

Meridian Centre Ready To Drink (RTD) Pouring Rights Partnership

September 11, 2024



MERIDIAN CENTRE
1 DAVID S HOWES WAY
ST. CATHARINES, ON

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Meridian Centre is requesting proposals from a qualified provider interested in a pouring rights partnership as primary Ready to Drink (RTD) provider and performing all services necessary to develop and implement the RTD categories within the Meridian Centre.

The goal is to enhance our patrons' experience and partner with brands whose missions are aligned with reaching a diverse audience while understanding that the exposure to approximately 250,000 annual visitors in a unique marketing opportunity to help stimulate mutual growth. The Meridian Centre will form a strong business alliance with the selected primary Ready to Drink (RTD) partner(s) with the expectation of delivering a quality product, outstanding guest experience, and working collaboratively in a pouring rights partnership.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

This RFP is intended to secure the Ready to Drink (RTD) pouring rights partnership with ONE (1) main Ready to Drink Provider, featuring ONE (1) primary SKU, being either Spirits or Malt based. Additional SKU lines may be considered from selected bidders who have a brand line up or unique offering to benefit the partnership.

Three (3) year term will commence November 1, 2024.

- i. **Supply:** the successful proponent will be required to provide enough supply to adequately service the varied event schedule of the Meridian Centre. A typical event schedule includes 34 OHL Hockey Games, 10 CEBL Basketball Games, and approximately 20 Live Entertainment Events throughout the year.
- ii. **Pricing:** Preferred product pricing will strengthen the proponents bid, at minimum licensee pricing is required.
- iii. **Sponsorship and Marketing Rights:** the successful proponent will be interested in investing in a strategic marketing alliance that will enhance the guest experience and will be rated for selection according to their investment. Submissions that include the following will be reviewed and rated as per the chart below:

1. Financial Contribution – 60%

Annual Cash Investment, with a minimum 2.5% escalator per year, for the contract's duration.

2. Marketing - Brand Contribution - 10%

Custom hospitality spaces should be considered with focus on service areas, signage promoting partnership in the venue, cross promotions, activations and contesting to empathize sponsorship, examples may include, branded inviting decor, portable carts and locations, and/or digital signage that can be utilized for event schedules.

3. Niagara Region - 10%

The successful proponent does not need to be based out of the Niagara Region but should have an established history of success in this market. Preference in this evaluation category will be given to those who produce locally. Local establishments and manufacturing throughout the Niagara Region emphasize their connection to communities and the local hospitality industry.

4. Product Quality and Evaluation- 10%

Deliver ONE (1) SKU of preference, and a second SKU (if applicable) for tasting and evaluation. Deliver to main box office prior to submission deadline within regular business hours.

5. Brand Recognition and Industry Experience- 10%

Strength of brand in the marketplace, relevant sales, consumption, product delivery and familiarity. Experience in like venues, similar markets and communities and venue successes of similar size and volumes, strengthened by testimonials.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

2.1 MERIDIAN CENTRE

Managed by ASM Global, the leader in global facility management, the Meridian Centre is the premier location for live entertainment in the Niagara Region. Opened in 2014, the 160,000 square-foot arena comprises 5,300 seats and is in the 12th largest CMA nationally. With nearly 2 million people located within 30 minutes of St. Catharines, the Meridian Centre has successfully attracted a wide variety of renowned sporting events, concerts, and performances to the Niagara Region. Capturing the hearts of a diverse population, the venue has hosted artists and athletes of all calibers including Jerry Seinfeld, Elton John, Bryan Adams, Cirque du Soleil, Stars on Ice, the U18 Women’s World Hockey Championship as well as the prestigious Scotties Tournament of Hearts and the FIBA U18 Americas Championships. Recurring events include OHL Hockey with the Niagara IceDogs, and CEBL Basketball with the Niagara River Lions. With an avid fan base of weekly visitors, the Meridian Centre continues to offer an extraordinary experience in both entertainment and hospitality.

2.2 ASM GLOBAL

ASM Global is the world’s leading producer of entertainment experiences. It is the global leader in venue and event strategy and management—delivering locally tailored solutions and cutting-edge technologies to achieve maximum results for venue owners. The company’s elite venue network spans five continents, with a portfolio of more than 350 of the world’s most prestigious arenas, stadiums, convention, and exhibition centers, and performing arts venues.

2.2.1 CORPORATE STRUCTURE

ASM Global is a party to a certain management agreement (the “Management Agreement”) dated as of May 20, 2013 with the Corporation of the City of St. Catharines (the “Owner”), whereby ASM Global (“Agent” or “Licensor”) has been retained to act as Owner’s managing agent in respect of a facility commonly known as MERIDIAN CENTRE (the “Facility” or “Centre”), located at 1 David S Howes Way, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 0B3 which is owned by the Owner. Pursuant to the Management Agreement, ASM Global has the express authority to enter into agreements on Owner’s behalf relating to the Facility.

3. RFP PROCESS

ASM Global, the management company responsible for the daily operation of the Meridian Centre will administer the RFP process and final selections.

3.1 KEY INFORMATION

Key Information for the RFP Process	
Contact Officer	Brodie Langford, Director of Food & Beverage
Method to Submit Proposal	Email: blangford@meridiancentre.com
Release	September 11, 2024
Questions and Amendments Open	September 16-27, 2024
Submission Due	Oct 4, 2024
Proponent Awarding	October 11, 2024

3.2 RFP SUBMISSIONS

The purpose of this RFP is to select a Preferred Proponent to negotiate, finalize, and sign the RTD Pouring Rights Partnership for the provision of the scope of services required.

- i. RFP Submissions must be received by the MERIDIAN CENTRE in writing, via email only, to the Contact Officer with “Ready to Drink (RTD) Pouring Rights Partnerships” in the subject line no later than 4:00 PM on Friday, October 4, 2024. RFP Submissions received after that time will not be considered.
- ii. RFP Proponents will be required to represent and warrant that the information contained in their RFP Submission remains valid, accurate, and complete for the period of the RFP Submission. In the event of any material changes to the information contained in the RFP Submission, the RFP Proponent will advise the RFP to contact immediately in writing, detailing such changes.
- iii. RFP Proponents will receive confirmation of receipt of their RFP Submission via email.
- iv. RFP Submissions delivered to the Meridian Centre will not be accepted. Supplementary information included in the submission that was not asked for as set out in this RFP will not be considered in the evaluation of the RFP Submissions.

3.3 REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RFP Proponents should make every effort to obtain any clarification they may require allowing themselves to deliver a viable RFP Submission. To ensure that all RFP Proponents receive equal information:

- i. Requests for additional information or requests concerning this RFP are to be received in writing via e-mail no later than 4:00 PM on Friday September 27, 2024, to the Contact Officer. Note: proponents will have TWO (2) weeks to submit requests for clarification or additional information within the timeframe of September 16-27, 2024, early questions encouraged.
- ii. The request and response to material inquiries will be communicated in a timely manner to all RFP proponents by way of an addendum issued by the Contact Officer, via email between the dates of September 16-27, 2024.
- iii. All material questions, as determined by the Contact Officer in their unqualified sole, absolute, unfettered, and subjective discretion, and responses, will be distributed to all RFP Proponents, without identifying the originator of the question.
- iv. Questions submitted to anyone other than the Contact Officer will not be answered. RFP proponents must not make oral inquiries associated with this RFP. The Meridian Centre, through written addendum only, may alter this RFP.

4. CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

The Meridian Centre is seeking a relationship with RFP Proponent(s) who will provide Ready to Drink (RTD) Pouring Partnership Rights as outlined.

4.1 SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUIRED

The RFP Proponent must have the ability to meet the volume of business and general business parameters as detailed below.

4.1.1 POURING RIGHTS VOLUME AND DETAILS

i. Estimated sales and volume required require approximately 10,000 - 15,000 (473ml) Ready To Drink (RTD) units delivered annually to the Meridian Centre, with the ability to reliably satisfy potential weekly volumes of 500-800 (473ml) units on any given week.

ii. Product SKU lines to be strategically targeted include:

- **1 x Ready to Drink (RTD), either Spirits or Malt Based**

Additional/Seasonal product lines to be agreed upon with the Director of Food and Beverage. Should any additional/seasonal product lines be introduced for a limited period, the Ready to Drink (RTD) Partner will take back and provide a credit for any unsold inventory, within a 2-month period.

iii. Customer preference and selection of brands may increase or decrease the volume estimate greatly. Proponents should be flexible and able to supply more or less volume as the program unveils and develops, these parameters are for information purposes only and are not a guarantee of any kind with respect to future gross revenues.

4.2 EVENT PARTNERSHIP CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

i. From time-to-time events at the Meridian Centre are sponsored by competing domestic and/or local RTD suppliers. For one-off events, competitive products may be permitted. The successful proponent understands and agrees that the organizers of certain national and international events occurring at the Meridian Centre may have a requirement that a competing brand lineup may be made available for sale at that event. No financial allowance will be made to the successful proponent because of this requirement.

ii. The Meridian Centre has a main domestic beer, a wine, a craft beer and cider sponsorship in place, an RTD partner will operate in parallel with this partnership. In submitting a proposal, proponents agree to this provision.

4.3 LENGTH OF AGREEMENT

The Successful Proponent is expected to enter this Ready to Drink (RTD) Pouring Rights Partnership for a term of three (3) years.

4.4 INFORMATION FOR THE RFP PROPONENT

The Meridian Centre will examine the RFP Submissions and evaluate, among other aspects:

- i. Financial Contribution
- ii. Marketing Brand Contribution
- iii. Local to the Niagara Region
- iv. Product Quality and Evaluation
- v. Brand Recognition and Industry Experience

4.5 QUALIFYING EVALUATION CRITERIA

It is the Meridian Centre’s intention to select ONE (1) Primary RTD Option, with an option of adding a second RTD if/when appropriate. Proponents that are qualified and who have met the mandatory requirements will be evaluated by the criteria herein.

Proposal Evaluation

The successful proponent will be selected based on evaluation of the proposal utilizing a rating system which considers the requirements outlined and a list of criteria represents areas which are to be specifically addressed in the proposal. The evaluation process will not necessarily be limited to these areas. Other criteria not specifically listed above may also receive consideration.

RFP Proponents are asked to provide descriptions, information, evidence, and references from other contracts that will demonstrate qualifications and help the Meridian Centre evaluate. Note: A guideline of one (1) page (minimum font size of 12 points) is a general recommendation to meet this requirement for each criteria section.

4.5.1 SUMMARY AND SELECTION RATING

<i>Summary of Key Criteria Point Allocations</i>	<i>Percentage Weight</i>
Financial Contribution - Annual Cash Investment, with a 2.5% escalator per year, for the contract's duration.	60%
Marketing Contribution - Custom hospitality spaces should be considered, with focus on service areas, signage promoting partnership in the venue, cross promotions and contesting to empathize sponsorship, examples may include, branded inviting decor, portable carts, and locations, and/or digital signage that can be utilized for event schedules.	10%
Niagara Region - Product preferably produced, administered, and established in the Niagara Region. Summary of current market share, business accolades, customer demographics and key insights for target market.	10%
Product Quality & Evaluation – deliver up to TWO (2) SKUs of preference (Main Product & select seasonal) for tasting, and evaluation. Deliver product to main box office prior to submission deadline within regular business hours.	10%
Brand Recognition & Industry Experience – strength of brand in the marketplace, relevant sales, consumption, product delivery and familiarity. Experience in like venues, similar markets and communities and venue successes of similar size and volumes, strengthened by testimonials.	10%
TOTAL	100%

5. GENERAL CONDITIONS

5.1 LEGAL RESTRICTIONS

The following conditions apply to this RFP:

- i. All contacts and inquiries must be through the RFP contact noted above at Section 3. No other member of the Meridian Centre may be contacted directly.
- ii. The Meridian Centre is not required to select any RFP Proponent.
- iii. The Meridian Centre reserves the right to request clarification from any or all RFP proponents.
- iv. RFP proponents acknowledge and agree the Meridian Centre will not be responsible, and RFP proponents agree to indemnify and hold harmless Meridian Centre, for any costs, expenses, losses, damages (including damage or loss of anticipated profit) or liabilities incurred by any RFP proponent as a result of, or arising out of, submitting a RFP Submission, the communication of any information contained in a RFP Submission or subsequent RFP Submission to any party, including the public, or due to the Meridian Centre acceptance or non-acceptance of any RFP Submission received.
- v. The Meridian Centre makes no representations or warranties concerning the completeness or accuracy of the information contained in this RFP. RFP proponents remain responsible for satisfying themselves as to the completeness and accuracy of all information.
- vi. Meridian Centre reserves the right to change all dates, schedules, deadlines, processes, and requirements of the RFP from time to time without liability whatsoever.

5.2 DISQUALIFICATION

The Meridian Centre may, in its sole discretion, disqualify a RFP proponent at any time during the RFP process if:

- i. The RFP Submission contains false information or the RFP proponent, or any proponent team member, misrepresents any information provided in the RFP Submission
- ii. The RFP proponent fails to submit, complete, or fully execute one or more of the RFP requirements.
- iii. The RFP Submission reveals, in the sole opinion of the Meridian Centre, a conflict of interest of sufficient character to prejudice the RFP process.
- iv. The RFP proponent has improperly contacted the people identified in Section 3
- v. The RFP proponent, or any advisor/consultant to an RFP proponent, contacts other potential RFP proponents to lessen competition between RFP proponents and deprives the Meridian Centre of a competitive and open process.

5.3 TERMINATION OF THE RFP

All RFP proponents, by submitting an RFP Submission, are deemed to have acknowledged and accepted that the Meridian Centre is not obligated or required to complete the RFP process or select any proponent. The selection and final approval of the successful proponent is subject to review and approval, in their sole, absolute, unfettered, and subjective discretion, of the Meridian Centre. All RFP proponents will be notified, in writing, if the RFP is cancelled or terminated.

5.4 AGREEMENT BY THE RFP PROPONENTS

Submission of an RFP Submission will mean the proponent agrees to comply with the RFP requirements and agrees to negotiate in good faith to finalize the terms of the Ready to Drink (RTD) Pouring Rights Partnership. Proponents have undertaken due diligence and accepts the characteristics and the objectives of the Meridian Centre.