

Request for Proposal (RFP) for a Financial Advisor



RFP Coordinator:
Audrey Castleberry
General Resources Department
Snoqualmie Indian Tribe

Introduction

The Snoqualmie Tribe—sduk^walbix^w in our Native language—consists of a group of Coast Salish Native American peoples from the Puget Sound region of Washington State.

We have been in the Puget Sound region and the Snoqualmie Valley since time immemorial. sq^wed (Snoqualmie Falls) is the birthplace of the sduk^walbix^w. We had more than 90 long houses along the Snoqualmie River and its tributaries. These rivers and streams were the highways used to travel from village to village and connected all the ?acit^walbix^w (Natives). The fish, game, trees and roots provided us with everything we need to live. All of this was given to us by duk^wibeł (Transformer) in the ancient times when all of the animals could talk and before things were what they are now.

We are the sduk^walbix^w, People of Moon. We are the decedents of sduk^walb tə duk^wibeł. We have lived, hunted and fished this area for as long as the earth and rivers remember. We are still here today; caring for the land, water, fish and game that duk^wibeł gave us.

sq^wed is our birthplace. The mists carry our thoughts and prayers to the spirits and ancestors as they cleanse our thoughts. The rushing waters give us the strength to keep our traditions alive and to continue to thrive in the modern times.

Long before the early explorers came to the Pacific Northwest, our people hunted deer and elk, fished for salmon, and gathered berries and wild plants for food and medicine. Today, many of our members live in the communities of Snoqualmie, North Bend, Fall City, Carnation, Issaquah, Mercer Island and Monroe.

Our Tribe was a signatory of the Point Elliott Treaty with the Washington territory in 1855. At that time, our people were one of the largest tribes in the Puget Sound region totaling around 4,000. We lost federal recognition in 1953, but after much battle, we regained federal recognition in October of 1999 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Today, the Snoqualmie Tribe is made up of approximately 650 members. The Snoqualmie Tribe is governed by an elected Council and our Tribal Constitution.

The Tribe owns the Snoqualmie Casino, which opened in November 2008, and since its inception has experienced considerable success. The Tribe also owns the Crescent Market, which opened in 2011. Both businesses are an important source of revenue and employment for the Tribe. In 2019, the Snoqualmie Tribe also acquired the Salish Lodge, the iconic hotel adjacent to sacred Snoqualmie Falls, and Eighth Generation, the first Native-owned business to produce wool blankets.

Scope of Services

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit statements of qualifications and proposals from qualified financial advisors interested in providing the Tribe's members with financial counseling services related to the use of its income tax-free general welfare benefits program, HUD rent and utilities vouchers, and retirement planning.

The successful proposer will, in accordance with the highest professional standards, provide at the direction of designated Tribal officials and staff, the following services:

- Meet with and counsel Tribal Members who are first-time home buyers before those individuals proceed with the Tribe's down payment assistance program;
- Meet with and counsel recipients of HUD rent and utilities vouchers to ensure that the recipients have a financial plan following exhaustion of the HUD voucher;
- Meet with and counsel Tribal members who have been identified as misusing General Welfare Consolidated program benefits to ensure that the Tribal Members are properly allocating their benefit needs to their daily expenses to avoid future problems; and
- Meet with and counsel Tribal Elders seeking assistance in retirement planning.

The successful proposer shall have a demonstrated knowledge and expertise to serve the unique needs of the Tribe.

All correspondence shall be directed through Audrey Castleberry, General Resources Manager.

To be eligible to respond to this RFP, the proposer(s) must demonstrate that they, or the principals assigned, can successfully perform the services in the Scope of Services section of this RFP.

The Firm or individual shall provide the Tribe with a current written listing of all its clients. The list must be kept current at all times. The Firm shall notify the Tribe of any new client(s) within ten days of such commitment(s).

Qualification of Experience

The ideal firm or individual will have:

- Ten (10) years minimum experience of providing financial advising services;
- A professional designation as a CFP, or certified financial professional;
- Demonstrated experience with tribal general welfare benefit programs enacted pursuant to the General Welfare Exclusion Act;
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of HUD rent and utilities vouchers; and
- Demonstrated experience providing retirement planning financial advising services.

Fees

The Tribe prefers the proposer(s) offer their fee as a firm, fixed fee schedule which includes all expenses including travel for the services outlined in this RFP. Please include a cost statement showing proposed fees to perform the audits. This information should include a table identifying each level of staff hours planned for the audit at the proposed rates and an itemized listing of all other expenses or fees proposed, including travel.

Conflict of Interest

In the event the Firm becomes aware of any conflicts or potential conflicts between the interest of the Snoqualmie Tribe and the interests of clients of the Firm, the Firm shall immediately notify the Audrey Castleberry or designee, in writing, of such conflict. Written notice may be in the form of an email notification. In the event the Tribe becomes aware of any conflicts or potential conflicts between the interest of the Tribe and the interest of clients of the Firm, the Tribe shall promptly notify the Firm of such conflict. The Tribe and the Firm shall attempt to resolve any such conflict in a manner mutually acceptable to the Tribe and the Firm.

Proposals

Proposals shall include the following:

1. Cover Letter

The cover letter must contain a statement that the Firm acknowledges all documents submitted pursuant to this request for qualifications process and project proposal will become a matter of public record. The Firm shall certify that all basic services will be provided by a financial advisor. The letter must also contain the following:

- The firm's legal name, address, e-mail, telephone, and facsimile number. Indicate home office and local offices and identify specific location where work will be prepared.
- Number of years the firm has been in business.
- A statement that the submission is a firm and irrevocable offer, good for 60 days.
- A statement expressing the firm's willingness to perform the services as described in this RFP.
- A statement expressing the firm's availability of staff and other required resources to perform all services and provide all deliverables as described in the RFP.
- The name, title or position, and telephone number of the individual signing the cover letter.
- The name, title or position, and telephone number of the primary contact and/or account administrator, if different from the individual signing the cover letter.

2. Technical Approach

- Describe your firm's capabilities for performing the services requested.
- Provide information explaining the firm's experience.
- Describe how the firm would ensure strict confidentiality of client information.
- Describe how your firm would keep the Tribe informed of its work and any general issues identified during counseling sessions.

3. Relevant Experience

- Provide descriptions of recent projects your Firm has completed which are similar to those under this RFP.
- Provide at a minimum three (3) recent projects, with all projects being within the last ten (10) years.
- The format of this section is at the discretion of the respondent, however at a minimum response must contain items below:

- Name, location, and client;
- Services duration;
- Description of services provided;
- Responsibilities; and
- Contact information for client.

Other Information

1. Signed Proposals – all proposals must be signed by a person authorized to sign on behalf of the Respondent and to bind the Respondent to statements made in response to this RFP.
2. Irrevocability of Proposals – by submission of a clear and detailed written notice, the Respondent may amend or withdraw its proposal prior to the closing date and time. A Respondent who has withdrawn a proposal may submit a new proposal prior to the closing provided that such proposal is done in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP.
3. Changes to Proposal Wording – the Respondent will not change the wording of its proposal after closing, and no words or comments will be added to the proposal unless requested by the Tribe for purposes of clarification.
4. Acceptance of Terms – unless specifically excluded in writing, all the terms and conditions of this RFP are accepted by the Respondent and incorporated in its proposal.
5. Respondent’s Expenses – Respondents are solely responsible for their own expenses in preparing, and submitting, a proposal and for subsequent negotiations with the Tribe, if any. The Tribe will not be liable to any Respondent for any claims, whether for costs or damages incurred by the Respondent in preparing, and submitting, the proposal, loss of anticipated profit in connection with any final Contract, or any other matter whatsoever.
6. Currency and taxes – prices quoted are to be in U.S. dollars
7. Sub-Contracting –
 - a. Using a sub-contractor (who should be clearly identified in the proposal) is acceptable. This includes a joint submission by two Respondents having no formal corporate links. However, in this case, one of those Respondents must be prepared to take overall responsibility for the successful performance of the Contract and this should be clearly defined in the proposal.
 - b. Sub-contracting to any firm or individual whose current or past corporate or other interests may, in the Tribe’s opinion, give rise to a conflict of interest in connection with the Project will not be permitted. This includes but is not limited to, any organization or individual involved in the preparation of a response to this RFP.
 - c. Where applicable, the names of approved sub-contractors listed in this proposal will be included in the Contract. No additional subcontractors will be neither added, or other changes made, to this list in the Contract without the written consent of the Tribe.
8. Acceptance of Proposals – this RFP should not be construed as an agreement to procure goods or services by the Tribe. The Tribe is not bound to enter into a Contract with the Respondent who submits the lowest priced proposal or with any Respondent. Proposals

will be accessed in light of the evaluation criteria. The Tribe will be under no obligation to receive further information, whether written or oral, from any Respondent.

9. Form of Contract – by submission of a proposal, the Respondent agrees that, should it be identified as the Preferred consultant, it is willing to enter into a Contract with the Tribe, subject to successful negotiations by both parties, in writing.
10. Liability for Errors – while the Tribe has used considerable efforts to ensure an accurate representation of information in this RFP, the information contained herein is supplied solely as a guideline for Respondents. The information is not guaranteed or warranted to be accurate by the Tribe, nor is it necessarily comprehensive or exhaustive. Nothing in this RFP is intended to relieve Respondents from forming their own opinions and conclusions with respect to the matters addressed in this RFP.
11. Modification of Terms – the Tribe reserves the right to modify the terms of this RFP at any time in its sole discretion. This includes the right to cancel this RFP at any time prior to entering into a Contract with the Preferred Financial Advisor.
12. Ownership of Proposals – all documents, including proposals submitted by Respondents in response to this RFP become the property of the Tribe. They will be received and held in confidence to the extent allowable by law.
13. Use of Request for Proposal – this RFP, or any portion thereof, may not be used for any purpose other than the submission of proposals.
14. Confidentiality of Information – information pertaining to the Tribe obtained by the Respondent as a result of participation in this Project is confidential and must not be disclosed without written authorization from the Tribe.
15. Material Ownership – all materials submitted, included but not limited to proposals in response to this RFP and any and all information, documentation, and presentations provided by the Respondent to the Tribe on a go-forward basis, shall become the sole property of the Tribe.

Late responses will not be accepted.

At the conclusion of the RFP process, all Firms will be notified of the outcome.

Submission of Proposals

Please remit an electronic version of the consultant's proposal no later than 5PM Pacific Standard Time on **July 12, 2024** to:

Audrey Castleberry
General Resources Department
Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
PO Box 969 Snoqualmie WA 98065

Email: Audrey.Castleberry@SnoqualmieTribe.us

Audrey Castleberry will serve as the primary contact for the review process for the Firm's proposal. Any questions regarding this RFP should be addressed to Audrey Castleberry through email at the above address.