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Calgary, Alberta, Canada
calgaryartsdevelopment.com

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Chinook Blast 2025 – 2027

Producer

RFP Issue Date	February 26, 2024
RFP Closing	April 22, 2024 – 16:00 MST
RFP Process Facilitator	Patti Pon President & CEO, Calgary Arts Development Authority Ltd. Email: chinookblast@calgaryartsdevelopment.com

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1.0 RFP PROCESS

Calgary Arts Development on behalf of the Chinook Blast Executive Committee (The City of Calgary, Calgary Arts Development, Calgary Economic Development, and Tourism Calgary) of the Chinook Blast Festival (the “Festival” or “Chinook Blast”), will conduct this RFP with the objective of maximizing the benefit to Chinook Blast 2025 to 2027, inclusive, while offering Proponents a fair and equitable opportunity to participate.

By agreeing to participate in this RFP, your organization will regard and preserve as confidential, all information obtained from any source because of this RFP. Information contained herein, is for

proposal response purposes only and is not to be disclosed or used for any other purpose. Disclosure or distribution without the express written consent of Calgary Arts Development is strictly prohibited.

1.1 RFP Intention

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit responses for the provision of Producer services to the Chinook Blast Festival 2025 to 2027 inclusive, as detailed in Section 3.0 of this document.

1.2 Notification of Participation

Proponents are requested to notify Mary Quinlan, Project Manager, by email (chinookblast@calgaryartsdevelopment.com) of their intent to participate in the RFP.

Notification of participation must be received by 14:00 MST Wednesday, March 6, 2024.

1.3 Proponent Questions

Proponents may submit written questions regarding the RFP process or requirements by email to Mary Quinlan (chinookblast@calgaryartsdevelopment.com) by 16:00 MST on Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

All submitted questions will be answered and distributed to all participating Proponents in the RFP process by 16:00 MST Thursday, March 28, 2024 following an open dial in session on March 28, 2024 at 13:00 MST.

1.4 RFP Schedule and Key Dates

RFP ISSUE DATE	FEBRUARY 26, 2024
Notification of Participation	March 6, 2024 at 16:00 MST
RFP Proponent Questions Submission Date	March 12, 2024
RFP Open Dial In Q&A	March 28, 2024
RFP Questions Response Distributed	March 28, 2024
RFP Closing Date	April 22, 2024 at 16:00 MST
Short List Selection	April 29, 2024
Short Listed Proponent Presentations	May 6 – 10, 2024
Selection of Successful Proponent(s)	May 21, 2024

The above dates are subject to change at the sole discretion of Calgary Arts Development. The initial award in this agreement is for Chinook Blast 2025 only, pending final budgetary approvals and confirmations. Calgary Arts Development may elect by written notice, at the completion of the 2025 Festival, not to proceed with any or all of the subsequent Festivals earlier anticipated, if in its sole discretion Calgary Arts Development determined that election to be in the best interested of the Calgary Arts Development based on budgetary constraints, Proponent performance, a change in Council direction or lack of any required approval, or any other reason. Calgary Arts Development, at its sole discretion, may elect to proceed back to market for subsequent Chinook Blast Festivals with no obligations to the 2025 Festival Proponent.

1.5 Evaluation of Responses

Written Submissions

The written proposals will be evaluated based on completeness and suitability of the response for Chinook Blast using specific proposal evaluation criteria.

The evaluation will be made based on the information contained in the body of the proposal and the completed RFP components as outlined in section 4.0 Proposal Content Guidelines. Scoring for each section will be as follows:

SECTION	SCORE WEIGHT
5.1 – Proponent Profile	5%
5.2 – Account Management	20%
5.3 – Agency Capabilities	60%
5.4 – Pricing Model	15%

***For agencies submitting for both Producer and Marketing services, evaluation will be split 70/30 under 5.3**

For the successful Proponent, reference checks may be conducted using the contacts identified in the Proponent’s submission according to RFP requirements.

Presentations

Following the evaluation of proposals, a shortlist will be determined. One or more of the responding firms will be invited to make a presentation that will be revealed only to qualifying agencies. The presentation to the Evaluation team will take place physically in Calgary, Alberta (at no cost to Chinook Blast or Calgary Arts Development).

Calgary Arts Development, at its sole discretion, will determine the number and nature of the proponents invited to the presentation phase. Firms judged to deliver best value-for-service and serve the interests of Chinook Blast and its partners, will be invited to participate in this phase.

Proposal evaluation ratings will be confidential and will not be disclosed to parties external to the advisors retained for the purpose of evaluating or participating in the evaluation of this proposal. After the Successful Proponent has been identified, Proponents can obtain a verbal debriefing about their own proposal on request to the RFP Process Facilitator. Note however, that the ratings and evaluation of other Proponents will not be discussed.

1.6 Calgary Arts Development Discretion

Calgary Arts Development at its sole discretion may:

- a) Accept any proposal that represents the best overall value to Chinook Blast, irrespective of whether such proposal represents the lowest price;
- b) Amend, cancel, or reissue this RFP in whole or in part at any time for any reason, or postpone or forego the RFP altogether without any liability or penalty to the Executive Committee members including, but not limited to, Calgary Arts Development and Chinook Blast;
- c) Waive any non-material defect, irregularity, mistake, or insufficiency in the RFP;
- d) Obtain clarification on any aspect of a proposal, without being obliged to seek clarification on all other proposals; and
- e) Terminate negotiations with the selected Proponent if the terms and conditions of the Agreement cannot be finalized after a reasonable period.

Calgary Arts Development shall not compensate or be liable to any Proponent for any costs incurred by the Proponent in the preparation, submission or consideration of the Proponent's proposal or the negotiation of the agreement.

1.7 Additional Defined Terms

Calgary Economic Development or **CED** means the economic development agency within Calgary that works with business, government, and community partners to position Calgary as the location of choice for the purpose of attracting business investment, fostering trade, and growing Calgary's workforce. CED has membership within the Executive.

Calgary Arts Development Authority or **CADA** or **CAD** means the city's designated arts development authority which supports and strengthens the arts to benefit all Calgarians. CADA has membership within the Executive.

Chinook Blast or the **Festival** means Calgary's winter celebration that brings together partners from the arts, non-profit, neighbourhood, tourism, and sports communities to create an inclusive event that highlights the best of Calgary. The Festival footprint includes Stephen Avenue, Olympic Plaza (222 8 Avenue SE), the City of Calgary Municipal Building Atrium (800 Macleod Trail SE), and the Central Library (800 3 Street SE). Programming associated with the Festival can happen with Friends of Chinook Blast throughout the city. Everything the Chinook Blast production team programs is free

meaning patrons do not need to pay to access The Hub (Olympic Plaza) or public activations, however some affiliated events or activities may require a fee.

Civic Partner(s) means the organization(s) The City invests in to deliver effective programs and services in targeted areas, develop and advance strategies, and construct and manage assets. The City of Calgary's Civic Partners are defined under the Investing in Partnerships Policy (CP2017-01). Civic Partners can be Strategy Delivery Partners or Program and Service Delivery Partners.

Civic Partner – Strategy Delivery Partner(s) means independent organization(s) that have been created by The City, or with whom The City partners to deliver on a Council approved strategy or mandate through an operating grant or other form of Investment over \$500,000.

Civic Partner – Program and Service Delivery Partner(s) means independent organization(s) that partner with The City to deliver programs and services; operate major City-owned facilities; or steward land, artifacts or other assets, through the management or use of a Regional Recreation Centre, a nominal lease, or an operating or capital grant over \$500,000.

Contractor means the person(s) that operates and/or manages the Festival on behalf of the Executive.

Executive Committee or **Executive** means the compilation of city and non-city representatives who have a controlling interest in and are the decision-making authority for the strategic direction and implementation of **Chinook Blast**.

Event Planner means the person(s) responsible for taking care of the operational and logistical strategy for the overall details of an event.

Event Producer or **Producer** means the person(s) responsible for some or all the specific areas related to the execution and coordination of the overall programming and operations plan for each annual edition of Chinook Blast. Responsibilities will also include budget monitoring, partnership development, programme coordination, costing and identification of technology and production needs (i.e., audio, visual, stage design) of Chinook Blast specific programmes; with the goal of delivering memorable experiences. Production services are attained through a contract by the Executive.

Executive Sponsor means the senior member organizations comprising the Executive.

Festival Operator or **Operator** means the person(s) that regulates Chinook Blast through a controlling interest or the right to operate and/or manage the Festival.

Fiscal Agent means the financial entity that attends to the financial and administrative need of Chinook Blast on behalf of its Civic Partners.

Footprint Partner means an organization that provides spaces and places for Festival programming which may include activities or installations. Footprint Partners do not receive funding from Chinook Blast.

Founding Members means the four Civic Partners (The City, CADA, CED, and Tourism) who conceptualized, realized, and ensure the Festival's delivery. These four entities are the primary Founders of the Festival and steward its execution as they are integral to its stability and endurance. The Founding Members each have representation on the Executive and are the Executive Sponsors of the Festival.

Friends of Chinook Blast or FOCB means local artists and organizations who provide events or activities as part of the Festival. FOCB programming must be accessible and can include sports, recreation, arts, or culture. FOCBs receive the funding needed to support activation. FOCB must find their own venues and can program anywhere in the city.

In-kind Contributions means non-monetary donations of equivalent resources in support of the Festival. In-kind contributions may include volunteered time, goods, services, or venues provided in lieu of money.

Lead Executive Sponsor means the member of the Executive who by extension of providing the insurance, indemnification, and assumption of all liability holds ensures accountability and fiscal oversight of the Festival.

Partner means an independent organization that collaborates with the Festival to deliver positive results.

Partnership means the working relationship between the Executive and one or more Partners to deliver positive results for Calgarians. It is characterized by the investment of resources and mutually agreed upon results, responsibilities, and accountabilities.

Pillar Festival Partner or Pillar Partner means an existing event or festival occurring within or close to Chinook Blast, thus enabling mutually beneficial programming opportunities. Pillar Partners receive an investment in recognition of the significance and scale of their programming contribution to overall festival outcomes and strategic priorities.

Production Services means the provision of production coordination and onsite programming services related to Chinook Blast specific programming. In the past this has included site supervision at all Chinook Blast sites/hubs, stage and production management for all Chinook Blast programmes, volunteer coordination, confirmation of security services, etc.

Programming Partner means an organization that programs their own events or opportunities within the overarching Chinook Blast. Programming Partners are not assigned funds directly although there may be some consideration through granting programs.

Society means an independent legal entity, a corporate `person` that exists separate and apart from its members. Society members cannot be held personally responsible for the debts of the Society. Like non-profit companies, societies must direct any profits back into fulfilling the objectives of the organization.

Sponsor means the person(s) or entity providing financial or in-kind contributions, whose objective is specifically for marketing and communications.

Sponsorship means the financial and/or in kind contributions provided in exchange for the ability to capitalize upon marketing and communication opportunities associated with the Festival.

Tourism Calgary or Tourism is the official destination management organization for Calgary, the purpose of Tourism Calgary is to work closely with tourism industry and community partners to drive demand of local businesses, increasing the economic impact of the visitor economy in Calgary. Their mission is to inspire more people to visit Calgary for memorable experiences that celebrate our community, culture, and people. Tourism Calgary has membership within the Executive.

1.8 Disclosure of information

The Proponent hereby agrees that any information provided in this proposal, even if it is identified as being supplied in confidence, may be disclosed where required by law or if required by order of a court or tribunal. The Proponent hereby consents to the disclosure, on a confidential basis, of this proposal by Calgary Arts Development to its advisors retained for the purpose of evaluation or participating in the evaluation of this proposal.

1.9 Background Information

Since its inception in 2021 two firms have provided Producer and Production Services. Tooth Blackner (2021) and Bird Creatives (2022, 2023, 2024). Thanks to the direct programming of a variety of partners, Chinook Blast directs its budget towards amplifying partner programming taking place and complementing with experiences that connect the spaces in between. Past editions included expanding programming in Olympic Plaza, City Hall Atrium, Central Library and placing installations throughout the downtown. Specific annual Chinook Blast budgets have ranged from \$1.3M - \$1.7M over the 4 festivals depending on available resources and programming needs in any given year.

2.0 CHINOOK BLAST OVERVIEW

2.1 About Chinook Blast

MANDATE

Chinook Blast is Calgary's signature winter celebration that brings together partners from the arts, nonprofit, neighbourhood, tourism, and sports communities to create an inclusive event that

showcases the best of our city. Our vision is to build a uniquely Calgary winter experience that draws visitors from all corners of Calgary and all around the world.

VISION

To create a heart-warming, must-visit, annual winter festival celebration in Calgary that advances existing cultural and sports offerings and fosters new winter experiences.

MISSION

By connecting Calgarians and visitors to multi-faceted cultural and sport experiences during our winter months, we aim to energize our economy, warm hearts and boost civic pride.

CHINOOK BLAST HISTORY

The concept for Chinook Blast emerged in November 2019 when a collective of Civic Partners envisioned a significant winter initiative for Calgary. Their goal was to align with and advance seven key civic strategies to support Calgary's arts community, boost tourism during its off-peak season, revitalize the downtown core, and foster community spirit and pride.

Initially conceived as a six-week event in January and February, Chinook Blast was designed to showcase the best of Calgary's art, music, theatre, sports, and recreation. Despite facing unforeseen challenges with the emergence of the global COVID-19 crisis in spring 2020, organizers remained resilient and determined to deliver a safe event in February 2021. Overcoming the ongoing pandemic challenges, more than 90 local community organizations collaborated to support Chinook Blast through programming, sponsorship, and marketing.

The COVID-19 edition of Chinook Blast in 2021 featured an immersive art and light display experience at the heart of the city. Alongside these displays, the event offered features such as firepits, skating, storefront decorating, locally broadcasted music, and textured street lighting. Remarkably, over 390,000 Calgarians ventured out during the pandemic to partake in the only winter event hosted in 2021.

In 2022, with reduced COVID-19 restrictions, Chinook Blast expanded its programming and Partners, evolving into a winter event umbrella that brought together diverse festival associations, businesses, and creative individuals. Prioritizing participant safety, the Festival spanned from February 12 to 26. While some winter festivals like BIG Winter Classic and High-Performance Rodeo couldn't proceed due to lingering restrictions, Chinook Blast attracted 288 Partners, offering 180 scaled-down, restriction-compliant programs, including Indigenous storytelling, pop-up musical performances, art tours, puppet shows, and more. Some programming was shifted to late spring due to changing restrictions, and the festival also introduced the successful Asian Night Market at City Hall Atrium.

In 2023, with COVID-19 restrictions no longer in place, Chinook Blast realized its original vision as a winter festival. Held from January 27 to February 12, the festival featured a lineup and experience aligned with initial plans. All festival Partners, including Block Heater, BIG Winter Classic, and High-

Performance Rodeo, presented full programming, solidifying the vision of a vibrant Calgary winter celebration that had been envisaged in 2019. Chinook Blast expanded its programming and venues to include:

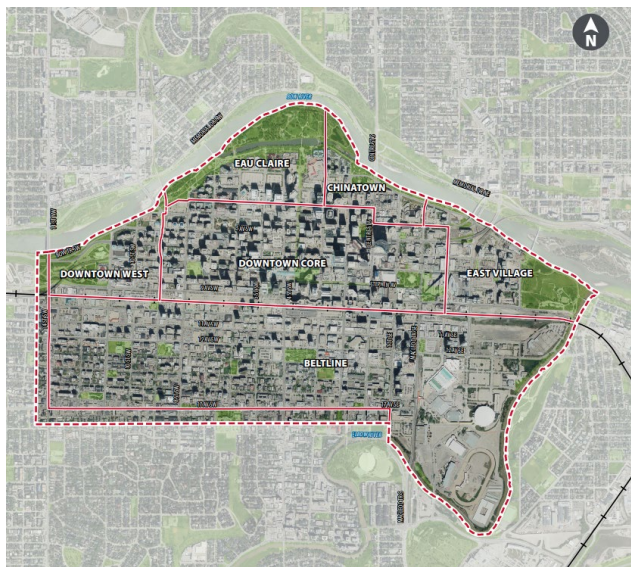
- Turning Olympic Plaza into Chinook Blast’s programming hub that showcase curated performances, light and art displays, ice sculptures, free skating and sport demonstrations.
- Creating the Artists Pavilion at the Central Public Library that featured pop up performances, fashion shows and sport and art displays.
- Creating a larger focus on hosting more sport and recreation experiences working with Sport Calgary and NitroCross.
- A greater focus on diverse programming that represented Calgary’s community featuring Black and Indigenous artists, an Asian market, and 2SLGBTQIA+ performances.
- And the City Hall Atrium markets were also expanded in 2023 to span over three weekends and included an Indigenous and Market Collective hosted market.

Chinook Blast also had to deal with its first controversy in 2023 as the Drag on Ice performance in Olympic Plaza was postponed due to planned protests that presented safety risk for performers and attendees alike. Drag on Ice was later successfully held in the spring of 2023.

This Festival configuration continued for Chinook Blast 2024 which was held February 2 to 19. This year’s Festival included new and expanded programming, and further community collaboration with almost 10% more programming Partners. For the lineup and schedule, visit www.chinookblast.ca.

Organizers expect to see Chinook Blast grow for many years into the future.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



Source: [Calgary's greater downtown plan](#)

Greater Downtown is located on the south bank of the Bow River and bounded to the east by the Elbow River, to the south by 17 Avenue S.W. and to the west by 14 Street S.W. It is comprised of the following communities:

1. Chinatown;
2. Eau Claire;
3. Downtown West;
4. Downtown Core (primary focus of Festival programming);
5. East Village;
6. Beltline (West Connaught, Connaught Centre, Victoria Crossing Centre, Stampede Park, and East Victoria Crossing).

2023 PROGRAMMING

In 2023, Chinook Blast programming included a variety of inclusive offerings for a truly dynamic winter experience. Per the spirit of collaboration characterizing Chinook Blast, most of our programming and activities were held in partnership with local performers, organizations and businesses.

Pillar Festival Partners: Chinook Blast partnered with iconic Calgary events for winter fun, building on existing festivals and expanding the audience for all of them. Pillar Festival Partners included Calgary Folk Music Festival's Block Heater, Ethnik Festival, BIG Winter Classic, and High Performance Rodeo. GLOW, a previous Pillar Partner hosted by Calgary Downtown Association (CDA), did not occur this year—although CDA did support the Art and Light Walk.

Friends of Chinook Blast: These were sporting, recreation, and arts and culture events led by local artists and organizations. Applicants were chosen by our internal jury and received funding to support their event. One friend hosted art workshops in three different locations downtown, including a senior's residence, helping more Calgarians access Chinook Blast programming despite the cold! Chinook Blast became an integral partner for the Korean Lunar New Year Festival and friends over at Music Mile created eight high quality reels of artists promoting Chinook Blast and Music Mile—increasing their growth on social platforms by over 4000% compared to months previously.

Après Chinook Blast: These Partners were bars, restaurants, and hotels that wanted in on the spirit and vibrancy of Chinook Blast. They amplified the festival while drawing festival goers into their spaces. Some hosted special events, while many others used Chinook Blast as a theme for special offers or discounts to patrons (e.g., staycation packages, food and drink specials).

Programming Partners (includes Hub programming, Footprint Partners, market partners and public art installation Partners): These Partners truly bring breadth, depth and reach to the Chinook Blast experience. This included the second year of the Asian Market in City Hall atrium, with two additional weekend markets including Four Winds Indigenous Showcase and Market, and Market Collective. Sport Calgary hosted a second great weekend in Olympic Plaza and the Artist Pavilion at the Central Library featured Black and Indigenous Artists throughout the festival.

Sport Programming Partners: In addition to having Sport Calgary hosting their sport festival on the second weekend of Chinook Blast (see above), exciting new partners extended the Chinook Blast Spirit out to other areas such as Nitro RallyCross at the Stampede Grounds and Canada Snowboard's Snow Rodeo at Winsport Olympic Park. Both events were well attended, with Nitro RallyCross seeing 18,000 attendees over the two days and Canada Snowboard seeing 4,500 attendees!

Diverse Programming: Chinook Blast produced its most diverse lineup this year as well. Including:

- MakeFashion x Indi City Powwow Runway— An outstanding collaboration between MakeFashion + Indi City, where technology meets traditional regalia as a Grand Entry into the world of Pow Wow. These masterpieces along with other fashion technology pieces were showcased through a runway event at Artists Pavillion sponsored by TD Bank.
- Throughout Chinook Blast, Four Winds Indigenous Showcase and Market, and 10 at 10 hosted lunchtime performances in celebration of Indigenous culture and Black History Month.
- Drag on Ice - The FIRST in Alberta. Audience watched the finest Drag Performers strut their stuff... on ice!
- Indigenous music and dance showcase at the RISE UP Community Stage at Olympic Plaza. It featured extremely talented Indigenous artists, including Juno nominated country and classic rock artist Armond Duckchief and his four-piece band, five-time Indigenous Music Award winner Drezus, and 2022 Juno Winner for Traditional Indigenous Artist of the Year, Fawn Wood.

Other Notable Statistics:

- Media mentions — We saw a 30% increase in media mentions of Chinook Blast. Globe & Mail named Chinook Blast one of the best winter festivals in Canada
- Hotel Occupancy — 2023 February occupancy hit an eight-year record in Calgary at 55.5%
- 55% of Chinook Blast website traffic came from out of Calgary, mostly from regional markets (i.e., Edmonton, Vancouver, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat)
- Festival Partners (Block Heater, High Performance Rodeo) saw ticket buyers from eight different provinces, over 34 communities in Alberta, as well as ticket sales from the United States and United Kingdom.

2.2 2025-2027 Strategic Focus

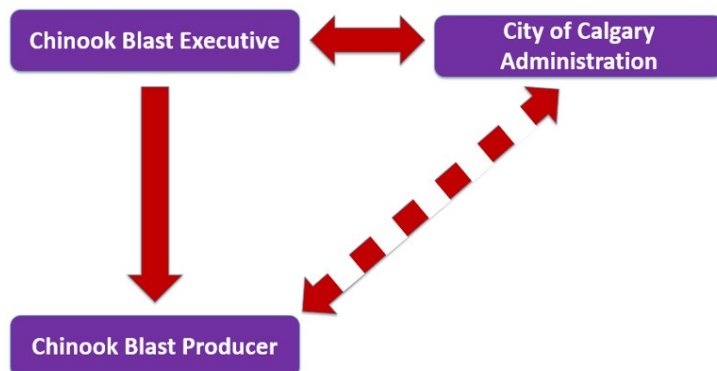
Chinook Blast is a celebration encouraging pride of place, participation, and economic stimulus in Calgary by combining winter events into an inclusive and accessible Festival experience.

We want Calgarians to discover a new way to enjoy their city, while building towards a future when visitors will be drawn here to share a truly dynamic winter experience.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. **Enhance Calgary's Downtown Vibrancy:** Create a dynamic and immersive winter experience in Calgary's downtown, leveraging innovative installations, performances, and interactive activities to attract diverse audiences and increase foot traffic during the winter season.
2. **Cultivate Local Prosperity:** Foster the growth of Chinook Blast as a signature winter Festival deeply rooted in Calgary's local culture. Prioritize collaboration with and support for local artists, organizations, and businesses, ensuring their active participation and economic benefit.
3. **Economic Stimulation and Job Creation:** Give Calgary a winter boost by strategically planning and executing initiatives that stimulate the local economy.
4. **Inclusive Representation of Calgary's Diversity:** Ensure Chinook Blast reflects the diversity of Calgary's communities, providing a platform for all voices and cultures to be heard and celebrated. Implement inclusive programming, outreach, and partnerships to engage residents from various backgrounds, making the Festival a unifying and representative experience for all Calgarians.

2.3 Corporate Structure



Note: Corporate Structure as of the date of this RFP.

STRUCTURE OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is a diverse group of Civic Partners with a shared belief in the need and value of a winter festival for Calgary. The four organizations which include the City of Calgary, Calgary Arts Development, Tourism Calgary and Calgary Economic Development, have a shared mandate to serve all Calgarians and the Festival's success is grounded in that mandate. The range of experience, expertise, and knowledge that each of the four Civic Partners brings to the table offers different perspectives and the ability to approach challenges as unique opportunities. They are the visionaries and communicators of Chinook Blast.

2.4 Chinook Blast Programming and Operations

The 2023 Festival saw continued growth with exciting new partners extending the Chinook Blast spirit out into other areas such as Nitro RallyCross at The Stampede Grounds and Canada Snowboard's Snow Rodeo at Winsport Olympic Park. Enthusiasm and demand for the Festival resulted in expanding the night markets from one to three weekends.

Chinook Blast is typically celebrated around the first three weekends in February. With a programming focus on arts and culture and sport/recreation.

The 2023 Festival supported local with participation of 920+ artists, performers, and creative makers; 10 founding Civic Partners; 200+ businesses supported with programming, logistics and operations; and 20 non-profits. Over 373,000 people attended the Festival resulting in a \$13.48 million in economic impact.

The Festival garnered 362.8 million earned media impressions and 96% positive social media sentiments. In 2023 the Globe & Mail named Chinook Blast one of the best winter festivals in Canada — **Canada's best winter festivals from coast to coast — The Globe and Mail.**

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility: 2023 programming encompassed a wider range of diversity, including the celebration of Indigenous music, art, and fashion, Black History Month, and performances featuring artists from the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

Contributions of each of the Founding Members: The City of Calgary, Calgary Arts Development, Calgary Economic Development, and Calgary Tourism are the four Civic Partners who conceptualized, realized, and ensure the continued delivery of Chinook Blast. These four entities are the pillars of the Festival and are integral to its stability and endurance.

The City of Calgary is a municipal corporation of the Province of Alberta. Calgary is located on the traditional territories of the people of the Treaty 7 region in Southern Alberta. This includes the Blackfoot Confederacy, made up of the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations; the Îethka Nakoda Wicastabi First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Good Stoney First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to the Otipemisiwak Métis government districts 5 & 6. We acknowledge all Indigenous urban Calgarians who have made this city their home. Together, their spiritual and practical relationships to the land create rich lessons for our life as a community.

Calgary Arts Development is the city's designated arts development authority which supports and strengthens the arts to benefit all Calgarians.

Calgary Economic Development is the economic development agency within Calgary that works with business, government, and community partners to position Calgary as the location of choice for the purpose of attracting business investment, fostering trade, and growing Calgary's workforce.

Tourism Calgary is the municipal department of tourism in Calgary, Alberta. As the official destination management organization for Calgary, the purpose of Tourism Calgary is to work closely with industry and community partners to drive demand of local businesses, increasing the economic impact of the visitor economy in Calgary. Their mission is to inspire more people to visit Calgary for memorable experiences that celebrate our community, culture, and people.

2.5 Chinook Blast Budgets and Impact

Year-over-year review

	2021	2022	2023
Number of Local Partners	229+	950+	1150+
Attendance	391,903	410,000+	373,000+
Economic Impact	\$3.35 million	\$8.2 million	\$13.48 million
Media Impressions	2.35 million	21 million	362.8 million
Budget	\$1.56 million	\$1.48 million	\$1.46 million

Approximate value of fee for service to the Producer and Production services is \$180,000 CDN per year (pending budget confirmation each year) excluding GST. Approximate value of fee for marketing services is \$95,000 CDN per year (pending budget confirmation each year) excluding GST.

3.0 AGENCY CAPABILITIES

Calgary Arts Development is seeking either a single agency partner, or multiple agencies, that will provide Chinook Blast a deeper skill set in specialized areas of expertise. Ultimately, we are open to considering proposals on the best agency structure to support in producing and marketing, that delivers on the outcomes desired for Chinook Blast Festivals 2025, 2026, and 2027.

The ideal agency collaborator(s) would embody a spirit of innovation and partnership, bringing to the table not just expertise, but a:

- Commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA);
- Deep awareness and existing relationships with Calgary’s arts, culture, tourism, sport, and recreation communities;
- Reconciliation journey;
- Awareness of the four Executive Committee members; and

- Previous experience and expertise producing large scale festivals and events.

The successful agency(s) will demonstrate expertise in the following service categories, including but not limited to:

3.1 Operations Management

The successful applicant will be required to plan, execute, and manage a large-scale public festival for three separate weekends during Chinook Blast. This will require experience in festival management and operational components including:

- Entertainment programming;
- Event logistics (i.e., security, audio visual technology, food and beverage, staffing/volunteers, stages and tents);
- Emergency response procedures;
- Community engagement;
- Budget management;
- Event marketing; and
- Experience managing festivals in public venues would be an asset.

The successful applicant will work closely with the Executive Committee to ensure event milestones are met and the budget is on track. As the Festival occurs in public venues, the successful applicant will work closely with The City of Calgary's Festival and Event division to obtain permits and ensure adherence to all local bylaws. A City of Calgary liaison will be assigned to assist with City operations.

3.2 Sponsorships Acquisition and Management

As Producer, one of the critical responsibilities is to secure and manage sponsorships that contribute to the overall success and sustainability of Chinook Blast. This duty involves forging strategic partnerships with organizations and brands that align with the Festival's vision, values, and target audience. Tasks in this area include identifying potential sponsors, crafting compelling proposals, building relationships, negotiating terms, and delivering committed value to all sponsors.

By effectively managing Chinook Blast's sponsorship acquisition process, the Producer plays a crucial role in elevating the Festival's profile, ensuring compelling and fresh programming, ensuring financial sustainability, and fostering long-term partnerships with sponsors.

3.3 Marketing Support

One of the critical areas of Chinook Blast is the overseeing and executing a comprehensive marketing strategy and managing all of Chinook Blast's channels to promote the event, enhance its visibility, and engaging Calgarians and visitors effectively.

Key Responsibilities

- Develop an annual strategic marketing and communications plan for Chinook Blast;

- Manage Chinook Blast’s social media channels (X, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) year-round;
- Oversee the Chinook Blast website and work with Chinook Blast’s creative agency to make annual updates and improvements;
- Manage Chinook Blast’s email marketing program and grow its subscriber list;
- Curate and create written, photo, and video content for Chinook Blasts digital channels;
- Develop annual advertising campaign in collaboration with Chinook Blast’s creative agency and coordinate local media buy;
- Execute public relations and local/national media outreach and maximize annual coverage for Chinook Blast; and
- Provide analytics and reporting on all marketing activities.

By taking charge of the marketing strategy and managing owned channels, the Festival Producer for Chinook Blast will play a pivotal role in ensuring the Festival's success, fostering community engagement, and establishing the event as a highlight in Calgary's winter calendar.

Year-over-year marketing metrics

	2021	2022	2023
Social Media Connections	7,286	9,663	12,851
Email Connections	1,003	1,875	2,664
Website Sessions	128,814	147,836	173,725
Media Impressions	2.35 million	21 million	362.8 million
Positive Social Media Sentiment	Not reported	96%	98%

In your RFP submission, please clearly identify if your agency is interested in fulfilling the marketing components for Chinook Blast. If a consortium with a marketing agency is being proposed, please clearly identify the agencies involved and the proposed management structure.

Through this RFP process, Calgary Arts Development reserves the right to either qualify a single agency or multiple agency partners who provide best-in-class services.

Calgary Arts Development reserves the right to give preference to local companies who actively and intentionally employ and source within Calgary and Alberta.

Calgary Arts Development reserves the right to seek clarification and further details as required from any submissions suggesting a consortium or third-party subcontractor arrangement.

4.0 PROPOSAL CONTENT GUIDELINES

All proposals must be provided in English and submitted by **16:00 MST on May 13, 2024**. Please submit five (5) hard copies of your completed proposal (and any supplemental documents) and one (1) electronic copy to:

Mary Quinlan, Project Manager, Chinook Blast
c/o Calgary Arts Development
The Edison
Suite 1410, 150 – 9 Avenue SW
Calgary, AB T2P 3H9

chinookblast@calgaryartsdevelopment.com or via drop box

4.1 Proposal Format

To facilitate evaluation and to ensure each Proposal receives full consideration, proposals should be organized in the following format using the section titles and sequence listed below. Please ensure brevity in your responses as page limits will be imposed.

Submission Page Limit

Proposals should be limited to the maximum number of twenty-four (24) pages counting all sides. Cover letters, table of contents, appendices including references, organizational charts, and personnel resumes will not be considered in the number of pages. The Evaluation Team may, in its sole discretion, exclude pages and/or sections from the proposal that exceed the stated page limits.

Proposal Section	Page Limits
Proposal Submission Letter	N/A
Proponent Profile	Three (3)
Account Management	Three (3)
Agency Capabilities	15 maximum <u>Note:</u> Each section to be no more than 5 pages per subsection (5.3.1 & 5.3.2), totalling no more than 15 pages.
Pricing Model	Three (3)

Appendices	N/A
Page Limit	24

Proposal Submission Letter

The letter must be submitted on Proponent letterhead, clearly reference “Chinook Blast 2025 – 2027 RFP” and must be signed by an authorized representative of the Proponent included in the Proposal.

4.2 Proponent Profile

Include written responses to the questions outlined in Section 5.1 — Proponent Profile. If partnering with another agency to address all capabilities in this request for proposal, please ensure you clearly outline what answers correspond to each agency.

Please limit this section to no more than 3 pages.

4.3 Account Management

Include written responses to the questions outlined in Section 5.2 — Account Management.

Please limit this section to no more than 3 pages.

4.4 Agency Capabilities

Include written responses to the questions outlined in Section 5.3 — Agency Capabilities. **If responding to all capability areas, please ensure responses to both 5.3.1 & 5.3.2**

Please limit each section to no more than 5 pages per subsection (5.3.1 & 5.3.2), totalling no more than 15 pages.

4.5 Pricing Model

Include written responses to the questions outlined in Section 5.4 – Pricing Model.

Please limit this section to no more than 3 pages.

4.6 Appendices

The proposal can include other material not specifically requested by this RFP by providing additional appendices in the proposal. Please note, this section does not count towards any limits imposed; however, Calgary Arts Development will not consider this information in the RFP scoring.

5.0 RFP QUESTIONS

For your submission, please structure your responses per the following sections. The completeness of the information you provide in accordance with the structure of the questions is important for us to make our selection. The selection will be made in Calgary Arts Development's sole and absolute discretion.

5.1 PROPONENT PROFILE

5.1.1 Agency Introduction

1. Provide a company overview outlining your agency's key competencies, culture, and work philosophy.
2. Tell us about your agency's key executives – experience, areas of expertise.
3. Detail when your agency was founded and if it is party of a larger group of companies. Explain how your agency fits into the overall organizational structure and how you leverage other business arms.
4. Confirm if you have an office in Calgary and the location of other fully staffed offices. If no offices in Calgary, detail how you plan to support and be physically present for Chinook Blast 2025 – 2027.

5.1.2 Agency Differentiation

1. Describe your agency's areas strength.
2. Detail how your agency is different from your competitors.
3. Detail where and how you out-perform your competitors.
4. Detail the methods, procedures, or techniques your agency employs in order to quickly adapt in response to the dynamic festival planning environment.
5. Describe any awards, recognition, or coverage your agency has received for outstanding work.

5.1.3 Chinook Blast Opportunity

1. Given your experience in the Festivals and Events Production space, discuss your assessment of Chinook Blast's current position and what business, and marketing opportunities do you see for our organization in the near term.
2. The Executive Committee works with over 700 partners and individuals to execute Chinook Blast every year. Under our structure, we work within an integrated network of partners, interested parties and government agencies at municipal, provincial and federal levels. Describe your experience with a similarly complex framework and how your agency would help Calgary Arts Development continually reflect alignment within our programs to represent the destination in a unified way.

5.1.4 Calgary Arts Development as a Client

1. Detail what your ideal client relationship looks/operates like.
2. Describe what specifically appeals to your agency about working with Chinook Blast.
3. Describe how your agency will help the Festival succeed in reaching its goals.
4. Calgary Arts Development may disqualify a Proponent or terminate an Agreement with such Proponent for any conduct, situation or circumstances, determined by Calgary Arts Development, in its sole and absolute discretion, to constitute a Conflict of Interest (COI). A Proponent must not engage in any COI or communications that could breach its COI obligations and must declare any actual or potential COI in their submission response. For the purposes of this RFP, a COI means any perceived, potential, or actual situation or circumstances where, in relation to Chinook Blast or Calgary Arts Development, a Proponent:
 - a. Has other commitments, relationships, financial interest, or involvement in pending or ongoing litigation that:
 - i. Could be seen to exercise an improper influence over the objective, unbiased, and impartial exercise of independent judgement by any personnel of Calgary Arts Development or its advisors; or
 - ii. Could be seen to compromise, impair, or be incompatible with the effective performance of the Proponent's obligations under the Agreement if that Proponent is selected under the RFP to become the Producer of Chinook Blast;
 - b. Has contractual or other obligations to Calgary Arts Development or other members of the Executive Committee that could or could be seen to become compromised or otherwise impaired because of its participation in the RFP or the Agreement; or
 - c. Has knowledge of confidential information of the Calgary Arts Development or Chinook Blast's Executive Committee of strategic and/or material relevance to the RFP or to the Festival that is not available to other Proponents and that could give or could be seen to give the Proponent an unfair competitive advantage.

5.1.5 Partnered Proposals

(Answer only if partnering with another agency to respond to all capabilities outlined in this request for proposal)

1. Detail your proposed model for collaboration with partnered agencies, ensuring cost efficiency for Calgary Arts Development.

5.2 ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

5.2.1 Proposed Client Team

1. Please detail the proposed staff who will be assigned to Chinook Blast 2025 – 2027 and outline their Producer, Marketing, Production Operations experience.

5.2.2 Account Management Expertise

For the following section, detail how your agency demonstrates the following capabilities related to account management:

1. **Agency / Client Integration**
 - a. Seamless collaboration with client marketing teams and internal partners, enhancing current expertise and promoting mutual growth and innovation.
2. **Project Management**
 - a. Strong project management skills which incorporate advanced marketing, project, and financial tools to ensure accountability in all projects.
3. **Account Management**
 - a. Strong account management skills which incorporate financial tools to ensure the diligent management of a budget that is subject to change.
4. **Inter-Agency Collaboration**
 - a. A track record of successful and transparent cross-team collaboration, working harmoniously with other agency partners, including media agencies.
5. **Cost-Efficiency & Return on Investment (ROI) Analysis**
 - a. A consistent approach to cost optimization and ROI analysis to ensure valuable marketing investments.
6. **Innovative Risk-Taking**
 - a. Advocacy for intelligent risk-taking, offering innovative solutions in event management.

5.3 AGENCY CAPABILITIES

5.3.1 Marketing, Communications and Promotions

For the following section, detail how your agency demonstrates the following capabilities related to marketing, communications and promotions:

1. **Marketing Campaign Strategy, Development and Deployment**
 - a. Skill in developing, producing, and implementing comprehensive campaign strategies that resonate across various platforms and mediums, enhancing brand connection with multiple audiences.
2. **Customer Understanding**
 - a. A deep understanding of evolving consumer preferences, utilizing data-driven insights to develop captivating narratives.
3. **Brand Stewardship**
 - a. Continuous assessment and adjustment of brand positioning to maintain relevance with audiences while ensuring a distinct identity in a competitive market.
4. **Web Development**

- a. Skill in developing superior web experiences with a mobile-first approach, ensuring responsive, secure, and user-friendly websites.
5. **Social Media**
- a. Detail your approach to social media and how it meets the specific needs of this Festival including reaching diverse communities.
 - b. Detail services provided including social media management, paid social, content development, social media analytics, social media strategy, social media engagement, and community management.
6. **In-house Team Support**
- a. A history of successful partnerships with client's in-house teams to enhance production capability and provide tools to create self-serve options aligned to broader creative strategy.
 - b. Detail approach to project management including meetings through the provision of a project management plan that clearly defines responsibilities, lines of communications, project meeting frequencies, scheduling, meeting notes, progress and budget monitoring, quality assurance requirements, reporting, and deliverables. The Executive Committee requires a minimum of two (2) weeks to review Consultant provided materials. The successful Proponent will attend regular meetings with the Executive Committee and shall provide PowerPoint updates and complete meeting minutes to capture all meeting information. Please note, that the Proponent will be required to work with many other consulting firms and organizations in addition to the regular meetings with the Executive Committee.
 - c. Detail what project management and community engagement tools are used.
7. **Marketing Analysis and Performance Management**
- a. Methodical approaches to evaluate and enhance marketing performance, aligning marketing key performance indicators (KPI) to business outcomes.
8. **Cultural Sensitivity & Inclusivity**
- a. Acknowledgment and incorporation of cultural diversity and inclusivity in all creative projects, with experience in fostering the engagement of all community members.
9. **Review Background Reports**
- a. Detail what your process would look like to respond to the content and intent of city planning and policy documents such as:
 - i. Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan Roadmap to Reinvention (April 2021);
 - ii. Tourism Calgary Destination Strategy;
 - iii. Calgary in the New Economy (September 2019);
 - iv. The Guide for Local Area Planning (2021)
 - v. 2023 – 2026 Calgary Arts Development Strategic Framework
 - vi. City of Calgary Winter City Strategy (2022);
 - vii. Cultural Plan – The City of Calgary (2016);

- viii. Culture Shift: A Summary of the Cultural Plan for Calgary -- The City of Calgary (2016);
- ix. Living a Creative Life – Calgary Arts Development (2014);
- x. And other documents as required.

5.4 CASE STUDIES

5.4.1 Relevant Experience

Provide three (3) relevant case studies of your agency's achievements within the past two years relevant to the questions outlined in this RFP.

Case studies may be scored higher for demonstrating value-added pieces such as use of technology, online resources, interactive experiences that made intentional positive contributions to the overall vibrancy of your project and increased access to diverse groups of the community.

5.4.2 References

Provide corporate references for at least two (2) projects undertaken similar in scope and complexity to the services described in this RFP.

References should include name, position, organization, street address, email address, and telephone number.

5.5 PRICING MODEL

5.5.1 Fees & Billing

1. Describe how your organization would propose structuring compensation for the required services outlined in this RFP.
2. Provide the proposed hourly charges for the account team and relevant support staff.
3. If relevant, please explain any policies your agency has around additional agency fees associated with:
 - a. In-house production;
 - b. Third-party costs including creative production, photography, filming, development, platform fees;
 - c. Out-of-pocket expenses (postage, couriers, telephone, proofs);
 - d. Travel and associated expenses;
 - e. Finance charges for overdue payments.

5.5.2 Financial Management

1. Describe your financial management process including tools used to ensure clear and detailed billing practices, and adherence to budget parameters and processes to catch overages before they take place.