu items with prices;
   2. Hours of operation;
   3. Staffing (levels, competencies)
4. What standards do you have for ensuring a high-quality operation? Address such considerations as quality and freshness standards for coffee, pastries, sandwiches, and other food products.
5. What ideas (promotions, advertising, publicity, special events) do you have for the library coffee shop that would distinguish it from other like kind operations in the vicinity?
6. Describe how you see the relationship between you and the library as being mutually beneficial.
7. Describe your experience welcoming all members of the public into your business.
8. Describe how your financial resources will allow you to undertake this project. Include at least three business/supplier/financial references with contact information.
9. Rental fee proposal. Please submit a rent proposal based on market rate, your budget, and vision for collaborating with the award-winning Missoula Public Library.

# Selection Criteria

The criteria to be used in evaluating the proposals are:

1. Experience and background in providing a coffee and food service, and experience of proposed site manager.
2. Concept for operation of the coffee shop.
3. Standards for ensuring a high quality operation.
4. Ideas for promoting and marketing.
5. Management philosophy and plan for staffing with high quality employees.
6. Vision for a mutually beneficial relationship between contractor and library.
7. Evaluation of other contractor locations, if any.
8. Description of contractor financial resources and feedback from references.
9. Rental fee proposal.

# Evaluation Process

After the proposals are received, the selection committee will review them for responsiveness to the requirements of the RFP (as defined in Standard RFP Information). Those deemed responsive will be evaluated according to the selection criteria stated above. The committee will then meet to assure that fair, impartial, and comprehensive evaluations have been made. The selection committee may recommend contract award without further involvement of the successful proposer or may interview finalist vendors. If interviews are conducted, the finalists will be reevaluated afterwards, and a recommendation will then be forwarded to the full Board of Trustees.

# Standard RFP Information

Classification of Proposals as Responsive or Non-responsive

All proposals submitted will be classified as either “responsive” or “non-responsive”. A proposal is considered “responsive” if it conforms in all materials respects to the requirements of the RFP. A proposal may be found non-responsive if:

* + Required information is not provided;
  + The proposal does not conform to the specifications described and required in the RFP. If a proposal is found to be non-responsive, it will receive no further consideration.

Determination of Responsibility

The library and/or the selection committee will make a determination whether the proposer has met the standards of responsibility based on the requirements of the RFP. Factors used to determine responsibility may include whether the proposer has:

* + The appropriate financial, material, equipment, or human resources to meet all contractual requirements;
  + A satisfactory record of integrity;
  + The legal ability to contract with the County;
  + Provided all information requested for use in the determination of responsibility;
  + A satisfactory record of past performance.

A proposer may be deemed “non-responsible” at any time during the evaluation process if information surfaces to support such a determination.

Library’s Right to Investigate and Reject

The library may make such investigations as are deemed necessary to determine the ability of the proposer to provide the services specified. The library reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence obtained fails to satisfy the library that the proposer is qualified to perform the obligations of the contract. This includes the library’s ability to reject a proposal based on negative references.

Selection and Contract Execution

After an evaluation of the proposals and the conclusion of any related investigations, the selection committee will recommend a contract award. If the successful proposer and the library are unable to successfully negotiate a contract, the library may move to the next ranked proposer or cancel the RFP. The work described in the RFP may begin only after the contract is signed by all parties.

Assignment

Neither the resultant contract nor any of the requirements, rights, or privileges contained therein may be sold, assigned, contracted, or transferred by the contractor without the express written consent of the library.

Recycling & Compostable Products

Proposers shall use recyclable and compostable products to the maximum extent economically feasible in the performance of the contract resulting from this RFP.

Library’s Rights Reserved

This RFP in no way constitutes a commitment to award and execute a contract. If such actions are deemed in its best interest, the library, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to:

* + Cancel or terminate this RFP;
  + Reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP;
  + Waive any undesirable, inconsequential, or inconsistent provisions of this RFP that would not have a significant impact on a proposal;
  + Not award a contract, if it is in the library’s best interest not to proceed with contract execution.

Preparation and Other Costs

The proposer is solely responsible for all costs incurred prior to contract execution.