



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

For The Activation of the Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion on the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Downtown Boston

Boston Harbor Now, the legislative non-profit partner of the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park, seeks creative and innovative ideas to activate the Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion on the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Downtown Boston.



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1. Summary of the Request for Information (RFI)

A visit to the Boston Harbor Islands and the Boston Harborwalk is a unique Boston experience. Boston Harbor Now, the non-profit partner of the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park, seeks entrepreneurial and creative ideas to activate and operate a prime location in the heart of downtown Boston at the Boston Harbor Islands Welcome Center on The Greenway.

This RFI not only offers a rare and unique business opportunity for a creative entrepreneur, company, artist, or individual to pilot activating an urban oasis, but it also provides a chance to partner with the National Park Service (NPS) and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to provide a first-class visitor experience, and to help Boston Harbor Now expand public awareness and access to Boston's Harbor, Waterfront (including the Harborwalk), and Harbor islands.

The Boston Harbor Islands Welcome Center is on the Rose Kennedy Greenway, a contemporary public park connecting neighborhoods from Chinatown to The North End, welcoming millions of visitors annually. The Welcome Center is a great public space with immense potential being centrally located by some of the City's most popular tourist attractions. We are seeking a vendor to partner with Boston Harbor Now and NPS), to help promote the Harborwalk and Harbor Islands and bring new life to this wonderful public space.

2. Key Dates

- **December 10, 2024:** RFEI distributed and posted on the Boston Harbor Now website
- **Tuesday, December 31, 2024, noon EST:** RFEI submissions due

Please note: Boston Harbor Now will review responses, follow-up with additional questions or conduct initial interviews, and invite select Respondents for proposals if warranted.

Contact PhuongDuy Tran at ptran@bostonharbornow.org for more information.

3. Background

Boston Harbor Now

Boston Harbor Now is the legislated non-profit partner of the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park Area. In this capacity, Boston Harbor Now supports the Park landowners and managers through various activities, including procurement and management of vendors, business development, and marketing of the Park. Boston Harbor Now is authorized to procure and manage vendor services on

Georges and Spectacle Island and is authorized to procure and manage vendor services at the Welcome Center on The Greenway.

Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park

The Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park is one of only 419 National Park Service units nationwide. The Park is the largest open green space in Boston, providing over 1,600-acres of recreational, historic, and educational opportunities. Many locations in the Park are open year-round, but public ferry service, visitor amenities, and programming on the most visited islands are offered seasonally from mid-May to mid-October (Indigenous Peoples Day).

Harbor Islands Welcome Center

Envisioned as the gateway to the Park, the Harbor Islands Welcome Center on The Greenway opened in 2012. Since 2016, the Welcome Center has been staffed by park rangers and volunteers during the times when public ferries operate providing information about the Park and helping visitors plan their trips. Occasionally, public programming is offered at the Welcome Center. Programming includes fitness classes such as yoga and Zumba as well as kids activities like arts and crafts, climate education, and Imagination Playground. In 2017, Boston Harbor Now added seating and tables. Since the Welcome Center opened, Downtown Boston and The Greenway have changed dramatically. Millions of people pass along and across The Greenway at this location between Faneuil Hall, the New England Aquarium and North End. We would like to leverage the foot traffic to increase awareness of and visitation to the Harborwalk and Harbor Islands.

4. Location Overview

The Boston Harbor Islands Welcome Center is located at the heart of Boston's Downtown Waterfront District at 191 W Atlantic Avenue, the center of the City's most popular tourist attractions. It is adjacent to the Greenway Carousel, and steps from Faneuil Hall Marketplace, the North End, Christopher Columbus Park, Long Wharf, and the New England Aquarium. Millions of visitors pass by the Welcome Center each year with the majority of the visitation from May through October with July and August being peak months. It is a signature permanent building on The Greenway.

It is an accessible area being steps away from the MBTA Aquarium Station on the Blue Line, Haymarket Station on the Orange Line and ferry docks on Long Wharf and Central Wharf.

Boston Harbor Now operates and manages the buildings and the ground space under the roof line, approximately 4,600 sq. ft. Additional ground space may be available.

[Google Earth Satellite View](#)

[Parcel 14 City Streets Layout Plan](#)

5. Ownership and Management of the Welcome Center

The Welcome Center is owned by NPS and managed by Boston Harbor Now. The selected vendor will be under contract with Boston Harbor Now to provide services. Boston Harbor Now and NPS will work jointly with the vendor to plan and manage services at the Welcome Center. Boston Harbor Now staff will be the primary contact for resolving day-to-day operational concerns and to ensure coordination and integration with the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Parks and the Greenway Conservancy.

6. Considerations and Expectations

The vendor will have the unique placemaking and activation opportunity to capture the heavy foot traffic that passes by the Welcome Center on a daily basis. Boston Harbor Now and NPS are committed to providing an opportunity for a successful business that supports the ethos of a public park, increases awareness and visitation, and respects that the property remains open to the public at all times.

NPS owns the existing buildings and equipment. The vendor is expected to use the equipment and premises in a responsible fashion and is responsible for required routine maintenance and for repairs due to normal wear and tear. If the premises or equipment are damaged through misuse or error, timely repair or replacement is the responsibility of the vendor. The vendor shall be responsible for the purchase, transport, installation and maintenance of any and all required equipment beyond what is provided by NPS and Boston Harbor Now as identified during the site visit.

The vendor will work with NPS, Boston Harbor Now, and the Greenway Conservancy to ensure that activation will not interfere with public safety, ongoing programming, and operations on The Greenway. All proper City and State permitting requirements must also be met.

The vendor should be familiar with and adhere to the [Greenway Park Use Guidelines for Public Programming, Special Events, and General Use](#). Boston Harbor Now will work with the selected vendor to engage with representatives of The Greenway, the City of Boston, and the surrounding community to make them aware of planned activities before launching any activities. Boston Harbor Now will facilitate discussions between the selected vendor and the Greenway Conservancy to ensure a cooperative partnership and that approved management and operational plans are consistent with the Greenway Conservancy requirements.

Boston Harbor Now and its partners are dedicated to supporting “green” operations and reducing waste. Toward this end, the vendor is required to use reusable, recyclable, or recycled items whenever possible.

7. Welcome Center Facilities and Operations

Area: The Welcome Center property consists of a canopy over two buildings, each of approximately 400 sq ft, and an open area of approximately 4600 sq. ft containing information boards about the Boston Harbor Islands. The property line for space available to the selected vendor is the roof line of the overhanging canopy structure. The open space adjacent to the Welcome Center is under the control of the Greenway Conservancy and does have certain easements owned by the City of Boston to ensure public access and passage. The north building, closest to the Greenway Carousel, is occupied seasonally (mid-May to Indigenous Peoples Day) by NPS to provide visitor services and information. The south building and all covered open space areas will be available to the selected vendor. Pending NPS operational plans, there may be space in the north building available for storage. The Greenway Conservancy manages the green spaces, and prohibits use of the lawn areas.

Electric Power: The north and south buildings at the Welcome Center share solar electrical power with a 37.44 kW capacity.

Portable Water and Bathroom: The south building has a potable water supply and a single unit bathroom that is not ADA accessible and only intended for staff use.

Operating Hours: Operating hours during the standard park season for NPS Visitor Services are 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Boston Harbor Now is open to considering different hours including evenings. Responders should propose the hours, days, and calendar for any activation. Boston Harbor Now does not have any fixed dates for requiring services: however, will require the Respondent to activate the Pavilion from mid-May to mid-October when there is a ferry service to the Park. There is no required closure of the facility, so in theory the facility could be used year round.

Staffing: The vendor will be required to have a sufficient number of staff available on site during operating hours and any events to ensure safe operations. While NPS and Boston Harbor Now staff will frequently be on site, there should be an assumption that no Boston Harbor Now or NPS Staff will be on-site to assist with operations.

Phone Lines and Office Working Space: The north and south building have phone lines and an office working station for the vendor to use.

Capital Improvements: The existing benches on the outside of the buildings are available to the vendor for use and may be supplemented with additional furniture by the vendor through purchase or rental from a reputable vendor with approval of Boston Harbor Now. Boston Harbor Now will consider proposals for removing the information boards in the covered area to make room for other uses at the vendor's expense. All changes to the physical structures, including signage, require the approval of Boston Harbor Now and NPS.

Storage: The vendor shall be responsible for, at its sole cost and expense, obtaining any additional storage space required for the proposed operations and programming. The vendor shall not store any equipment or supplies at the premises without the prior approval of Boston Harbor Now. No item shall be placed upon any public space, including the ground adjacent to the premises without Boston Harbor Now's prior approval. The vendor will be required to safely store all outdoor equipment on a nightly basis and anytime the operation is closed.

Waste Management and Delivery Schedules: The vendor will be responsible for the cleaning and upkeep of the Welcome Center during the day and at the close of operating hours each day the operations are open or there are special events. The vendor will be responsible for coordinating deliveries and collecting all trash and transferring it to locations and on a schedule approved by the Greenway Conservancy.

8. Marketing Partnership

Boston Harbor Now expects that the selected vendor will develop and implement a robust marketing plan to attract visitors to the Harbor Islands and Harborwalk complementing the marketing efforts of Boston Harbor Now and its partners and other vendors. The selected vendor will be asked to cooperatively design and market these events, keeping in mind that they should be appropriate to a public park location. All materials promoting the Welcome Center must be approved by Boston Harbor Now and the National Park Service prior to circulation and whenever possible should recognize and acknowledge the Harborwalk and Boston Harbor Islands as well as Boston Harbor Now, Department of Conservation and Recreation and National Park Service. Use of the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park logo, the National Park Service emblem, the DCR emblem, the City of Boston emblem, and Boston Harbor Now logo in any promotional material or on site is encouraged with the prior express written permission of Boston Harbor Now and the National Park Service.

Boston Harbor Now will favorably view proposals that demonstrate an awareness that the Welcome Center is an integral part of the visitor experience in the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park and that demonstrate a commitment to support Park managers and the Park community.

9. Terms of Contract

Boston Harbor Now would consider pop-up or pilot proposals for Spring 2025 with the expectation that the preferred services be fully operational by Summer 2025.

10. Overview of Process and Schedule

Project Manager Contact Information

The Project Manager at Boston Harbor Now is PhuongDuy Tran . All questions regarding this RFI should be directed to PhuongDuy by email at ptran@bostonharbornow.org.

Please note: Boston Harbor Now will review responses, follow-up with additional questions or conduct initial interviews, and invite select Respondents for proposals if warranted.

Process

Mandatory Pre-Proposal Site Visit

There will be a mandatory site visit for all interested proposers. Attendance by a vendor representative at the site visit is mandatory in order for that vendor's proposal to be considered. The site visit will commence at the Welcome Center on The Greenway. This tour will take place rain or shine; only if there are extreme weather conditions will the site visit be cancelled and rescheduled.

Pre-registration Required for Site Visit

All interested potential respondents must pre-register for the site visit. To pre-register, please send an email to PhuongDuy Tran at ptran@bostonharbornow.org with a subject line '**Welcome Center Site visit registration**' and the body of the email should include the name of the company who will be submitting the proposal, the name, email address, and telephone number for the lead person participating in the site visit; and the names of all representatives who will be participating in the site visit.

Questions

If you have any questions about this RFI, please submit questions in writing via email to PhuongDuy Tran at ptran@bostonharbornow.org.

Submission

Proposals must be received by Boston Harbor Now by Tuesday, December 31, 2024, noon EST through email sent to ptran@bostonharbornow.org

11. Application

Name:

Business Name:

Email:

Phone Number:

Website:

Social Media Handles: Facebook/Twitter/Instagram

Concept Plan: In 1000 words please describe the preliminary concept to activate the Harbor Islands Welcome Center. Boston Harbor Now seeks an innovative and modern concept to activate this space and make it more dynamic. This is also designed to help generate revenue for the vendor and Boston Harbor Now. Boston Harbor Now expects to collaborate with the vendor and with NPS, the Greenway Conservancy, and other neighborhood groups to finalize the concept.

Proposal should include:

1. **Hours, Days and Terms of Operation:** General operating hours at the Welcome Center are from 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM during the peak Summer Season. Boston Harbor Now encourages the responder to suggest ideas that would allow the Welcome Center to be activated and open at least two evenings per week. Please provide a sample schedule.
2. **Offerings:** Please describe the activities/services you propose to offer. Innovative and creative ideas that provide a distinctive experience and align with the Boston Harbor Now brand are highly encouraged.
3. **Site Plan:** Boston Harbor Now is flexible in coordinating the final layout with the selected Respondent. Boston Harbor now encourages Respondents to set up operations of premium quality and design to create a fun and welcoming space. Please list proposed on-site equipment, products, and materials required for a smooth operation.

Relevant Experiences and Qualifications:

Describe previous experience and key staff as it relates to the operation expectations and responsibilities, including any work highlighting the Respondent's experience with the type of offerings proposed and with the level of customer service required. Please provide web links to any relevant media (traditional or social) about the owners or their businesses. Please provide information regarding past, present and potential clients or business relationships with other parties that either do pose or could pose a conflict of interest if the Respondent were selected.

Financial Proposal:

Boston Harbor Now is excited to partner with a Respondent to create unique placemaking in the public realm as well as revenue generating opportunities for the vendor and Boston Harbor Now on behalf of the Park. The Respondent will be responsible for providing the upfront investment, operating costs, and equipment necessary for operations. Please offer a preliminary pro forma with expected costs, revenues, and revenue sharing mode for services fully operational for Summer 2025, as well as pop-up or pilots for Spring 2025, if applicable.

A suggested pro forma template can be [found here](#) for your convenience.

References:

Please include **three (3)** relevant references, with whom the Respondent has previously worked and/or who can describe the Respondent's capability to operate at this venue. Please include the following details.

Name

Email Address

Phone Number

Relationship

12. Consideration and Evaluation of Proposals

Boston Harbor Now reserves the right to accept or to reject any or all proposals, to withdraw or amend this request for proposals at any time, to initiate negotiations with one or more proposers, to modify or amend with the consent of the proposer any proposal prior to acceptance, to waive any informality and to affect any agreement otherwise, all as Boston Harbor Now in its sole judgment may deem to be in its best interest. Boston Harbor Now will select the proposal that is most responsive to Boston Harbor Now's needs based on

- a thoughtful, creative, and thorough response to the criteria specified in this request for proposals;
- a demonstrated ability to successfully operate the proposed activities; and
- a proposal deemed to be in the best interest of Boston Harbor Now and the Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park.

By submitting a proposal, the Respondent agrees that if Boston Harbor Now makes an award to the Respondent, then the Respondent expects to enter into an agreement with Boston Harbor Now. Certain portions of the final contract shall be completed in accordance with the terms of the successful proposal.

Execution of Agreement and Performance Bond

The proposer to whom the contract is awarded, shall, execute and return to Boston Harbor Now a contract within thirty (30) calendar days after award along with satisfactory evidence of required insurance coverage.

Information Provided

The information contained in this RFI and in any subsequent addenda or related documents is provided as general information only. Efforts have been made to do so; however, Boston Harbor Now makes no representations or warranties that the information contained herein is accurate, complete, or timely. The furnishing of such information by Boston Harbor Now shall not create any obligation or liability whatsoever and each Respondent expressly agrees that it has not relied upon the foregoing information and shall not hold Boston Harbor Now liable therefore.

Confidentiality and Public Records

Any information provided to Boston Harbor Now in any proposal or other written or oral communication between the respondent and Boston Harbor Now will not be, or deemed to have been, proprietary or confidential, although Boston Harbor Now will use reasonable efforts not to disclose such information to persons who are not employees or consultants retained by Boston Harbor Now except as may be required by M.G.L. c.66. As owners of the properties where services will be performed, DCR, NPS, the City of Boston, and appropriate City, State, and Federal oversight agencies have the right to access information provided to Boston Harbor Now. Any information provided to federal entities should be understood by the respondents to be subject to the Freedom of Information Act and therefore publicly accessible.

If you believe that your proposal contains trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information, mark the cover page of each copy of the proposal with the following legend: The information specifically identified on the pages of this proposal constitutes trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information that the Offeror believes to be exempt from disclosure. The Offeror requests that this information not be disclosed to the public, except as may be required by law. You must specifically identify what you consider to be trade secret information or confidential commercial or financial information on the page of the proposal on which it appears, and you must mark each such page with the following legend: This page contains trade secrets or confidential commercial and financial information that the proposer believes to be exempt from disclosure, and which is subject to the legend contained on the cover page of this proposal.

No Personal Liability

Neither the members of Boston Harbor Now nor any individual member, officer, agent, or employee of Boston Harbor Now shall be charged personally by the proposer with any liability under any term or provision of the RFI.

No Representation

Vendor(s) shall not represent himself/herself as an agent of Boston Harbor Now, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, the National Park Service, or any other member of the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership.

Non-Discrimination and Diversity Policy

Boston Harbor Now prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, Vietnam Era Veteran status, or disability. Boston Harbor Now is strongly committed to developing and maintaining a diverse workforce and highly values the perspectives and varied experiences which are found only in a diverse workforce. Boston Harbor Now believes that promoting diversity is important to the success of its overall mission. Accordingly, Boston Harbor Now requires its vendors to comply with non-discrimination laws and encourages them to promote diversity within their workplace. To assist Boston Harbor Now in its selection process, respondents to this RFI may provide evidence of their policies and practices related to diversity and inclusion.

13. Photographs





Zumba class in action



Birds of Prey



Kids playing

