

South Waikato District Council Procurement for Contracted Services

RFP – Community Vibrancy

The Opportunity

South Waikato District Council (SWDC) invites Proposals from eligible Respondents with the capability and experience to plan and deliver community events in the South Waikato District.

This procurement supports the Long-Term Plan 2024-2034 goal: “More people participate in community activities and event than ever before.” Council may award one or more contracts from a total available pool of \$96,311 excluding GST.

Council is seeking events that increase community participation, are well planned and responsibly delivered, and respond to the communities they are intended to serve. Respondents may propose the use of suitable Council-owned venues or public spaces, including underutilised facilities. Their use is encouraged where appropriate but is not mandatory and remains subject to availability, charges, booking requirements and approvals.

1. Key Information

1.1. Context

This is an open, competitive Request for Proposal for contracted Community Vibrancy event-delivery services. The successful Responded or Respondents will enter into a contract with SWDC and will be accountable for the agreed services, use of the investment and reporting requirements.

1.2. Indicative timeline

The following timetable sets out the current programme for this RFP Process. The timetable is indicative, SWDC may amend the process or dates by issuing a Notice to Tenderers on the Council website. Material clarifications will be made available to all Respondents

Action	Indicative Date
RFP opens and Proposal Forms become available	17 August 2026
Tokoroa Information session – Tokoroa Library	25 August 2026, 9.30am – 11.30am
Tirau Information session – The Dog	26 August 2026, 11am – 12 noon
Tokoroa Information session – Te Tira	27 August 2026, 1pm – 3 pm
Putāruru Information session – Putāruru Library	1 September, 10am – 12 noon
Deadline for Respondent questions	7 September
Final date for SWDC to publish answers to questions	8 September
Deadline for Proposals	14 September 11.59pm
Compliance review and evaluation	14 September to 5 October
Approval and notification	By 12 October 2026

Contract signing and commencement	By end of October 2026
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1.3. Contact details

Information drop-in sessions will explain the RFP requirements and submission process. Staff will not prepare, improve or provide content for a Respondent's Proposal. Any material clarification provided during a session will be published for all Respondents.

All communications concerning this RFP must be directed to:

Mandy McCabe

07 985 3842

communitycontracts@southwaikato.govt.nz

It's strongly encouraged that all proposals be discussed with the grant administrator to ensure that proposals meet eligible criteria in this competitive market.

1.4. Proposal submission method

Proposals must be submitted via email using the official application forms available on the South Waikato District Council's website [Community Investment Contracts - South Waikato District Council](#).

Proposals must be completed in full and submitted by the closing date and time specified in this Request for Proposals. Late submissions may not be accepted unless approved by the Council in exceptional circumstances.

Hand delivered or hard-copy applications will not be accepted.

1.5. RFP definitions

In this RFP key words and expressions have the meanings as set out in the definition section at the end of this RFP.

2. Our Requirements

Details of the specific response requirements can be found in the Instructions section of the RFP Response Form. The following sections provide an overview of our requirements, and this understanding should be reflected in your response.

2.1. What we require from a Respondent

Each Proposal must describe an event, or a related series of events, to be delivered within the South Waikato District. The Respondent must demonstrate:

- Relevant experience of transferable capability to deliver community events
- Clear leadership, responsibilities and delivery arrangements
- Sufficient people, time systems and resources, or a credible plan to secure them
- A practical delivery methodology, event plan and risk-management approach
- A credible approach to increasing participation and reaching the event's intended communities
- Proposed KPIs that are relevant, measurable and achievable

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- Sound financial management and a realistic, transparent budget

Each Proposal must include a credible plan to attract at least 500 attendees in total across the event or related event series covered by that Proposal.

2.2. Contract term and value

The contract will commence when signed by the last party and will expire on 30 June 2027. SWDC may approve an extension to 30 September 2027 where reasonably required to completed approved delivery or reporting.

The total available pool is \$96,311 excluding GST. Respondents may request part or all of the pool. Council may award one or more contracts and is not required to allocate the full pool. Any partial award will require agreement with the Respondent on a revised scope, price, deliverables and Contract terms.

Payments will be linked to milestones agreed before contract signing. Milestones may include contract execution; acceptance of the event plan; budget and required approvals; completed event delivery; and acceptance of final performance and financial reporting.

Unspent investment must be returned to SWDC in accordance with the Contract.

2.3. Eligibility Criteria

Eligible Respondents

A Respondent must be a legal person or entity capable of entering into and performing the Contract. Eligible Respondents must be one of the following:

- A legally constituted not-for-profit organisation, incorporated society, charitable trust or other community entity
- A sole trader
- Part of a joint or consortium Proposal that nominates one eligible lead entity to enter into the Contract and be accountable to SWDC.

Ineligible

- An individual acting only in a personal capacity, without operating as a sole trader or through another eligible legal entity, is not eligible.

Other Eligibility Requirements

- The event must be delivered within the South Waikato District
- The Respondent must hold public liability insurance of at least \$1 million before the Contract commences and maintain it for the required period
- The Respondent must not have an existing SWDC Community Vibrancy contract for the same services or costs proposed in this RFP
- The Respondent and any proposed lead entity must be solvent and able to meet their contractual obligations.
- The Respondent must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest and any matter that may materially affect its ability to deliver the Contract.

2.4. Eligible Costs

SWDC investment may be used for reasonable costs directly attributable to planning and delivering the contracted event including:

- Equipment hires
- Venue hire
- Marketing and advertising
- Performer, artist and entertainment fees
- Event-specific licences, permits and regulatory costs
- Administration and personnel costs directly related to event delivery, up to 20% of the amount awarded by SWDC.

2.5. Ineligible costs and activities

SWDC investment must not be used for:

- Costs incurred or committed before the Contract commences, unless expressly approved in writing
- General organisational costs or overheads unrelated to the event
- Minor or major infrastructure upgrades
- Alcohol
- Prizes, awards or gift vouchers
- Donations or koha
- Permanent full-time or part-time salaries
- Personnel costs above the permitted 20% limit
- Costs already funded from another source
- Activities primarily intended to provide private financial benefit

New, existing and recurring events are eligible where the Proposal demonstrates how the requested investment will increase participation or improve community outcomes. All anticipated event income, sponsorship, other funding and in-kind contributions must be disclosed in the budget.

2.6. Key deliverables, performance and reporting

The successful Respondent must:

- Deliver the agreed event within the South Waikato District
- Deliver within the contracted timeframe and budget
- Obtain all required venue bookings, licences, permits and regulatory approvals
- Use South Waikato venues and suppliers where they are suitable, reasonably available and represent value for money
- Undertake agreed marketing and provide material to Council at least four weeks before the event, unless another timeframe is agreed
- Meet with relevant SWDC staff at agreed planning and progress points
- Maintain complete financial records and evidence of expenditure
- Collect appropriate attendance, participation and feedback information
- Provide the agreed progress and final performance and financial reports

Reporting dates will reflect the event timetable and will be stated in the Contract. Personal information must be handled in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020. Attendance and feedback should be reported in

aggregated or anonymised form where possible. Permission is required before identifiable names, testimonials, photographs or recordings are provided to Council or published.

If the Respondent materially fails to deliver the agreed services or use the investment for approved purposes, SWDC may require repayment of an appropriate portion in accordance with the Contract. SWDC will consider work completed, eligible costs properly incurred, circumstances outside the Respondent's control and approved changes before deciding repayment.

2.7. Other RFP documents

These documents have been uploaded to Council's website and are available to Respondents – they form part of the RFP. These include:

- a) Appendix A - RFP Response Form (Community Vibrancy)
- b) Appendix B – Project Budget Template (Community Vibrancy)

A Respondent may submit Proposals for more than one event. A separate Response Form and Project Budget Template must be submitted for each Proposal. A combined covering letter may identify efficiencies or other benefits of delivering more than one event.

3. Proposal Requirements

The Respondent must:

- Complete every mandatory part of the RFP Response Form
- Answer the questions directly and in the order provided
- Complete and sign the declaration
- Provide a completed Project Budget Template and all required supporting information
- Submit the Proposal by the deadline and method in section 1.4.
- Questions must be directed to the Point of Contact in section 1.3.
- Proposals will be evaluated in accordance with section 4.
- The proposal form can be branded and adapted to match the 'look and feel' the respondent wishes to use; however, the structure and formatting should not be adapted.

4. Evaluation

4.1. Pre-conditions

A Proposal must meet all of the following pre-conditions to proceed to weighted evaluation:

- **The Respondent meets the eligibility requirements in section 2.3. and has a formal legal structure or has nominated an eligible lead entity.**
- **The Respondent holds, or commits to obtain before Contract commencement, public liability insurance of at least \$1 million.**
- **The Proposal is received by the deadline and submission method in section 1.4. and contains the mandatory information required by the RFP Response Form.**

SWDC may waive or seek clarification of a minor or technical omission where doing so is fair to all Respondents and does not permit the Respondent to materially improve its Proposal.

4.2. Weighted criteria

Criterion	Weight	What will be assessed
Governance and leadership	15%	The Respondent's governance and leadership arrangements will be assessed proportionately to its legal structure and scale. The assessment will consider clear accountability, decision-making, financial oversight, management of conflicts of interest, delivery responsibilities and relevant skills and experience. Where applicable, the Community Governance Good Governance Code will be used as a guide when assessing the Respondent's governance arrangements. Sole traders and other Respondents without a formal governance board will be assessed against equivalent evidence of accountability, oversight and responsible decision-making
Relevant experience	20%	Relevant or transferable experience, supported by examples showing successful delivery, innovation and management of challenges.
Outcomes and methodology	30%	A practical delivery plan, community reach, mobilisation, systems, risk management, proposed KPIs, and the suitability of the proposed venue or location. Effective use of an underutilised Council-owned venue may be recognised where appropriate, but is not required.
Financials and value for money	20%	A credible budget; the amount requested relative to scope, participation and outcomes; financial controls; other contributions; delivery risk; and ability to account for public money. Additional funding or in-kind support is desirable but not mandatory.
Alignment with key themes	15%	Alignment with community participation, collaboration, local leadership and empowerment, and culturally appropriate approaches relevant to intended participants, including relevant Te Ao Māori and/or Te Ao Pasifika approaches.

4.3. Common scoring scale

Rating	Score	Definition
Excellent	90-100	Exceeds the requirement and demonstrates significant added value, supported by strong evidence.
Good	70-89	Satisfies the requirement and demonstrates additional benefits, supported by evidence.
Acceptable	50-69	Satisfies the requirement with adequate supporting evidence.
Minor reservations	30-49	Barely satisfies the requirement; there are concerns or limited supporting evidence.
Serious reservations	10-29	Only partially satisfies the requirement and presents significant concerns.
Unacceptable	0-9	Does not satisfy the requirement or provides insufficient evidence.

The scale will be applied separately to each weighted criterion. If a Proposal receives an Unacceptable score for any criterion, the TET may exclude it from further consideration, having regard to the nature and significance of the failure.

4.4. Evaluation process and selection

- Each evaluator independently scores eligible Proposals against the published criteria.
- The TET meets to moderate and confirm scores and records the reasons for its conclusions.
- SWDC may seek written clarification or conduct proportionate due diligence.
- Clarification must not allow a material improvement to a Proposal.
- SWDC may invite shortlisted Respondents to a presentation. The same process will apply to all invited Respondents, and SWDC will advise whether the presentation is scored and what information may be considered.

The TET recommends the combination of conforming Proposals that best meets the published requirements, provides appropriate community and geographic coverage, represents value for money and remains within the available pool.

Recommendations are subject to approval under Council delegations and satisfactory due diligence and Contract agreement.

The TET will use information contained in Proposals and information formally obtained through an authorised clarification, presentation or due diligence process. Evaluators must not rely on undisclosed personal knowledge, assumptions or unsupported opinions.

5.0. Due diligence

Due diligence may include:

- Reference checks of the Respondent and any named personnel
- Companies Office or NZBN checks
- Presentations
- Site visits
- Financial or credit checks where proportionate
- Police vetting for relevant personnel whose roles involve working independently with children or vulnerable people

6.0. RFP Terms

By submitting a Proposal, the Respondent agrees to these RFP Terms and the requirements in the RFP documents.

Fair process: SWDC will endeavour to act fairly and reasonably and may amend, suspend or cancel the RFP by written notice.

Point of Contact: All RFP communications must use the Point of Contact. TET members must not be contacted or lobbied about the RFP.

Respondent costs: Each Respondent bears its own costs of preparing and submitting a Proposal and participating in clarification, presentation, negotiation or due diligence.

Acceptance and rejection: SWDC may accept one or more Proposals, may negotiate with one or more preferred Respondents, and may offer a partial award subject to agreement. The lowest price proposal will not necessarily be selected.

Late Proposals and minor omissions: SWDC may accept a late Proposal or waive a minor or technical omission only where this is consistent with a fair process and does not give an unfair advantage.

Clarification: SWDC may seek clarification but is not obliged to do so. Clarification must not materially change the Proposal except through an expressly authorised negotiation with a preferred Respondent.

Confidentiality and disclosure: SWDC will handle information in accordance with applicable legal obligations, including the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 and the Privacy Act 2020. Respondents must identify information they consider commercially sensitive, but SWDC cannot guarantee it will be withheld.

Conflicts and probity: Actual or perceived conflicts of interest must be disclosed promptly with proposed mitigation. Gifts, inducements an improper lobbying are prohibited.

Due diligence: SWDC may verify information and take due-diligence results into account. Materially inaccurate or misleading information may result in exclusion.

No contract until signed: Selection or notification does not create a contract. A contract exists only when an agreed written Contract is signed by both parties.

Debriefing: Unsuccessful Respondents may request feedback after notification.

Governing law: The RFP process and any resulting Contract are governed by New Zealand law.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Conflict of Interest	an actual, potential or perceived conflict between a person's or organisation's interests or obligations and its duties in this RFP process or resulting Contract.
Deadline for Proposals	the closing date and time in section 1.2.
GST	goods and services tax under the Goods and Services Tax Act 1985.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator: an agreed measure used to assess delivery and outcomes.
Long-Term Plan or LTP	SWDC's Long-Term Plan 2024-2034.
Notice to Tenderers or NTT	a written notice issued by SWDC to clarify or amend the RFP.
Point of Contact	SWDC's contact in section 1.3 and the contact identified in a Respondent's Proposal.
Proposal	a response submitted under this RFP.
Proposal Form	the form and declaration prescribed by SWDC.
Respondent	a legal person or entity that submits a Proposal, including an eligible sole trader, organisation or consortium lead entity.
RFP	this Request for Proposal for Community Vibrancy contracted event-delivery services.
SWDC	South Waikato District Council.
TET	the Tender Evaluation Team responsible for evaluating Proposals and making recommendations.