



Request for Proposals

Community Thrift Store Feasibility Study

Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon, on behalf of the Community Thrift Store Steering Committee (see Appendix 1) is seeking a qualified partner who will work with us to open a Community Thrift Store in Whitehorse. Since the Salvation Army, Raven Recycling and the City of Whitehorse have closed their thrift store and free store, we believe that a group of NGOs could work together to open a Community Thrift Store in Whitehorse.

Collectively, the steering committee has identified the following social goals which influence and inform the design and operational model for the enterprise:

- waste reduction / diversion and environmental conservation
- to provide a retail space offering household and personal items at low cost for lower income families, hobbyists etc
- work experience and skills development for people with employment barriers
- revenue generation / fundraising for Yukon NGOs

About the Community Thrift Store Steering Committee

Initially, the existing steering committee has invited broad participation in the discussion meetings. We see great value in including both individual and organizational perspectives on the many functions and overarching values that might be contained within the social enterprise concept.

Vision of the community thrift store: To create a self-sustaining social enterprise to re-purpose donated products / goods for the benefit of the community.

Mandate of the Steering Committee: Non-profits driving a vision of community thrift store in Whitehorse.

Structure of the committee: Initially loose community group where everyone is welcome and all organizations are currently equal in voice. When it turns into something more solid we need to reconsider membership (i.e. purposely having board members representative of First Nations, youth, elders, etc. perspectives).

About Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon who applies on behalf of the Community Thrift Store Steering Committee

Our mission is to foster and promote volunteerism throughout the Yukon by providing access to resources, training, consultation, and support for individuals and organizations. It is our purpose to encourage and promote volunteerism in the Yukon by providing support and facilitation to these volunteer organizations and individuals.

Our key goals are:

- To educate about the need for and value of volunteerism;
- To provide resources, training, consultation and support that enables volunteer organizations and individuals;
- To inspire Yukoners to volunteer their knowledge and skills to the community;
- To recognize volunteers and contributions to their community; to develop partnerships that will facilitate the advancement of volunteerism in the community
- To connect volunteers and volunteer organizations Yukon wide.

As such, Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon is equally a:

- *Volunteer center* with the goal to offer volunteer support services to the voluntary and non-profit sector;
- *Training center* with the goal to offer training programs and resources to the voluntary and non-profit sector;

- *Communication & Networking center* with the goal to offer networking services to the voluntary and non-profit sector;
- *Resource center* with the goal to offer resource to the voluntary and non-profit sector;
- *Employment Centre*: Since May 2017, we help youth with barriers to find work with a non-profit organization.

Scope of work, deliverables, and roles

The steering committee seeks to hire a professional individual or company (the “consultant”) who will work with *Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon’s* executive director and with the steering committee. The first part of this work is a feasibility study.

Essential Components of the Feasibility Study (See Appendix 2 for more details)

- 1. Strategic Alignment:** Assess the fit of the business with our organization.
- 2. Market Opportunity:** Assess who may buy the product or service, and under what circumstances.
- 3. Operational Capabilities:** Assess what skills, resources and tools are needed to run this enterprise.
- 4. Financial Potential:** Assess the potential of the business idea to generate significant sales revenue, and achieve business break-even (we call this “100% business cost recovery”) after three years.
- 5. Social Feasibility:** Assess the potential for achieving the intended social goals.
- 6. Recommendations / Start-up Needs**

During the Contract: The consultant will need to meet with the steering committee at least three times

- Once the contract is signed, the consultant will need to meet with the steering committee for their input.

- Near the midpoint of the contract's term, the consultant will present a report of their progress, accomplishments, what remains to be done by May 2018, and any other relevant points.
- At the end of the contract, by May 2018, to present the feasibility study.

The feasibility study will feed into the business plan.

RFP evaluation criteria and process

Proposals will be evaluated based on the criteria listed below. Please ensure that the information you provide demonstrates sufficient evidence of your capabilities and experience in regards to these criteria.

- **Consultant information:** What is your legal operating name, mailing address, telephone number, website address and email address? How many years have you been in business and what are your main areas of expertise?
- **Client references:** What are the names of two projects, similar in scope to this one, that you have completed in the past five years? Please provide us with the client organization name, a contact person (name, telephone number and email address) and a suitable description of what you did.
- **Proposed approach:** Based on the scope of work, deliverables and role described above, please describe the methodology, work plan and timeline in order to ensure everything is finished, on time, and on budget.

We suggest all applicants use the information in Appendix 2

The hiring committee will review all submitted proposals and award this contract based upon the quality of each response. Any proposals and materials submitted will become the property of the Steering Committee.

Please submit two (2) printed copies of your proposal to the Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon office at **305 Wood Street** prior to **4:00 p.m. on January 10th, 2018**. Proposals sent by mail that arrive after this deadline date will not be opened.

The envelope containing your proposal shall be marked **RFP submission: Community Thrift Store Request for Proposal** and include your operating name and return mailing address.

Any questions regarding the contents of this RFP must be sent by email to info@volunteeryukon.ca before **4:00 p.m. on January 9th, 2018**. Answers to these questions will be sent via email to all proponents who have expressed an interest in this RFP.

The Steering Committee reserves the right to cancel or modify the selection process or reject any proposals that we deem unfit for the purposes of adequate evaluation. We are not liable for any costs related to the preparation or submission of proposals.

Finally, this project is subject to funding being secured.

Important RFP and project dates

- Any questions or clarifications regarding the contents of this RFP must be received by Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon before 4:00 p.m. **on January 9th, 2018**. Our answers to these questions will be sent via email to all proponents who have expressed an interest in this RFP.
- All RFP submissions must be received by Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon before 4:00 p.m. PST **on January 10th, 2018**.
- VBY expects that the awarding of this contract to the successful proponent will take place no later than **March 1st, 2018**. (Pending receipt of funding)
- In order to account for the preparation and acquisition of a signed contract, VBY anticipates that the successful proponent will need to start work on this project by **March 7th, 2018**.
- The feasibility Study will have to be done by May 11th, 2018.

Appendix 1: Steering committee members:

- Jamie Richardson, Boreal Animal Society
- Colette Acheson, Yukon Association for Community Living
- Annette Truitt-Avoledo, Humane Society Yukon
- Carol Oberg, Casey's Bed and Breakfast / Humane Society Yukon
- Bruno Bourdache, Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon
- Darby MacWilliam, Co-ordinator (Many Rivers)
- Karen Wienberg, Little Footprints Big Steps (child protection org)
- Susie Anne Bartsch, Clarity's Path Consulting
- Shonagh McCrindle, Yukon Association for Community Living + Ready Willing and Able

Appendix 2

Phase 2: Feasibility Study

1. Executive Summary

- Overview of the findings of the study.
- What is the proposed purpose of this entity, how is the proposed structure?
- What products and services will the organization provide?
- What gaps will this organization fill in the market place?

2. Market Potential and Strategy

- What market capacity exists?
- What kind of competition will the organization face?
- How will the organization distinguish itself in the market? How will it be different from competitors?
- What major risks exist in the market? Any mitigation strategies?
- What is the nature of the industry?
- What are the trends in the industry?

3. Operations (High Level)

- How could this organization work or be organized? (Non-profit / Society / Federally incorporated, etc.)
 - Management models
 - Board Structures
 - Taxes
- What are the best practices in Yukon and outside of Yukon
- Who are the organization's primary suppliers? What are the controls for quality / quantity?
- How will the company be day-to-day managed / operated?
- What guidance and support will be provided by the director / manager?
- What are the potential business locations?
- What would be an idea in planning / launching annual marketing, PR and community engagement campaigns?
- Describe how to support the staff by taking part in meetings with government and other community partners.
- Any other operational insights.

4. Financial Needs and Sources

- How much capital is estimated to be needed to get the organization started? What sources of capital will be used?
- What are the approximate costs of operating the organization?
- Will the organization's revenue justify and cover the costs, including debt services?
- What is an estimated 3 year projected revenue and expense model based on the feasibility study level assumptions?

- oversight of finance and general operations

5. Social Feasibility

Assess whether the enterprise is likely to succeed in making the social changes aimed for.

- Will NGOs generate revenues through the operation of the Community Thrift Store?
- How will the Community Thrift Store contribute to the environment?
- How will the Community Thrift Store help people in need/low income families?
- How will the Community Thrift Store help people with employment barriers?
- Assess whether the business will be able to accommodate the barriers faced by the target population.
- Calculate how many employees the business will need.
- Calculate how much the employees will earn. What will their benefits be?

6. Recommendations / Start-Up Needs

- What will it take to get the company started, in terms of lead time, available facilities, etc.?
- What risks need to be further explored and mitigated moving forward?
- What management skills will be needed?
- What facilities will be needed, costs, are they available?
- What should be the key roles and positions for each NGO that will participate in the Community Thrift Store?

It is expected that the feasibility study will explore a variety of configurations for a governing body that will be chosen to drive the next phase of development.