

Request for Proposals – Final Selection Bellwether 2023-2024 Event Management

At today's meeting, staff will present the recommendation of the Selection Panel for the Bellwether 2023-2024 event management RFP.

Motion: A motion to approve the 2023-2024 Bellwether Arts Festival Event Management RFP Final Selection, as recommended by the Selection Panel.

BACKGROUND

The City of Bellevue has historically created and produced Bellwether through independent projects and building partnerships with Downtown arts organizations and stakeholders to create a multi-disciplinary and sensory event. Last majorly updated in 2018, Bellwether has continued to test ideas, new media, technology and address issues in the community while city staff have worked to build a foundational network of partners and collaborators.

This approach, however, has required a significant amount of staff time, affecting our ability to make process on other arts goals and objectives while also failing to deliver the attendance impacts we feel the event is capable of.

After Bellwether 2021, City staff met with participating organizations, including EastHUB, Bellevue Arts Museum and Creative Directors SuttonBeresCuller, to hear feedback and suggestions for the event moving forward more sustainably. Next, the City hired a consultant to look at best practices for the event and help staff to move the event into a more sustainable long-term model.

Across the nation, exhibitions and events have created innovative and catalytic programs through public- and private-sector partnerships. Bellwether is ready to take its next leap by shifting to a model primarily run by an outside organization with support from the City of Bellevue. This transition will allow the event to grow creatively but also in scope and impact.

SELECTED PROPOSAL

The attached Bellwether Event Management Proposal from The Performance Center Eastside (PACE) is recommended for approval by the Selection Panel. The proposal includes the following elements:

- Statement of Interest
- Bellwether 2032 Vision
- Project Approach
- Preliminary Timeline
- Preliminary Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Plan
- Preliminary Budget
- Preliminary Marketing Plan
- Preliminary Sponsorship Plan
- Overview of Organizational Experience
- Overview of Key Personnel
- Work Samples
- Additional materials as required by the RFP Process

The Selection Panel felt this proposal addressed the RFP requirements and had a strong vision for where Bellwether could go and how to get it there. Particularly, the panel felt the emphasis on marketing and sustained sponsorship led to a strong and realistic multi-year budget considering the planned reduction of City funds.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the approval of the Selection Panel's recommendation for 2023-2024 Bellwether Event Management by PACE.

OPTIONS

Option 1: Commission motions to approve the 2023-2024 Bellwether Event Management Proposal by PACE

Option 2: Commission elects not to approve the 2023-2024 Bellwether Event Management Proposal by PACE

NEXT STEPS

If approved, staff will begin the contracting process with PACE for Bellwether Event Management in 2023-2024. The final contract will go to Council for approval in Q1, 2023.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: PACE Bellwether Event Management Proposal

STAFF CONTACT

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