

Request for Proposals

SEA Maine - Seafood Economic Accelerator for Maine

Market Development Subcommittee

Market Development Strategy – Promotional Council

Issue Date: December 1, 2021

Closing Date: January 14, 2022

1. SEA Maine Background

The Seafood Economic Accelerator for Maine (SEA Maine) is an industry-led initiative committed to growing Maine’s seafood economy by developing a roadmap and action plan that will ensure a vibrant, innovative and resilient marine economy. Funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, Maine Technology Institute, and FocusMaine, SEA Maine brings together leaders from aquaculture and commercial fishing to identify strategies and targeted investments to help transition our heritage seafood economy into a modern engine for sustainable economic and job growth.

This cross-sector effort builds on substantial existing research in many areas of the seafood sector, and partners share their research to forge a new vision for the future of Maine’s economy. Co-led by Curt Brown, Ready Seafood, and Bill Mook, Mook Sea Farm, the SEA Maine steering committee includes approximately 35 members located across the state including public and private entities including industry, associations, non-profits, academia, and research and development. Maine Development Foundation serves as the project manager for SEA Maine and will coordinate the RFP and selection process.

SEA Maine is a 3-year, \$2.1 million project, initiated in June of 2020, to strategically plan for the future of Maine’s seafood economy. The results of our final report and the network we have established are intended to endure far into the future.

2. Project Background

The SEA Maine Market Development Subcommittee is entering its next phase of work building off of an initial analysis and market development study which included a gap analysis to determine missing or needed studies, collateral, or knowledge. From this work, two bodies of work were identified as essential to grow Maine’s marine living resource sector. First, an economic impact analysis of the marine living resource sector. Second, to develop a promotional council for Maine’s marine living resource economy; building on DMR’s marketing efforts; the roadmap developed by CEI and SEA Maine’s own work on this matter.

3. Project Purpose and Description

Purpose: Develop an actionable roadmap for creation of a seafood promotional council, including recommendations for funding sources, governance, marketing initiatives and other concrete action steps.

Scope of Work

- Develop a 5- to 10-year plan for a Seafood Promotion Council (incorporating findings and recommendations from Coastal Enterprises Inc (CEI)/Maine Seafood Marketing Initiative (MSMI)) supported by an appropriate mission and funding. Market development initiatives should be woven into the Council strategy.
- Engage with industry to gauge interest, relevant KPI's, and potential support for a Promotional Council
- Work collaboratively with the Maine Climate Council's Seafood Business Council concept to maximize alignment/collaboration and minimize duplication.
- Maine Seafood promotional efforts should build off parallel initiatives such as the Maine Climate Council, Department of Marine Resource's (DMR's) marketing efforts, CEI's MSMI, Maine Center for Entrepreneur's (MCE's) Food Accelerator programs, species/subsector-specific marketing entities, among other efforts.
- Identify baseline goals and milestones that would guide a successful Promotional Council guided by industry perspective.
- Identify opportunities for regional partnerships (e.g., with other New England states) and national (e.g., a potential National Seafood Council) collaboration to grow markets for Maine seafood.
- Identify how this Promotional Council would work effectively with the Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative

Deliverables:

The key deliverable

1. List of potential funding mechanisms, along with making contact with potential funders
2. Assessment of industry support for a Promotional Council.
3. Step for a PR campaign to support the development of a council, and an action plan for garnering industry support
4. Suggested governance structure and recommendations of specific individuals to make up the council
5. What the council will accomplish in its first 3 years and how it will ultimately become self-funded (i.e. Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative model)

Request for Proposals and Project Timeline

All responses to this RFP are due electronically by 5:00 pm EST on January 14, 2022, to Adam Burk, aburk@mdf.org

Questions concerning the project must be submitted by 12:00 PM (noon) on January 13, 2022, to Adam Burk, aburk@mdf.org.

Evaluations of proposals will be completed with interviews to follow. Upon selection of a successful applicant, contract negotiations will begin immediately.

4. Bidder Qualifications & Proposal Materials

Proposals will be accepted until 5:00 PM, January 14, 2022. Proposals must be no longer than 5 pages including a project narrative that clarifies the proposed approach including industry engagement, an itemized project budget, and a budget justification. Respondent qualifications and references may be submitted in addition to the 5-page limit. No overhead charges will be allowed. Specific contract terms and conditions will be negotiated upon the determination of the selected proposal.

Suggested proposal outline:

- A. Detailed description of how your proposal will lead to actionable results
- B. Work program outline detailing:
 - a. Tasks to be performed.
 - b. When each will be completed (timeline).
 - c. Tentative allocation of person days by task.
 - d. Schedule of work products, action items.
- C. Methods the Consultant proposes to use to manage the project and communicate with SEA Maine as to project progress and reviews.
- D. Identification of key personnel to be assigned to the project and their roles, with resumes of all key personnel.
- E. Budget: including hourly rates (inclusive of overhead and profit) for personnel or personnel categories.
- F. Data expected to be provided by/needed from SEA Maine

Thank you for your interest in working with the SEA Maine Market Development committee.

Please contact Adam Burk, aburk@mdf.org if you plan to submit a proposal. We look forward to hearing from you.