

Request for Proposals: Queens Museum Café



The Queens Museum seeks proposals from interested parties in the operation of the Museum Café:

- 1) provision of food service for the Café
- 2) expansion of beverage service to include wine and beer
- 3) creation of outdoor seating area in Flushing Meadows Corona Park
- 4) small catering opportunities

Proposals Due: December 2, 2016

In 2013, the Queens Museum, located in Flushing Meadows Corona Park, completed the first phase of a major expansion that doubled the size of the institution and ushered in a new wave of energy, excitement and interest in the institution. As attendance to the 105,000 square foot Museum grows, we seek a partner to help develop opportunities for expanding food and beverage service in creative and imaginative ways. This is an exciting entrepreneurial opportunity to create a gathering place for museum visitors and neighbors for morning coffee, lunch, after-hours beverages, etc. We hope to create a destination for dining experiences as well as cultural ones. The Museum is one of the foremost cultural and visual arts institutions in the borough, boasting a strong exhibition program, robust slate of public events and educational opportunities, and a diverse audience.

The site itself boasts an equally interesting history as the building was the City's Pavilion for the both the 1939 and 1964 World's Fairs and the original home of the United Nations General Assembly (1946-1950).

A second phase of expansion is scheduled to commence in 2017 and brings with it a branch of the Queens Library to be situated adjacent to the café.

Objectives, Facilities, Scope of Work Objectives:

The Museum constantly looks for ways to improve visitor experience while fostering lasting relationships within the myriad communities it serves. In keeping with this mission, the Museum seeks a professional Café Partner to operate the Museum Café, located within the Museum, in a highly visible first floor space facing the majestic Unisphere and the Park. The planned starting date for operation is approximately April 1, 2017.

Café should provide a variety of family fare, healthy food options, and a variety of beverages that reflect and incorporate the spirit and culture of Queens and the Queens Museum. Attentive, customer-oriented service to the Museum's visitors is a must and the Partner must provide consistency in staffing, production and food service quality. The ideal Partner would also be interested in interweaving dining and artistic engagement, perhaps pairing food with exhibitions or programs, working with Museum staff to coproduce events, etc. Additionally, the Museum is situated in the midst of Flushing Meadows Corona Park, a wonderful green space that is home to four other cultural institutions, as well as CitiField and the US Open. There are no other public dining options in the Park and this is an excellent opportunity for growth.

**General Facilities Information:**

The Museum Café was constructed and outfitted in 2013 and is approximately 1600 square feet, including 130 square feet of storage/prep/cleaning space in an adjoining area. The café features: a 29 foot long counter with both refrigerated and heated casework; refrigerated beverage display; additional integrated cold and hot storage; a hooded food prep area with grill, and other cooking equipment; built-in icemaker. The adjoining prep space includes a full sink and dishwasher. Cooking equipment, small wares, glassware, accessories and disposable supplies will be the responsibility of the Partner. The Partner will be responsible for maintaining the structural and aesthetic integrity of the café area ensuring that all available utilities are in working order. The Partner will bear the expense of all repairs and maintenance that may be required as a result of damages caused by their organization's agents or employees.

The inside dining area seats approximately 48 people and features views of Flushing Meadows Corona Park and the majestic Unisphere. The Museum will work with the café partner to expand to outdoor seating for meals/beverages during the warmer months.

Café Operating Hours:

The hours will include Museum operating hours, which are currently as follows, but may be subject to change. Additional hours of operation may be negotiated with the Partner to meet additional service needs of potential café patrons:

- Open Wednesday through Sunday from 11:00 AM – 5:00 PM
- Closed Mondays and Tuesdays
- Closed July 4, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Years Day

Menu and Pricing:

Based on the design and configuration of the kitchen, consideration must be given to the type of food services to be provided. Heavy cooking is impractical given the space and equipment available. Anecdotally, most visitors seek a light, healthy lunch (soups, sandwiches, salads) between the hours of 11:00AM and 2:00 PM and beverage service (including coffee/espresso), desserts and light snacks during other hours. The Museum also wishes to make wine/beer service available from the Café. In the event that the parties negotiate hours outside of the normal gallery hours, it is possible that fruit, pastries, and light breakfast type fare may be appropriate for morning hours. Additionally, the Museum and visitors desire a unique fare that reflects the hyper-diversity of the population of Queens.

It is also possible that light dinner fare may be appropriate for evening hours. Menu and pricing should consider the Museum's family-oriented environment and the average visitor who is not expecting to purchase an expensive meal.

Catering:

The Museum currently has a contracted caterer that is responsible for the larger private and public events that range from corporate functions and weddings to exhibition opening receptions. All events larger than 100 guests would be steered to the caterer. However, there is an unmet need for luncheon meetings, smaller internal catering needs and small wine and cheese type offerings that the Partner would be responsible for assisting with.

The Museum anticipates a strong business partnership with the Café Partner, and a creative, adaptable approach and flexible menu will be able to secure frequent catering bids.



Pre-proposal Walk-Through Requirement:

A walk-through of the facility and area(s) designated for food service is strongly recommended. Applicants may contact David Strauss: 718.592.9700 x145, dstrauss@queensmuseum.org to set up a time to visit the facility and discuss the needs of the institution before submitting a proposal.

Submission of Proposals

Interested parties are required to submit a formal proposal outlining operational business plan for the Café, including menu ideas and pricing, staffing needs, etc.

One (1) hard copy of proposal and one electronic version in Word or PDF format are required, submitted by email or USB drive to: Queens Museum, NYC Building, Flushing Meadows Corona Park, Queens, NY 11368; email address listed above.

The proposal, whether mailed or hand delivered, must arrive at the Museum no later than December 2, 2016.

Key Dates:

Issue Request for Proposals: October 17, 2016

Opportunity for Walk-Through: October 31-November 11, 2016

Proposals Due: December 2, 2016

Contact: David Strauss: 718.592.9700 x145, dstrauss@queensmuseum.org