

## **Terms of Reference to study the Feasibility of Joint Fund Development for the M7 Sites**

### **Proposal Summary:**

To retain a consultant to examine the feasibility of joint fund development for the larger locally managed sites in the Nova Scotia “family of museums”, Known as the M7 sites.

### **Background**

The Nova Scotia Museum is the most decentralized Provincial Museum system in Canada with 27 sites spread throughout the Province. These sites not only vary in size and scope, but also in administrative structure. Some sites are operated directly by government employees, others are operated by local Societies that serve as local management groups operating the museum on behalf of the Province.

The local management structure has been an effective arrangement not only for the sites, but also for the Nova Scotia Museum. The structure encourages and facilitates increased community input and ownership, which is key to the survival of the museums. In addition, not being a direct part of government, many of the sites are able to operate in a more cost effective manner. As a result of the success with the local management structure, the Nova Scotia Museum has begun to seek local management groups for some of its directly managed sites.

A number of years ago the larger locally managed sites began to meet on a regular basis to discuss issues that were affecting all of them. There are now 7 of these museums which meet regularly and are known as the M7. The M7 consists of the Firefighters Museum in Yarmouth, the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic in Lunenburg, Fundy Geological Museum in Parrsboro, Highland Village Museum/An Clachan Gàidhealach in Iona, Ross Farm Museum in New Ross, Sherbrooke Village in Sherbrooke, and Le Village Historique Acadien de la Nouvelle-Écosse in Pubinco

It is also important to note that all of the locally managed sites are located in rural communities (i.e. outside the metro Halifax). The impact that these museums have in their area, especially in the case of the M7 sites, is significant. Many of these sites drive their local economies not only as a generator of tourism but also in some cases as the largest employer in the community.

There are, however, issues that are beginning to hamper the operation of these sites. These issues have direct ramifications on the museums’ ability to operate and meet some of their core responsibilities including stewardship of cultural heritage assets, public service & education, and strategic planning. In fact some sites are facing serious cash and operational deficits.

## **Description:**

Professional expertise is required to assist the M7 in determining the appropriate fund development entity/ plan for sustaining operations within a non-profit museum environment.

The M7 proposes to engage a consultant(s) and/or firm to investigate the feasibility of joint fund development. The consultant will provide consultation, process design, facilitation and report writing services in support of exploring the feasibility of a collaborative fund development program for the M7 sites, with the ultimate goal of developing a working model that can be shared with other museums. This is of particular importance, at this point in time, as additional revenue streams are needed in these times of government fiscal restraint. The consultant will report to the M7 Directors/Managers, who will act as the Steering Committee for the project. They will be required to attend a start-up meeting and facilitate a workshop to analyze the various options researched by the consultants.

The consultant will investigate similar collaborative efforts across Canada; investigations will include, but not be limited to, exploring the feasibility of “Friends of Museums” philanthropists donating to a trust fund that would be administered by the M7 to fund operational costs. This fund would be for operating costs - especially salaries, professional and program development. This would not be for specific programs but to develop capacity to create a planning culture within Museums. Currently, there is little time or funds to break the cycle of crisis management.

## **Project scope:**

- research fund development and governance models which would be possible options for the Museums
  - research should include analysis of models, structure and accountability frameworks established in other jurisdictions to manage similar entities
  - prepare a document outlining the fund development/governance models
  - provide analysis of the pros and cons of each model
  - review background materials
  - meet with M7 as the Steering Committee to confirm desired outcomes
  - design process agenda to support achievement of outcomes for workshop
  - liaison with Steering Committee to finalize process design
  - determine information needs for participants in workshop
  - design in-session templates for collection of data to inform final report
  - prepare session feedback sheet
- Facilitation – (Scheduled to accommodate Board members and Stakeholders interests and needs)***
- serve as process guide for workshop - Format may include dialogue, small group work, graphic facilitation, interactive exercises
  - model collaborative practices
  - clarify roles/expectations of participants/facilitator
  - Research - to follow up on ideas from the sessions

- Report Writing
- prepare a report on the feasibility of joint fund development initiatives for the M7 group of Museums. This report would be available to the Boards of the said institutions. The model developed or suggested would be shared with other like institutions.

**Outcomes:**

- reaffirmation/adjustment of fund development feasibility
- shared understanding of the current context – internal and external to inform priority setting
- shared understanding of core areas/priorities for key fund development
- alignment of current initiatives and commitments
- increased understanding of roles and expectations
- commencement of dialogue on future trends and projections, new ways of doing business and potential impact of changes
- identification of next steps

**Critical Timelines:**

Activity	Scheduled Date
Request for proposals Issued	Jan 6, 2012
Proposal Submission Deadline	Jan. 23, 2012
Project end date - final report due	Mar. 15, 2012

**Project Budget:** not to exceed \$15,000.00 Including taxes and expenses

**Evaluation:**

The consultants will provide:

- final documentation that will result in a “move forward” action plan, with a professional presentation to take to stakeholders and a clear communication plan for internal and external partners
- that Board and Staff of the M7 will know if joint fund development is feasible and will have a model fund development plan that will be doable within the resources of the institutions and has buy-in from all parties

**Attachments:**

Evaluation Criteria