



GILLIAN'S PLACE

Working to end gender-based violence in Niagara

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ("RFP")

For

Strategic Plan Consulting Services

The closing date for proposal submission is
January 19, 2024 (the "Closing Date").

Gillian's Place
P.O. Box 1387
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7J8
www.gilliansplace.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| DEFINITIONS | 3 |
| COMMUNICATIONS | 4 |
| Electronic Communications | 4 |
| Addenda | 4 |
| BACKGROUND OF GILLIAN'S PLACE | 5 |
| PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES..... | 6 |
| PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA | 7 |
| PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS..... | 8 |
| INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS | 9 |
| GENERAL CONDITIONS | 11 |
| CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS | 14 |

DEFINITIONS

Owner: refers to Women's Place (St. Catharines & District) Inc., operating as Gillian's Place.

Agreement: means the agreement between Gillian's Place and the selected Proponent to perform the services, which are the subject matter of this document.

Award: means the written award from Gillian's Place to the successful Proponent to supply the services as a result of this document.

May: when used in this document shall be permissive and discretionary.

Shall or Will: when used in this document, shall be mandatory and required.

Person: when used, shall refer to any individual firm, company or person who has submitted a response to this document.

Proponent means any firm or company that has submitted a response to this document.

Work: means the work and services undertaken by the successful Proponent under the Agreement and includes all labour and services and any other items required to perform the Agreement.

COMMUNICATIONS

All other questions related to this Tender or for clarification of completing the Form of Tender are to be directed in writing to:

Nicole Regehr, Executive Director
Gillian's Place
P.O. Box 1387
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7J8
Tel: 905.684.4000, ext. 231
E-mail: nicole@gilliansplace.com

No person other than the above-named person or their authorized designate shall be authorized to speak for Gillian's Place concerning this document. Proponents agree not to rely upon nor is Gillian's Place bound by any oral or written statements or representations of any other person whether or not employed by Gillian's Place.

Any written enquiries regarding this Document received by Gillian's Place at least 96 hours before the Proposal Closing will be responded to at least 48 hours before the Proposal Closing. All replies will be via email. Should Gillian's Place, in its sole and absolute discretion, consider the enquiry relevant to potential Bidders, Gillian's Place will use its best efforts to provide both the query and the response to all known potential Bidders of record by email via addenda. Written enquiries received by Gillian's Place within 96 hours before the Proposal Closing will not be addressed and responded to except in extreme circumstances as determined in Gillian's Place's sole and absolute discretion.

Electronic Communications

Gillian's Place will only receive and reply to enquiries via email (please request a read receipt to confirm receipt of your message). Proponents agree to waive all confidentiality rights in their transmission and shall assume all risks of such methods of communication.

Addenda

Gillian's Place reserves the right in its sole discretion to amend this document at any time up to 96 hours before the closing date/time; proponents are advised that any changes to the document shall only be done by a formal written addendum issued by Gillian's Place's authorized representative.

Any such addenda shall be electronically mailed to all known proponents, and proponents are cautioned to ensure they have received all addenda before submitting a bid or, in any event, before the closing of bidding, as proposals cannot be amended or withdrawn following the close of bidding, for any reason.

BACKGROUND OF GILLIAN'S PLACE

As one of Ontario's first shelters for women and children experiencing abuse, Gillian's Place has been providing safe refuge and non-residential programs that enable women and their children to break the cycle of violence for over 45 years.

Gillian's Place is the only shelter and supportive services agency for women, trans and non-binary folks and their children who've experienced abuse, serving north and west Niagara (including Grimsby, Lincoln, West Lincoln, Niagara-on-the-Lake, St. Catharines and Thorold). Support and services are offered by qualified and experienced staff at two locations through our 34-bed emergency secure-access shelter, 13 transitional housing units, one-on-one and group counselling, and a 24/7 support line (phone or text).

Clients staying at the shelter or living in the community can access our support services, which include trauma-informed counselling for adults, youth, and children; transitional housing support services to assist women in developing a plan for independent living free from violence; and legal services, within which we employ a family law lawyer, providing legal advice, information, and assistance including child custody and access, support and property division. To our knowledge, we are the only shelter in Ontario that has a full-time family lawyer on staff.

Our facilities are fully accessible, and free translation services are available. It is not necessary to live in the shelter to access the free and confidential support services we provide.

Our Mandate

Gillian's Place is much more than a safe shelter. Our team provides confidential and compassionate counselling, legal advice, and transitional support to women, children, Two-Spirit, genderqueer, trans and non-binary people facing gendered violence in our community. We desire to offer services and spaces where all survivors can come without reservation, knowing they will be welcomed, respected, and provided with hope, support, and choices.

Our Mission

To work with and empower people experiencing gender-based violence by providing safety and support through a variety of programs and services and raising awareness about the root causes to end the cycle of violence and abuse.

Our Vision

We strive to be a socially just and equitable community where all are free from gender-based violence.

Founded: 1977

President: Jennifer Wallace, Board President

Budget: 2.5 million

Facilities: 24,000 sq ft St. Catharines facility housing shelter, administrative, and non-residential services, and Beamsville location housing non-residential services.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

In March of 2021, Gillian's Place commenced a strategic planning process entitled Reducing Barriers and Creating Sustainable Change. This planning took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and is influenced by many of the challenges faced throughout this time in our communities. Recognizing the impact of COVID-19 on shelter services and the growing diversity in the St. Catharines and North Niagara Region guided our work.

The successful implementation of our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan, Reducing Barriers and Creating Sustainable Change, relied on our ability to build on our community collaborations and increase our connections to local organizations that support diverse populations. Further, responding to post-pandemic needs in our communities required outreach and adapting to the changing needs of our community through collaborations and targeted expansion of our programming. We carefully documented a road map of our goals and laid out our strategic priorities in four overarching themes: Reduce Barriers, Expand to Better Serve the Needs of our Community, Respond to Post-pandemic Community Impacts and Organizational Sustainability.

At the renewal of this plan, and as we are amid an 8-million dollar renovation and expansion, it's time to look forward again and create a Strategic Plan for 2025-2028 that clearly outlines our upcoming Strategic Priorities and Objectives, given the changing landscape of our economy, community and the declaration of Intimate Partner Violence as an epidemic in Niagara.

Our organization has changed, the challenges we experience are evolving, and our objective in developing this new Strategic Plan is to address how we will continue to be a sustainable organization while providing the level of service required to our clients and their ever-changing and increasing needs.

Scope of Work

- Review of internal documentation
- Virtual interviews and focus groups: stakeholders, staff, board members (and other key stakeholders as necessary)
- External sector research as necessary
- Review of vision, mission, and values statements
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis
- Review of our current Strategic Plan and implementation work plan
- Development of our Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Tentative Schedule

November 24, 2023: RFP posted

January 19, 2024: Proposals due

February 28, 2024: Committee recommendations chosen

March 7, 2024: Finalist selected by the Board

Target completion date July 31, 2024

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Gillian's Place is committed to selecting the best-suited and most competitive offer. We will be considering the following criteria in our evaluation:

- Understanding of all items expressed in the RFP
- Demonstrated prior experience developing and implementing strategic plans for not-for-profit organizations
- Prior experience with or understanding of gender-based violence
- Understanding of Niagara's social services sector and landscape
- A demonstrated commitment to diverse and inclusive practices
- An approach to work that suits our organizational values and culture
- Quality, creativity and relevance of samples provided
- Suitability for project – current workload, ability to align with our timelines, staff size and resources and a demonstrated effectiveness with similar projects
- Budget

PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

We look forward to receiving your proposal outlining a complete and detailed description of the type(s) of service rendered.

The Proposal will include the following:

- A response to all core needs outlined in the Scope of Work
- Examples and sample work
- References that reflect expertise and experience
- Company Details, including:
 - Company name
 - Years in operation and total number of employees
 - Service address and primary phone number
 - Website and blog URL
 - Primary point of contact (name, title, phone and email)
 - Bios of primary team members who would be engaged in this project
 - Overview of key resources applicable to the project
 - What percentage of business is non-profit related
- Approach to project
 - What is your approach to understanding a new client's business and beginning work on a new account?
 - Explain the methodology and planning process for plan development
 - Outline what content will be needed
 - Detail any technical requirements
 - Detail project management
- Timeline to complete project
- Fee schedule and detailed budget, including applicable billing rates

Gillian's Place will not reimburse any cost associated with developing or presenting a proposal.

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

Receipt of Submissions

Proponents are required to submit proposals by email no later than 11:59 pm on **Friday, January 19, 2024**, addressed to:

Nicole Regehr, Executive Director
nicole@gilliansplace.com

Proponents are solely responsible for ensuring their proposals are received on time (please request a read receipt as a means to confirm receipt of your message). Proposals received after the closing date and time shall not be accepted or considered and shall be returned to the Proponent unopened. No proposal amendments or changes shall be made or received after the closing date and time.

General

These terms, conditions and specifications govern the Strategic Plan Consulting Services Request for Proposal for Gillian's Place. Gillian's Place shall make every effort to safeguard the confidentiality of each proposal submission. However, all proposal submissions are subject to the provisions of the current privacy legislation.

Conflict of Interest

An employee or Board Member of Gillian's Place shall not have a direct or indirect interest in a company or own a company which provides services to Gillian's Place.

Time Open for Acceptance

This proposal is irrevocable and is to continue open for acceptance by Gillian's Place for ninety (90) calendar days after the date and time set for submission of the proposal. Gillian's Place may at any time within the above ninety (90) day calendar period accept this proposal whether or not any other [tender, quotation or proposal] has previously been accepted.

Withdrawal

Gillian's Place reserves the right to withdraw, at its discretion, this proposal at any time and shall not be liable for any expense, cost, loss or damage incurred or suffered by any bidder as a result of such withdrawal.

Rejection of Proposals

Gillian's Place reserves the right to reject any or any part of any or all proposals. Also, it reserves the right to award a contract to a bidder other than the bidder submitting the lowest total budget.

At the election of Gillian's Place, whether or not a bid or bidder otherwise satisfies the requirements of the request for proposal, Gillian's Place may reject summarily any submission received from a person or corporation that is or which has been involved in litigation with Gillian's Place within the five years immediately preceding the date on which the request for proposal was published; any corporation that is an affiliate of or successor to any person or corporation described in clause (a); a person or corporation which, in the opinion of Gillian's Place or its professional advisors, does not possess the experience or financial, technical, personnel or other resources that may reasonably be expected to be necessary to carry out the obligations that the bidder proposes to assume under the terms of its bid;

Ownership of Documents

All documents prepared by the bidder are instruments of service for use in carrying out the service and are the property of Gillian's Place. The bidder irrevocably assigns to Gillian's Place its copyright therein. It is further expressly understood and agreed that, where applicable, all reports, documents, or other material prepared by the bidder may be published, printed or otherwise reproduced in whole or in part by Gillian's Place.

Examination of Contract Documents

The submission of a proposal shall constitute an acknowledgment, upon which Gillian's Place may be assured that the Bidder has thoroughly examined all of the contract documents, including, but not limited to, the legal and procedural records, general conditions, specifications, and addenda, if any, as well as Federal or Provincial regulations relating to the procurement. The failure or neglect of a Bidder to receive or examine any of the contract documents shall in no way relieve them from any obligations concerning this proposal or the contract, and no claim for additional compensation will be allowed, which is based upon a lack of knowledge of any contract document.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Governing Law

The laws of the Province of Ontario shall govern this agreement.

Comply With Laws

The successful bidder shall comply with all applicable statutes, laws, by-laws, regulations, ordinances, notices and orders, whether Federal, Provincial, Municipal or otherwise, at any time in effect during the currency of this contract.

Ethical Conduct

It is expected that suppliers for Gillian's Place will adopt, both for themselves and their employees, the highest ethical standards in the industry. All suppliers should become familiar with applicable Provincial and Federal standards and statutes concerning ethical conduct in a business setting.

Review of Submission

1. At the close of the proposal call, Gillian's Place will examine all eligible proposals.
2. Gillian's Place, at its sole discretion, may clarify any aspect of this request for proposal or any proposal with any proponent at any time. Any such clarification will not alter the proposal and will not constitute negotiation or re-negotiation of the total price of goods or services to be supplied or performed as set out in the proposal at the close of the proposal call.
3. Gillian's Place's right to clarify includes the right to request additional or missing information. The purpose of such clarification is to enable Gillian's Place to determine whether the bidder's proposal complies with the Proposal. The right to clarify is within the sole, complete, and unfettered discretion of Gillian's Place and may or may not be exercised by Gillian's Place at any time concerning any or all proposals. The right to clarify does not impose upon Gillian's Place a requirement to explain any part of a proposal where the proposal is deficient or otherwise unacceptable.
4. Review of its proposal with any proponent shall not oblige Gillian's Place to enter into a Contract with such proponent and shall not constitute an acceptance of any proponent's proposal.
5. All discussions pursuant to paragraph 2 above shall be in writing in a form satisfactory for inclusion in the Contract and satisfactory to Gillian's Place.

6. The proponent recommended may be required to meet with officials of Gillian's Place within 30 days to explain the details of the proponent's proposal. Such a meeting will take place virtually or in St. Catharines.

Confidentiality

All information regarding the terms, conditions, financial and technical aspects of the proposal, which, in the Proponent's opinion, are of a proprietary or confidential nature, should be clearly marked "**Confidential**" at each relevant item or page. All information marked "**Confidential**" will be held in strict confidence and shall not be intentionally released to any other party without the Proponent's consent or as may be required by any applicable law or trade agreement.

Prohibition Against Gratuities

Gillian's Place may preclude any Proponent from proceeding with this Proposal if it is found that gratuities in the form of entertainment, gifts or otherwise were offered or given by the Proponent or any employee, agent or representative of the Proponent to any officer, director, agent or employee of Gillian's Place to secure an agreement or seek favourable treatment in respect to the award or amendment of the contract or influencing the performance of the agreement. The Proponent must certify that no officer, director, agent or employee of Gillian's Place has benefited or will benefit financially or materially from the proposed agreement. Gillian's Place may terminate any contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were offered to or received by any Gillian's Place officer, director, agent or employee contrary to this policy.

Disposal of Submissions

All proposals and supporting material submitted in response to this Proposal shall become the property of Gillian's Place.

Non-Waiver

No condoning, excusing or overlooking by Gillian's Place of any default, breach or non-observance by the bidder at any time or times in respect of any provision herein contained shall operate as a waiver of Gillian's Place's right hereunder in relation to any continuing or subsequent default, breach of non-observance or to defeat or affect in any way the rights of Gillian's Place herein in respect of any such continuing or subsequent default or breach, and no waiver shall be inferred from or implied by anything done or omitted by Gillian's Place save only by express release in writing. And the doing of anything by Gillian's Place required by this agreement to be done by the bidder shall not relieve the bidder of their continuing obligation to do that thing.

Non-Assignment

The Proponent may assign neither this contract nor any work to be performed under this contract or any part thereof without the prior written consent of Gillian's Place. Such written consent, however, shall not under any circumstances relieve the Proponent of its liabilities and obligations under this contract and shall be within Gillian's Place's sole and unfettered discretion.

Termination

Gillian's Place may terminate any Contract if the successful bidder refuses or fails to comply with any of the terms and conditions of this agreement or with any proper order or request of Gillian's Place, and such refusal or failure continues for five (5) business days after receipt by the successful bidder of notice in writing from Gillian's Place setting out the particulars of such refusal or failure, Gillian's Place shall have the right, at its sole option, to terminate this agreement forthwith by notice in writing to the successful bidder at the address given by them in the bidding documents. Thereupon, the rights of the successful bidder shall immediately cease, determine and be at an end, and all funds being managed on behalf of Gillian's Place shall be transferred to the firm as instructed by Gillian's Place within 30 days of the termination of the agreement. Gillian's Place shall not be liable for payment to the successful bidder of any monies whatsoever by reason of such termination. Where the Agreement is terminated in accordance with the preceding, Gillian's Place, without limiting the generality of the preceding, shall be deemed free to enter into an agreement with any other person or persons.

In Case of Bankruptcy

Subject to the provisions of the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act or any successor legislation or any other applicable legislation, where, during the term of the contract, the successful bidder makes an assignment for the benefit of its creditors or becomes bankrupt or insolvent or undergoes reorganization, or makes a proposal to its creditors, or otherwise becomes financially unable to perform this contract, Gillian's Place may, at its option, declare the contract immediately terminated. Where Gillian's Place declares the contract immediately terminated, Gillian's Place shall be entitled to enter into a contract with another party without the consent of the successful bidder. The said declaration of immediate termination of the contract by Gillian's Place and Gillian's Place's entering into a contract with another vendor shall in no way prejudice any rights or remedies that Gillian's Place may have at law against the successful bidder.

Verbal Instruction or Suggestion

Gillian's Place will assume no responsibility for verbal instruction or suggestion. All official correspondence regarding the specifications must be directed to and will be issued by the Gillian's Place Administration in the form of an Addendum.

In Case of Dispute

In case of dispute as to whether or not a service quoted or delivered meets specifications, the decision of the Board of Directors of Gillian's Place shall be final and binding on both parties.

Rights Cumulative

All rights and remedies herein given to Gillian's Place are distinct, separate and cumulative. They shall not be deemed to be in exclusion of any other rights or remedies available to Gillian's Place under this agreement or otherwise.

Survival of Bidder's Obligation

Upon the expiration or termination of this agreement for whatsoever reason, the obligations of the bidder remaining unsatisfied hereunder shall nevertheless continue unless otherwise expressly provided herein.

Non Exclusive Contract

Any Contract awarded as a result of this document shall be non-exclusive, and the Contractor acknowledges that Gillian's Place may, in its sole discretion, contract with others for the same or similar service during the term of any Contract formed as a result of this document.

CONTRACTUAL REQUIREMENTS**Indemnity**

The successful bidder shall indemnify and save harmless Gillian's Place, its directors and officers, employees and agents against and from all actions, causes of action, interest, claims, demands, costs, damages, expenses, including defence costs or losses which Gillian's Place may bear, suffer, incur, become liable for or be put to by reason of any damage to property or injury or death to persons by reason of, arising out of or in consequence of the breach, violation of non-performance by the successful bidder of any provision of this agreement, or by reason of or arising out of the use of the premises or in connection with the work covered by this contract, or by reason of or arising out of any act, neglect or default or omission by the successful bidder or any of its agents or employees or any other person or persons, in, on, or about the premises.