



A Stakeholder Engagement Facilitation Request for Proposal

Statement of Purpose

Minnesota Brass seeks a consultant or consultants to assist in gathering input from stakeholders and experts regarding the future of our performing ensembles. The consultant will be required to complete the following tasks outlined in detail below:

1. Conduct focus groups
2. Write and administer two online surveys
3. Conduct individual interviews
4. Write a summary report based on the data gathered in tasks 1-3

Work will be conducted in June-August, 2018.

Background Information

Mission

Minnesota Brass shares a unique passion for the live performing arts by producing ensembles and events, rooted in the drum and bugle corps tradition, that challenge our members to reach their full potential while inspiring our audiences

Vision

To be a national center of excellence in the design for, and education of, live musical and visual performing ensembles.

Founded in 1946, Minnesota Brass is a performing arts organization based in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. The organization has primarily existed to field a competitive drum and bugle corps that travels and competes regionally and nationally. In addition, the organization has launched ancillary ensembles rooted in the drum and bugle corps tradition, which are hired for events and celebrations and participate in national color guard and drum line competitions.

Drum and bugle corps is a niche art form that continually evolves. Similar to marching bands, drum and bugle corps perform outdoors and feature brass, percussion and color guard performers. After a period of significant contraction during the 1990s and 2000s, the activity has seen modest growth in recent years, particularly among the most elite and highest-quality organizations.

In April 2018 the leadership of Minnesota Brass announced that it would not field a competitive drum corps for the 2018 season. This announcement came as a shock to many in the drum corps community as well as the alumni and active members of the organization. While the organization is financially stable, the leadership did not feel confident it could create a high-quality experience for all members. Specifically, the executive team pointed to lackluster interest and recruiting in recent years and the lack of a highly committed teaching staff within the brass section in particular. The board of directors supported the leadership's recommendation.

The organization now faces significant strategic question about its future. Specifically, Minnesota Brass must address four key questions:

1. What ensembles will Minnesota Brass support in the future?

2. Where/how will Minnesota Brass secure a committed, highly talented staff to support these ensembles (particularly for winds/brass ensembles if necessary)
3. What is the leadership succession plan for the organization?
4. How will the organization recruit and grow the board of directors?

Given the cyclical nature of the organization's traditional performance space, key decisions will need to be made by September 2018 if the organization plans to participate in the 2019 competitive summer season.

Tasks to be Accomplished

Minnesota Brass is committed to listening to and learning from key stakeholders including alumni, staff and music educators. To assure consistent, unbiased data-gathering, the consultant will be responsible for gathering feedback and summarizing input. Specifically, the consultant will:

1. Conduct at least two member/alumni focus groups
2. Interview key organizational leaders (at least 8 interviews)
 - a. Executive team (four interviews)
 - b. Key staff (at least four interviews)
3. Interview local/national music educators (at least eight interviews)
4. Create an online survey for alumni/members
5. Create an online survey for Minnesota music educators

The results of the stakeholder engagement will strive to answer the following questions, among others the consultant recommends:

1. What are alumni/members most passionate about regarding Minnesota Brass? Where will they put their energy? What are the barriers to participation in existing ensembles?
2. What additional resources are available within the organization? What skills/talents are available among alumni/staff that could be leveraged more effectively in the future?
3. What needs to be done to recruit and retain a strong staff?
4. What needs to be done to strengthen recruitment of potential members?

To support the consultant, Minnesota Brass will provide a liaison to facilitate outreach and contact information with stakeholders. The consultant will develop the interview guide, set up logistics for focus groups and schedule interviews. It is anticipated most interviews will be conducted over the phone and take 30 minutes or less.

With the Minnesota Brass liaison, the consultant will develop the content of two online surveys of stakeholders. The consultant will be responsible for choosing the electronic tool and setting up the survey; Minnesota Brass will provide outreach and electronic communication to encourage the completion of the surveys.

The consultant will work independently to summarize the data gathered and report to the Minnesota Brass board of directors.

Summary of Deliverables

All deliverables are due by the end of the period of performance.

1. In person presentation to the Board of Directors summarizing findings
2. Narrative report (4-8 pages) summarizing findings

3. Raw survey data report

Contract Details

- Period of Performance – Deadlines will be negotiated and finalized between the consultant and the Minnesota Brass liaison. The target completion date for all deliverables is August 15, 2018.
- Payment – Payment will be made at the end of the engagement within 30 days of receipt of an invoice. Consultant will adhere to the negotiated project rate.
- Travel, Incidentals, Supplies – No travel is anticipated for this project. Consultant's proposal should be inclusive of any necessary supplies/incidentals such as hospitality and/or room rental for focus groups, incentives for interviews, printing etc.

How to Submit a Proposal

Please submit the following as one PDF file no later than June 8 Eric Molho, Minnesota Brass board chair via email to: eric@mnbrass.org .

1. A technical approach, which describes how you will carry out the tasks outlined above. (not to exceed three pages)
2. A summary of your background and experience including recent and relevant projects (1 page).
3. A firm bid of the fees to be charged and an estimate of any expenses that would be incurred.
4. Bios of all consultants who would be involved in the project.
5. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses of individuals at three organizations who have been your clients for similar activity and whom we can contact as references. At least one must be a nonprofit organization.

We will hold interviews with finalist(s) during the week of June 11, 2018. If you have questions, please email them to eric@mnbrass.org.

While not required, experience working with performing arts organizations and/or knowledge of the marching arts community will be viewed favorably.

If additional information is required consultants may contact Eric Molho at 952-210-7915 or eric@mnbrass.org.