

Request for Proposals (RFP): Guest Experience & Operations Transformation

1. Project Overview & Background

The Tech Interactive has recently been awarded a grant to completely revitalize and optimize our guest engagement operations. The goal of this project is to create an overall refresh of our guest experience and establish a more sustainable staffing model, while continuing to deliver on our core mission.

Currently, our operations face a few distinct challenges and opportunities:

- **Lobby Navigation & Experience:** Our large lobby is challenging to navigate and underutilizes space that could otherwise deliver impactful museum or learning experiences.
- **Competing Amenities:** The lobby houses multiple amenities (retail store, ticketing counter, IMAX theater, concessions, and a café) that compete for visibility, visitor attention, and staff resources.
- **Operational Evolution:** We recently implemented a new ticketing software (Ticketure) and are actively merging two historically separate teams, Visitor Services and Gallery Facilitators/Educators, into a single, unified guest experience team.

We are seeking a qualified consultant or consulting firm to lead a process of analysis, co-design, and strategic planning to transform our physical spaces, guest flow, and staffing models.

2. Scope of Work

The selected consultant will partner with leadership and staff to deliver on the following core areas:

A. Lobby Master Planning & Visual Flow

- Analyze current layout challenges and visitor behavior within the lobby.
- Design a comprehensive plan to improve visitor flow, reduce friction points, and eliminate competing priorities between the store, box office, IMAX, concessions, and café.
- Integrate educational, hands-on, or museum learning experiences directly into the lobby footprint.
- Provide physical layout recommendations to align with the new staffing model, ahead of a planned physical remodel.

B. Comprehensive 5-Year Exhibition & Activation Plan

- Draft a 5-year exhibition roadmap that balances hands-on gallery spaces with a lower labor model
- Address existing gaps in the current guest experience and identify opportunities for innovative, mission-aligned engagement.

C. Food, Beverage & Retail Optimization

- Café Model Analysis: Evaluate the financial and operational viability of bringing a full-time food and beverage program in-house versus securing a new external vendor (addressing our current low-commission model).
- Amenity Operations: Optimize the operations, cash handling and food handling training requirements for IMAX concessions and the gift shop to maximize revenue potential and visitor value.

D. Integrated Staffing Model & Team Co-Creation

- Unified Staffing Model: Design a comprehensive guest experience staffing model optimized for the new layout and Ticketure software.
- Team Merging & Co-Creation: Lead a series of staff workshops, team-building exercises, and co-design sessions to seamlessly merge the Visitor Services and Facilitator/Educator teams into one cohesive unit.
- Training Framework: Identify training needs for cross-functional staff (e.g., cash handling, food service, facilitation, and Ticketure utilization).

3. Project Timeline & Deliverables

Because the physical modifications and new staffing model must be fully rolled out by December 2026, this project operates on a highly compressed, overlapping schedule.

August 2026: Discovery, stakeholder interviews, team co-creation workshops, and Ticketure operational analysis.

September 2026: Delivery of the 5-Year Exhibition Plan, Food & Beverage model recommendations, and the Unified Staffing Model.

October 2026: Finalization of the low-cost lobby layout design, construction documentation, and staff cross-training.

November – December 2026: Physical lobby remodeling/modifications executed and the new staffing model launched.

Critical Deadline: All consultant deliverables, physical space adjustments, and staff transitions must be fully complete and operational no later than December 31, 2026.

Key Deliverables Expected:

- Current State Assessment
- Lobby Space Allocation & Visitor Flow Blueprint
- 5-Year Exhibition and Activation Plan

- Food & Beverage Pro-Forma (In-house vs. Vendor RFP recommendation)
- Unified Staffing Structure, Job Descriptions, and Training Matrix
- Facilitated Co-Creation Workshops for Merging Teams

4. Proposal Submission Requirements

Interested consultants should submit a proposal including the following components:

Firm Profile & Relevant Experience: Overview of your practice, specifically highlighting past work with museums, science centers, or visitor-heavy attractions. Experience with team mergers or hospitality/educator cross-training is highly desirable.

Project Approach & Methodology: A detailed description of how you will approach the co-design process with staff, space planning, and financial modeling.

Proposed Timeline: A breakdown of phases, milestones, and key touchpoints.

Staffing Plan: Bios of the key personnel who will be assigned to this project.

Cost Proposal: Total fixed fee for the scope of work, itemized by phase or major deliverable, inclusive of travel expenses.

References: Contact information for at least three recent clients for whom you have performed similar services.

4. Budget & Project Constraints

Total Initiative Budget: The maximum total allocation for this project is \$197,000, which must cover both consulting services and all subsequent physical fabrication and remodeling costs.

Consultant Fee Cap: Proposals for the consulting, co-design, and planning scope outlined in this RFP must not exceed \$60,000 (inclusive of all labor, materials, and travel expenses). Proposals exceeding this ceiling will be disqualified without review.

Design Realism: The selected consultant must deliver space and operational recommendations that can be realistically and fully executed using the remaining \$137,000+ of physical renovation capital.

In your Cost Proposal section, please provide:

Itemized Fee Structure: A fixed fee for the consultant's scope of work, broken down by phase.

Value Engineering Approach: A brief explanation of how you will ensure your physical design recommendations remain achievable within a highly constrained execution budget.

Submission Instructions

Please submit proposals by **July 31st** to:

Doris Bell
VP, Operations
The Tech Interactive
dbell@thetech.org

Please send proposals as a PDF with the subject line:

Proposal for Guest Experience & Operations Transformation

The Tech Interactive may invite selected firms for follow-up conversations.

Thank you for your interest in helping The Tech Interactive build a guest experience that focuses on discovery, hands-on learning, and our mission to inspire the innovator in everyone.