



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

### *Architectural Services for the Preparation of Construction Drawings and Related Services for the Cane River Discovery Center Project*

#### **I. PROJECT SUMMARY**

The Cane River National Heritage Area (hereafter referred to as "CRNHA") is requesting proposals from architects licensed by the Louisiana State Board of Architects for the preparation of working drawings and bid specifications for the construction of an addition to its headquarters located at 4115 University Parkway, Natchitoches, Louisiana 71457. CRNHA intends to rehabilitate this building as the Cane River Discovery Center, a facility designed to enhance visitors' experience of the natural and cultural attractions in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. This center will serve as an educational and informative hub that provides visitors with a deeper understanding of the region's significance, history, ecology, and other relevant information.

The current square footage of the building is 4200 sq ft. The addition is expected to increase the building's square footage to 10,000 -12,000 sq ft.

#### **II. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND**

The Cane River National Heritage Area, Inc. (CRNHA) is a non-profit organization located in Natchitoches, Louisiana, that works closely with communities, cultural organizations, and subject matter experts to document the stories and traditions of the surrounding regions in an authentic, accurate, and inclusive manner. Many leadership representatives have identified a need to engage a younger population to create a thriving cultural tourism epicenter in the southern region. To instill knowledge and caring about all people, nature, and history, the CRNHA will design and build an engaging, hands-on Discovery Center.

The Discovery Center will engage the community and visitors while improving knowledge and enjoyment of the Cane River National Heritage Area and increasing awareness and community involvement regarding the culture and heritage of the area. The space will be dynamic; it will help visitors orient themselves to the area and function as a safe place for families to learn, experience, develop, and grow.

The gallery will be designed for families of children ages 4-10 years. Content will be developed in partnership with local entities such as Northwestern University, cultural institutions, and local businesses to capture the essence of the culture and history of the area while presenting the information utilizing sensitivity and respect. Exhibits will be focused on the development of the whole child and incorporate elements that foster physical, social, emotional, sensory, cognitive, and communicative growth.

The Discovery Center is located in a corridor that will see growth within the next 2-5 years. This includes nature trail connectivity, from the baseball complex all the way through to the University. In addition, there are plans for a travel trailer park nearby and a putt-putt golf course.

A space of this nature does not currently exist in the area. The CRNHA is uniquely equipped to handle a project of this importance and magnitude. They have a dedicated staff and board with their pulse on the community, its needs, and key partners that are extremely supportive.

### III. PROJECT SCOPE

Cane River National Heritage Area, Inc. is undertaking the project of developing a discovery center, more commonly referred to as a visitor center or interpretive center. In pursuit of this endeavor, we require a comprehensive range of architectural services, including but not limited to:

**1. CONCEPTUAL DESIGN:** Develop an innovative and coherent conceptual design that seamlessly incorporates the new addition into the existing structure while capturing the essence of discovery and exploration.

**2. ARCHITECTURAL PLANS:** Produce detailed architectural plans encompassing floor plans, elevations, sections, and site plans that will guide the construction process effectively.

**3. INTERIOR DESIGN:** Curate interior spaces that are both functional and captivating, providing optimal layouts for exhibits, displays, and interactive areas. The selected firm must work with CRNHA contracted exhibit design firm.

**4. SUSTAINABILITY INTEGRATION:** Infuse sustainable design principles throughout the project, emphasizing energy efficiency, renewable materials, and environmentally conscious practices.

**5. ACCESSIBILITY:** Ensure universal accessibility, adhering to pertinent accessibility codes and standards to guarantee an inclusive experience for all visitors.

**6. LANDSCAPE INTEGRATION:** Develop a landscape design that harmonizes outdoor areas with the Nature Discovery Center, creating inviting spaces for outdoor learning and relaxation.

**7. COST ESTIMATION:** Deliver a comprehensive cost estimation that covers all facets of the project, encompassing materials, labor, and other associated expenses.

**8. PROJECT MANAGEMENT:** Collaborate closely with contractors and oversee the construction phase to guarantee the translation of design into a functional reality.

### IV. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:

We kindly request interested firms to submit a comprehensive proposal outlining their approach to the project. The proposal should incorporate the following elements:

**1. COMPANY OVERVIEW:** Briefly introduce your firm, highlighting its history, relevant experience, and notable projects.

**2. DESIGN APPROACH:** Detail your firm's creative strategy for realizing the Nature Discovery Center's vision and its alignment with our organization's mission.

**3. PROJECT TEAM:** Introduce key team members who will be actively engaged in the project, accompanied by their credentials and designated roles.

**4. PORTFOLIO:** Showcase past projects demonstrating your firm's proficiency in designing discovery or educational centers, especially those emphasizing interactive and experiential elements.

**5. TIMELINE:** Propose a project timeline outlining critical milestones from initial design to project completion.

**6. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL:** Provide a transparent breakdown of your fees, expenses, and anticipated costs associated with delivering the scope of services.

## **V. TIMELINE**

**A. RFP ISSUED:** FEBRUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

**B. QUESTIONS DUE:** MARCH 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

**C. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS:** MARCH 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

**D. RFP DUE:** MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

**E. SELECTION OF SHORTLISTED FIRMS:** APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

**F. EVALUATIONS/PRESENTATIONS:** TBA

**G. FINAL SELECTION & CONTRACT NEGOTIATION:** TBA

**H. DESIGN PHASE COMMENCES:** TBA

Please submit your questions electronically to Arianna Mace at [amace@propel.llc](mailto:amace@propel.llc). Please submit your proposals electronically to [amace@propel.llc](mailto:amace@propel.llc) no later than 5 PM on March 27, 2024. All other inquiries concerning this RFP can be directed to Arianna Mace by email or call (661)623-0077.

We are enthusiastic about the possibility of partnering with your firm to bring the Cane River Discovery Center to life. This initiative holds great promise for our community and beyond. We eagerly anticipate reviewing your proposal and commencing this exciting journey together.

## APPENDIX

### I. Building Images



Figure 1: Front Facade of 4115 University Parkway (NW)





Figure 2: SW Side of 4115 University Parkway



Figure 3: SE Facade of 4115 University Parkway



Figure 4: NE Facade of 4115 University Parkway