

CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG

LIBRARY

**Request for Proposals
Main Library Cafe Operations and Catering
for
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library**

**Proposals Will Be Received Until
2:00 PM EST October 27, 2025**



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Introduction

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library (“Library” or “CML”) is seeking proposals from experienced operators to manage and operate a café at the Main Library (currently under construction) as well as provide non-exclusive catering throughout the property, located at 310 N Tryon St Charlotte NC 28202. The successful bidder must demonstrate a proven track record in food business operations and customer service. The primary objective of this project is to find an experienced and professional operator with a financially sustainable operations plan and whose mission aligns with the Library’s mission to improve lives and build a stronger community.

About

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is one of America’s leading urban public libraries. Located in Mecklenburg County, the library system serves a diverse community of over one million citizens through 21 branches and on-line services. Since our founding in 1891, and as an original Carnegie Library in 1903, our role as a provider of lifelong education and learning in this community has never been more relevant.

CML is beloved by many, with 70% of Mecklenburg County residents stating that they had visited a Library location in the last 12 months. There were well over 2.2 million visitors to the various Library locations in Fiscal Year 2024.

The Library has 458 full and part-time employees, along with an extensive volunteer network that engages more than 1000 people throughout the year. For FY2024, operating expenditures totaled \$53.8 million.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is currently developing a new strategic direction for FY26-28, with a major component being the opening of a new Main Library. The iconic new Main Library will be the flagship of the system; a free, open, and accessible information hub for all as well as a destination for local, regional, and national engagement.

Mission, Vision, Values & More

Our mission is to improve lives and build a stronger community. Charlotte Mecklenburg Library envisions itself as the essential connector of a thriving community of readers, leaders, and learners. We value learning, openness, respect, inclusion, and leadership. Our brand promise is to be accessible and welcoming to all while celebrating and supporting the joy of reading and learning, fostering exploration and personal growth, and connecting individuals to each other, the community, and the world.

We believe wholeheartedly in intellectual freedom. The Library is committed to protecting the First Amendment’s guarantee of free and open access to information and ideas—a principle vital to our democracy and to each individual’s search for knowledge. We seek to provide our diverse community with a comprehensive collection of materials, services, and programs providing a wide range of knowledge and perspectives.

Scope of Work

The selected firm will manage and operate the Café at Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's Main Library (located at 310 N Tryon Street, Charlotte NC) and provide non-exclusive catering services throughout the property.

Contract Term

Initial Term: Operator shall be granted the right to access and use the Premises for the purposes of providing catering and food services for a term of up to five years beginning when Main Library opens to the public (which is anticipated to occur in the spring of 2027). The Operator will have access to the premises up to three months prior to the public opening to allow for set-up of operations and training of staff.

Contract Extension: Two, 2-year extensions will be available following the initial term by mutual agreement of both parties based on operating and financial performance. If the contract extension is exercised, the terms and conditions of the original contract will continue to apply at the same annual price or at such price set forth in the bid for additional years.

Main Library Operating Hours, Policies, and Estimated Attendance

Operating Hours

Main Library will observe the following operating hours throughout the week:

- Sunday: 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm (Memorial Day to Labor Day)
- Monday – Thursday: 9:00 am-8:00 pm
- Friday – Saturday: 9:00 am-5:00 pm

The Library observes 15 holidays with specific dates approved annually by the Library's Board of Trustees. These days include:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Sunday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Indigenous Peoples' Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving (2 days)
- Christmas (3 days)

Estimated Attendance

The previous Main Library (at the same location) had over 158k visitors in Fiscal Year 2019 (pre-Covid). The facility closed in Fiscal Year 2022 for the construction of the new Main Library.

ImaginOn: The Joe and Joan Martin Center (CML's exclusive children's library at 300 E 7th Street, Charlotte NC) received similar visits in Fiscal Year 2019 at over 160k. In Fiscal Year FY2025, ImaginOn had over 266k visits.

The Library expects the newly constructed Main Library to have slightly more visitation than the ImaginOn branch. Library leadership has also set an aspirational goal of 1 million visitors in the first operating year.

Café Operations

Operator shall use the designated space, which is approximately six hundred (600) square feet and equipment (Appendix B) within Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Main Library to operate a café. Operator shall be responsible for all operational aspects of running a cafe, including, without limitation: customer service; food preparation and service; and sanitation – to include routine janitorial of the café space. The Library shall be responsible for routine pest control, grounds maintenance, normal and customary capital maintenance. Operator shall ensure that the cafe is adequately staffed at all operating times. Operator shall be responsible for complying with all applicable state and federal laws applicable for the operation of a cafe.

The Operator's use of the Premises shall be subject to all applicable laws and to Library rules and policies, as may from time to time be amended. The Premises shall not be used for any illegal purposes or in any manner to create any nuisance or trespass, nor in any manner to vitiate the insurance or increase the rate of insurance on the Premises.

Use of Premises and Operator's operations as permitted by this Lease shall be rendered in accordance with all applicable federal laws and standards that prohibit discrimination against individuals on the basis of age, race, color, sex, religion, national origin, veterans' status, or disability.

Hours of operation will be mutually agreed upon. Operator shall be permitted to access to the Premises during regular facility hours during the Term plus any pre-opening and post-closing hours as mutually agreed upon to facilitate operations. Hours may be extended for holidays or other special events as agreed in advance between The Library and Operator.



Rendering of the Café

Licenses and Permits

Operator shall be responsible for maintaining all licenses and permits required or necessitated, including, without limitation, all licenses and permits necessary for operating a dining facility.

Inspections

Designated Library or Mecklenburg County Asset and Facilities staff will be allowed to conduct random inspection of premises. The inspection will check all appliances, fixtures, and HVAC systems to ensure they are in proper working order. They will also inspect any signs of damage or wear and tear, such as chipped paint, broken tiles, or leaks. Photographs or notes may be taken during inspections, and a report may be provided detailing the findings.

Utilities

The Library shall be responsible for electric and water/sewer services to the Premises. The operator shall be responsible for providing its own telephone, computer, and internet service. Public wi-fi service is available throughout the building.

Use of Premises

The Premises shall be used solely for the purpose of providing cafe services. The Premises shall not be used for any illegal purposes, housing of staff or clientele, uses that disrupt library customers and visitors, or in any manner to create any nuisance.

Services by the Library

The Library may replace or repair, where applicable equipment and fixtures throughout the Term, except for replacements or repairs required due to Operator's negligence, willful wrongdoing, or misuse. Further, if the Library determines, in its sole discretion, that a replacement or repair is not economically viable or is not in the Library's best interest, it shall have no obligation to make such replacement or repair. Additionally, Operator may request that the Library undertake routine and capital repairs at the Premises for the duration of the Term, except repairs required due to Operator's negligence, willful wrong doing, or misuse, and further provided that if the Library determines, in its sole discretion, that a repair is not economically viable or is not in the Library's best interest, it shall have no obligation to make such a repair. Operator is responsible for all repairs and replacement of equipment or fixtures damaged and/or destroyed due to Operator's negligence, willful wrongdoing, or misuse. The Library will invoice Operator for, and Operator shall be responsible for, one hundred percent (100%) of all costs assumed for repairs and/or replacements required due to Operator's customers, guests', or invitees' negligence, willful wrongdoing, or misuse of the Premises.

In the event the Library opts not to replace or repair equipment or fixtures and/or opts not to complete a repair or replacement to the physical premises, the Library shall not be liable to the Operator for any loss of revenue or other expenses of any kind.

Operator is solely responsible for maintaining insurance coverage on any improvements made to the Premises by the Operator and any business personal property of the Operator. The Library shall not maintain or replace any

property belonging to, provided by, or altered by Operator. The Library may replace any Library-owned equipment or fixtures, at the Library's sole discretion, during the Term and may elect not to do so if the damage was caused by Operator's misuse, negligence, or willful wrongdoing. The Library, in its sole discretion, will select replacement appliances, fixtures, and equipment. The Library shall not be responsible for any consequential damages to Operator's business due to failure of equipment, delay in replacement of equipment, or closure of Premises for repairs and/or construction to the Premises. The Library will not be responsible for Operator's business interruption, extra expense, and/or loss of revenue for any reason. Operator's insurance policies shall be primary with respect to policies covering Charlotte Mecklenburg Library and shall be maintained during the term. Operator may elect, with Library's approval, to replace appliances, fixtures, and equipment at Operator's sole expense and assume any future repair and replacement costs of such. Replacement of Library-owned appliances, fixtures, and equipment shall be the property of the Library upon termination of the agreement.

The Library shall be responsible for addressing and remedying the property's building systems failures and repairs, such as electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and be responsible for the building's daily operations and routine maintenance.

Services by Operator

Operator will accept the Premises in the condition as delivered based on physical layouts provided and as facility is being constructed, and as suited for the uses intended by Operator. Operator agrees to return the Premises to the Library at the expiration or prior termination of the agreement, in as good condition and repair as when first received, ordinary wear and tear, damage by storm, fire, lightning, earthquake, or other similar casualty alone excepted. Operator, Operator's employees, agents, contractors, or subcontractors shall take no action which may void any manufacturers or installers warranty with relation to the Premises. Operator shall indemnify and hold the Library harmless from any liability, claim, demand, or cause of action arising on account of Operator's breach of the provisions of this paragraph.

Operator is responsible for any and all preventive maintenance, cleaning, and general upkeep needed and required for operation of any and all Library provided equipment and fixtures. The Operator may elect to provide and use its own equipment and fixtures, with express prior written permission from the Library.

Operator shall inform Library of any repairs needed to Library owned equipment and shall obtain prior written approval for any repairs over \$500. If granted prior written approval, Operator shall follow all applicable bidding laws, and all laws, rules, regulations, and codes of the State of North Carolina and/or its political subdivisions relating to construction, use and occupancy of property, and any other applicable laws.

Operator is responsible for providing any furniture, fixture, equipment, or miscellaneous items required for its operations not provided by the Library. A list of Library provided equipment is attached to this RFP as Appendix B. Operator shall also provide any furniture, fixture, equipment, or miscellaneous items required for operations which the Library opts not to replace during the Term. Operator is responsible for maintenance, repairs, and replacement of all Operator's personal property and any item purchased by the Operator.

Operator is responsible for daily and routine cleaning of all equipment and fixtures (whether provided by the Library or Operator), as well as the physical premises used by the Operator. Operator is responsible for providing daily housekeeping as such are rendered necessary by the Operator's operations and trash disposal services to the Premises.

Operator will remove bagged trash in leak proof containers (Brute barrels on dolly/casters or tilt trucks) from the premises to a Library provided dumpster. Library will be responsible for the trash removal service.

Operator will be responsible for cleaning the serving and food preparation area and catering kitchen. Library will be responsible for nightly janitorial services in the cafe seating area. Operator and Library will share the responsibility for cleaning of the tables and the seating areas during the day.

Operator will be responsible for the maintenance of grease interceptors (if required).

The Library (via Mecklenburg County) will provide routine security services to the Premises, as such are currently provided to other Library facilities. Operator is responsible for its staff's safety, including but not limited to the handling of funds received during café operations.

Removal of Fixtures

Operator may (if not in default hereunder) prior to the expiration of the agreement, or any extension or renewal thereof, remove all Operator-owned equipment or fixtures which it has placed in the Premises, except fixtures reasonably necessary to the functioning of the Facility, provided Operator repairs all damage to the Premises caused by such removal, at the Operator's sole expense.

Exterior Signs

Operator shall place no signs upon the outside walls or anywhere within the interior of the Premises without written consent of the Library's Real Estate Services Director. All requests for signage shall be made and approved in writing. Any and all signs approved for use by the Library shall be maintained by the Operator in compliance with governmental rules and regulations governing such signs and Operator shall be responsible to the Library for any damage caused by installation, use or maintenance of said signs, and all damage incident to removal thereof.

Indemnity

Operator agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Library against all claims for damages to Customers or property by reason of Operator's use or occupancy of the Premises, and all expenses incurred by the Library thereof, including attorney's fees and court costs. For the purposes of this section, "Customers" are defined as patrons of the Premises, their family members, or cohorts, who utilize, or intend to utilize the services of the Operator. Supplementing the foregoing and in addition thereto, Operator shall during the term of this Lease and any extension or renewal thereof, and at Operator's expense, maintain in full force the insurance coverage as described in the Minimum Insurance Requirements

Catering

Operator agrees to provide nonexclusive catering throughout the property. This may be for both Library and non-Library sponsored events. Catering services may include, but are not limited to, meal preparation, delivery, setup, service, and cleanup. Operator is responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable health and safety regulations, providing appropriate staff, and coordinating with Library personnel for event scheduling and access.

Potential catering locations:

- Level 1
 - Knight Hall (Lobby)
 - Open air courtyard
 - Forum
 - Sklut emerging adults reading area
 - The Tepper Foundation plaza
 - Midblock entrance plaza
 - Novant Health café seating area (40-64 including stadium seating)
- Level 2
 - Gambrell Foundation Innovation Lab
 - Level 2 Terrace
 - Meeting rooms (capacities: 22,8,6,4,4,2)
- Level 3
 - Philip Van Every classroom (25)
 - Meeting rooms (capacities: 10, 8, 6, 4, 4, 2,2)
- Level 4: granted by special permission
- Level 5
 - Joyce Davis Waddell event space (224-300)
 - Dowd Foundation board room (36)
 - Nucor 5th floor terrace (50)
 - Leon Levine Destination reading room
- Level 0 staff lounge (12-20)

Operator shall provide all necessary utensils and disposable service items unless otherwise agreed. Catering must be coordinated with Library events staff to minimize disruption to patrons and ongoing Library operations. Operator is responsible for set-up, service, and removal of all catering materials, leaving spaces in clean, ready-to-use condition. Operator must ensure staff are trained in safety, food handling, and Library policies, including access, noise, and patron interaction.

A dedicated catering kitchen is available as detailed in Appendix B. The kitchen is equipped to support food preparation, staging, and service for events throughout the Library. Operator shall be responsible for maintaining the cleanliness and proper use of all kitchen equipment and must comply with all applicable health and safety regulations.

The Library will operate a nonexclusive catering model, meaning multiple approved caterers may provide services at the Library for both Library-sponsored and private events.

Notice to Proposers

The successful Proposer must comply with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all rules and regulations promulgated thereunder. By submitting a proposal, the successful Proposer agrees to indemnify the Library from and against all claims, suits, damages, costs, losses, and expenses in any manner arising out of, or connected with, the failure of the Company, its subcontractors, agents, successors, assigns, officers, or employees to comply with the provisions of the ADA or the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder.

All proposals must be firm and not subject to increase, unless specified within the provisions of this Request for Proposals (RFP) and mutually agreed upon by the Library and the Proposer.

No special inducements will be considered that are not a part of the original proposal document.

Library Rights and Options

The Library, at its sole discretion, reserves the following rights:

- To supplement, amend, substitute, or otherwise modify this RFP at any time
- To cancel this RFP with or without the substitution of another RFP
- To take any action affecting this RFP, this RFP process, or the Services subject to this RFP that would be in the best interests of the Library
- To issue additional requests for information or clarification from Offerors or to allow corrections of errors or omissions
- To require one or more Service Providers to supplement, clarify, or provide additional information in order for the Library to evaluate the Responses submitted
- To negotiate an agreement with a Service Provider based on the information provided in response to this RFP.
- To award one or more contract(s).

Public Records

Any material submitted in response to this RFP will become a "public record" once the Proposer's document(s) is opened and the Proposer is determined to be a participant in the solicitation process and shall be subject to public disclosure consistent with Chapter 132, North Carolina Statutes. Proposers must claim any applicable exemptions to disclosure provided by law in their response to this RFP. Proposers must identify materials to be protected and must state the reasons why such exclusion from public disclosure is necessary and legal. The Library reserves the right to make all final determination(s) of the applicability of North Carolina General Statutes § 132-1.2, Confidential Information.

Trade Secrets/Confidentiality

Proposers must claim any material which qualifies as "trade secret" information under N.C.G.S. 66- 152(3) in their response to this RFP and must state the reasons why such exclusion from public disclosure is necessary and legal.

To properly designate material as trade secret under these circumstances, each Proposer must take the following precautions: (a) any trade secrets submitted by a Proposer should be submitted in a separate, sealed envelope marked "Trade Secret - Confidential and Proprietary Information - Do Not Disclose Except for the Purpose of Evaluating this Proposal," and (b) the same trade secret/confidentiality designation should be stamped on each page of the trade secret materials contained in the envelope.

Do not designate your entire proposal as a trade secret, and do not designate pricing information as a trade secret. Doing so may result in your proposal being disqualified.

In submitting a proposal, each Proposer agrees that the Library may reveal any trade secret materials contained in such response to all Library staff and Library officials involved in the selection process.

Familiarity with Laws and Ordinances

The submission of a proposal on the equipment and services requested herein shall be considered as a representation that the Proposer is familiar with all federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations which affect those engaged or employed in the provision of such services, or equipment used in the provision of such services, or which in any way affects the conduct of the provision of such services; and no plea of misunderstanding will be considered on account of ignorance thereof. If the Proposer discovers any provisions in the RFP documents that are contrary to or inconsistent with any law, ordinance, or regulation, it shall be reported to the Library in writing without delay.

E-Verify Compliance

Per N.C.G.S. 143-133.3 E-verify compliance. Provider shall comply with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina General Statutes (verification of work authorization). Further, if the Provider utilizes a subcontractor, the Provider shall require the subcontractor to comply with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

https://www.ncleg.gov/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/PDF/BySection/Chapter_143/GS_143-133.3.pdf

https://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/Statutes/HTML/ByArticle/Chapter_64/Article_2.html

Iran Divestment Act

Provider hereby certifies that it is not on the North Carolina State Treasurer's list of persons engaging in business activities in Iran, prepared pursuant to NCGS 147-86.58, nor will Provider utilize on this agreement any subcontractor on such list. This list, along with additional information about the Iran Divestment Act, is available on the Treasurer's Office site: <https://www.nctreasurer.gov/iran-divestment-act>

Divestment from Companies that Boycott Israel

Contractor hereby certifies that it is not on the North Carolina State Treasurer's list of companies engaged in a boycott of Israel in violation of NCGS 147-86.80 et. seq. and that it will not utilize on this agreement any subcontractor on said list."

Contract Required

The successful proposer will be required to enter into a written contract with the Library, setting forth the conditions specified in this RFP, as well as other standard terms and conditions. The successful vendor shall be solely liable for compliance with all specifications contained herein.

Proposal Duration

All proposals will remain in effect and shall be legally binding for at least one hundred eighty (180) days after the proposal submission due date.

Minimum Insurance Requirements

The Operator shall procure and maintain insurance against claims for injuries to persons and damages to property for the duration of the contract which may arise from or in connection with the performance of work hereunder by the Operator, his agents, representatives, or subcontractors.

- A. Commercial General Liability Insurance. The Operator shall maintain occurrence version commercial general liability insurance or equivalent form with a limit of not less than \$2,000,000 each occurrence. If such insurance contains a general aggregate limit, it shall be no less than two times the occurrence limit. Such insurance shall:
 - 1. **Include Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, its officials, officers, and employees as additional insureds** with respect to performance of the Services. The coverage shall contain no special limitation on the scope of protection afforded to the above listed insureds.
 - 2. Be primary with respect to any insurance or self-insured retention programs covering the Library, its officials, officers and employees.
- B. Business Automobile Liability Insurance. The Operator shall maintain business automobile liability insurance or equivalent form with a limit of not less than \$1,000,000 each accident. Such insurance shall include coverage for owned, hired, and non-owned automobiles.
- C. Workers' Compensation and Employers' Liability Insurance. The Operator shall maintain workers' compensation insurance with North Carolina statutory limits and employers' liability insurance with limits of not less than \$1,000,000 each employee or each accident.
- D. Crime Insurance: The Operator shall maintain Crime Insurance (Employee Theft/Dishonesty) with a limit no less than \$150,000
- E. Other Insurance Requirements. The Operator shall:
 - 1. Prior to commencement of services, furnish the Library with properly executed certificates of insurance which shall clearly evidence all insurance required in this section. Provide copies of endorsements and policies, if requested by the Library, in lieu of or in addition to certificates.
 - 2. Replace certificates, policies, and endorsements for any such insurance expiring prior to completion of the services.
 - 3. Maintain such insurance from the time services commence until services are completed.
 - 4. Place such insurance with insurers authorized to do business in North Carolina and having A.M. Best Company ratings of not less than A:VII. Any alternatives to this requirement shall require written approval of the Library's Risk Manager.

The Operator understands and acknowledges that these insurance coverage requirements are minimums and that they do not restrict or limit the hold harmless provisions of this agreement. Charlotte Mecklenburg Library reserves the right to reject any bid not meeting the insurance requirements as stated herein.

Request for Proposal Process

Schedule

Date	Event
September 24, 2025	RFP Issue Date
5:00 PM EST October 8, 2025	Deadline for Submission of Written Questions. Service Providers are permitted to submit to the Library written questions, but only for purposes of clarifying this RFP. All submissions shall be submitted as outlined herein.
October 15, 2025	Response to Written Questions via Addendum
2:00 PM EST October 27, 2025	Responses are due on this date.
October 28- November 7, 2025	Library review and firm selection (interviews if needed)
February 2026	Anticipated contract award

Proposer Questions and Inquiries

Proposer Questions and Inquiries relative to this RFP must be submitted electronically by 5:00 PM, October 8, 2025, to Michael Boger, Deputy Finance Director, at mboger@cmlibrary.org. The Library will provide written responses to all inquiries received by this date, and responses will be made available to all known recipients of this RFP and posted by October 15, 2025. Any oral responses made by any representative of the Library may not be relied upon. Any supplements or amendments to this RFP will be in writing and furnished to potential bidders.

Submission of Responses

Five (5) paper copies in a sealed envelope/package and one (1) electronic copy of the proposal by way of a USB drive, including all required forms, must be submitted to the attention of Michael Boger, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, Library Administration Center, 510 Stitt Road, Charlotte, NC 28213 by 2:00pm EST on October 27, 2025. Emailed and faxed submissions will not be accepted. All risk of late arrival due to unanticipated delay – whether delivered by hand, US Postal Service, courier, or other delivery service is entirely on the submitting Proposer. It is the sole responsibility of the Proposer to have the proposal physically in the Library's office by the specified time and date. The time of delivery will be marked on each proposal when received, and any proposal received after the proposal submission deadline will be rejected.

The Library reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. The Library reserves the right to reproduce proposals for internal use in the evaluation process.

The Library will not be obligated for the expenses of any provider arising out of preparation and/or submittal of responses to this RFP. Any and all proposals to this RFP are to be prepared at the cost and expense of the respondents, with the express understanding that there may be no claims whatsoever for the reimbursement of any costs, damages, or expenses relating to this procurement from the Library or any other party for any reason (including the cancellation of this RFP).

Proposals must be made in the official name of the individual, firm, or corporation under which the business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed in ink by a person duly authorized to legally bind the business entity submitting the proposal.

All proposals should be complete and carefully worded and must convey all of the information requested by the Library. If errors or exceptions are found in the proposal, or if the proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP, the Library will be the sole judge as to whether that variance is significant enough to reject the proposal. Proposals should be prepared simply and economically. All data, materials, and documentation shall be available in a clear, concise form.

Proposers are expressly forbidden from contacting any other Library employee or Charlotte Mecklenburg Library official regarding this Request for Proposals. Any such outside contact may result in disqualification from the request for proposal process.

Evaluation Criteria

All bids that are submitted in accordance with this RFP and which meet the requirements as outlined herein will be considered to be responsive bids. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, any and all bids may be rejected, and the Library may negotiate with any or all bidders. The Library will award the contract to the responsive, responsible bidder offering operations that provide the greatest combination in terms of hours of operation, financial stability, alignment with Library core values and mission and the highest proposed fee or rate payment.

A short-list of firms may be invited to Stage 2 of the evaluation process, the Interview/Demonstration. Interview/demonstrations are an important aspect of the evaluation process that offers the Library an opportunity to see how the proposer's solution meets the critical components of the RFP. A committee will evaluate the responses and select the top proposal. The Library may elect to make a final selection without holding an interview/demonstration. Selection will be based on the criteria listed below:

- Experience and Qualifications – 25%
 - Demonstrated track record of successfully operating cafés, food service venues, or catering businesses of similar size and scope.
 - References from comparable institutions (museums, libraries, universities, cultural centers, or public facilities).
 - Demonstrated commitment to food safety, staff training, and customer service excellence.
- Financial Stability and Proposed Business Terms – 25%
 - Evidence of financial strength and capacity to invest in and sustain operations.
 - Long-term viability of proposed business model.
- Operations Plan – 20%
 - Hours of operation and ability to meet Library's needs (including flexibility for evening events).
 - Staffing plan, hiring, and training practices.
 - Menu approach, pricing strategy, and ability to serve a diverse patron base.
 - Catering capabilities for on-site events.
- Alignment with Library Mission and Community Impact – 15%
 - Commitment to supporting the Library's mission to "improve lives and build a stronger community."
 - Incorporation of local partnerships, minority/women-owned business participation, or community engagement efforts.

- Alignment with sustainability goals (waste reduction, composting, recycling, use of local products when possible).
- Proposal Quality and Responsiveness – 5%
 - Completeness, clarity, and professionalism of the proposal.
- Interview/Demonstration (if held) – 10%

Award will be made at a later date pending evaluation of all proposals submitted and approval by the Library's Board of Trustees.

Rejection of the Proposal

The Library reserves the right to determine and evaluate the qualifications of the Operator's candidates and to reject any Final Proposals.

The Library retains the right to waive minor irregularities in the statement format.

Basis for rejection includes but is not limited to:

- Contains false or misleading statements.
- Not having the required insurance coverage.
- Not in the format described under Proposal Content.
- Unsigned proposal by authorized person
- Unsigned acknowledgement of addenda form
- Received after the due date.
- Restriction or limitation upon their use.

Proposal Format

Section A: Executive Summary

You shall include a cover letter containing all business contact information and key points of your plan.

Please provide responses to the following questions:

- **MISSION:** A description of your company's mission, goals, and values
- **TIME IN BUSINESS:** How long in business
- **COMPANY CONTACTS:** Names of other company representatives that will be responsible for Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Services. List local managers and the person(s) who have the authority to execute the contract.
- **COMPANY STATISTICS:** What is the size of your Company; annual sales (broken down between concessions and catering), number of employees, geographic area(s) that you operate in, etc.
- **CONCESSIONS SERVICES:** Description of services your company provides (i.e., food and/or alcoholic beverage concessions, corporate or university campus food services, etc.) and types of venues/locations (museums, zoos, public attractions, office buildings, etc.) to which you provide services. Please provide a list of these locations.
- **CATERING SERVICES:** Description of services your company provides (i.e., food and/or alcoholic beverage catering, event planning, equipment rentals, etc.) and the types of venues/locations (museums, public attractions, office buildings, etc.) to which you provide services.
- **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION:** Describe any programs currently in use at your company to evaluate customer and guest satisfaction and implement operational changes because of feedback, and how you would be implementing such a program at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

Section B: Concept and Design

Please present your food and beverage design concept ideas and business plan befitting of the library. We would like to understand how your Partnership will differentiate your proposal from the others. Please elaborate on your concept summary and overview.

Café and Concessions

- Philosophy for Concessions, including driving principles and priorities
- Chef Bio, style, and philosophy
- Demonstrate how you plan to create an exceptional food and beverage program for the public and Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.
- Describe experiential elements you would propose incorporating into the visitor's dining experience and how you would propose collaborating with the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library programs team.
- Please outline any back-of-house space (specifying square footage) you anticipate needing outside of the footprints of the café and catering kitchen.
- Provide sample menus and pricing for each concessions location, including vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, and allergy-conscious choices:
 - Special events
 - Café

Catering

MENUS, PRICING, TERMS & CONDITIONS: Provide sample catering menus and pricing. Your sample menus and pricing should reflect three (3) sample menus (for low-, medium-, and higher-priced examples) for each service listed below.

If your catering services do not include the scale or type of any of the events listed below, please indicate so, and include your most similar menus.

- A corporate lecture for 300 guests, 4-hour event
- A wedding reception on the 5th floor, 100 guests, cocktails on the terrace followed by a seated plated dinner inside the 5th floor event space, 5-hour event
- A corporate holiday party buffet dinner in the 5th floor event space, 250 guests, 4-hour event
- Drop off breakfast, lunch, and coffee service for a daytime meeting in the 5th floor event space, 150 guests
- Catering for small meetings in any of the 21 meeting rooms (4 people to 40 people).

In Addition, please address the following in your proposal:

- What is the maximum number of guests your company has served for a seated dinner function?
- What is the maximum number of guests your company has served for a reception with food stations?
- What is the minimum number of guests your company will serve for a function?
- What is the breakdown of your clientele, i.e. corporate/association versus social?
- Are you able to provide meals for guests with special dietary restrictions, i.e. gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian and kosher?
- Provide your standard server/guest ratio for a seated three-course dinner
- Provide your standard server/guest ratio for a buffet-style reception

Provide all terms and conditions regarding your prices, including but not limited to:

- Minimums, if applicable (dollars and/or guest counts)
- Staffing rates, by position, and staffing minimum hours or dollars as applicable
- Deposit terms and final payment terms
- Late payment terms and conditions, including, if applicable, interest charges
- Guest count guarantee terms and conditions
- Equipment, if any (china, glassware, flatware, etc.)
- Tax rate/basis (charged on what services/products)
- Other financial or material terms and conditions applicable to Charlotte Mecklenburg Library events
- Service Charges

Section C: Partnership/Organization

List your proposed organizational structure for Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, including the Lead Executive of Hospitality and all others reporting to them. The Lead Executive of Hospitality must have the authority to operate the facility and make decisions on behalf of your company.

On your organizational chart, list each management position, such as Restaurant Managers, Chefs, Back of the House Manager, and any Supervisors. Provide the specific job description for each position as it relates to Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

List your local support management team. How will they assist the Lead Executive of Hospitality to ensure the day-to-day operations team succeeds as it relates to guest service?

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library expects the on-site team to be capable of operating the facility and providing the leadership to run the operations. Your local support should ensure the team has the independence and tools to accomplish what Charlotte Mecklenburg Library requires.

Describe a specific ongoing maintenance plan that will ensure the library remains in compliance with all current applicable Federal, State, County, and Municipal codes; maintains the standards established in your proposal; and remains safe and continues to deliver a first-class, high-quality experience for guests.

Section D: Marketing

Think fresh and delicious. It is important that all visitors are invited and feel comfortable. It is also important that you engage in periodic collaborative efforts with Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's in-house marketing and communications department to reach the widest audience possible to drive concessions revenue. For brand alignment, all marketing and communications including interior or exterior signage must be approved by Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

- Please provide an overview with examples of your overall approach to marketing and public relations plans with other venues.
- Please elaborate on your overall social media strategy for marketing your venues. Please be specific for each platform (i.e. Facebook) and list your number of social media followers on each channel.

Section E: Investment and Financial Performance

Projected Revenue

Please provide your year one projected revenue for all concessions and catering sales.

Commissions and Profit Sharing – Café and Concessions

The goal of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is to provide the best food options at an accessible and inclusive price point. After all revenues and expenses are calculated, we shall decide upon a mutually agreed upon profit sharing, to be discussed during contract negotiations. The Library welcomes proposals that may include optional discounts for Library staff.

Commissions and Profit Sharing – Catering

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library will require approved caterers to pay a commission of 10% of all GROSS Food and Beverage Sales on all events held at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library's Main library.

Commission payments are due within thirty (30) days of event with a copy of the final client invoice.

No commission will be due on events where The Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is the client. Please provide acknowledgment that you are amendable to these terms.

Investment

Please provide details on your investment to keep the program running smoothly. All the capital improvements shall be the property of Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. You will be responsible for all small wares for the kitchen and front of the house, POS, and pre-opening.

Section F: Professional References

Café and Concessions

COMPARABLE CONCESSIONS VENUES REFERENCES: List up to three venue operations where you provide concessions services most similar to those you would provide for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

Include the following for each venue listed:

- Description of overall services
- Venue Contact: name, address, phone, email address
- Date you started services
- Any non-proprietary details about the financial relationship

Catering

COMPARABLE CATERING VENUES REFERENCES: List at least three venue operations where you provide catering services most similar to those you would provide for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library.

Include the following for each venue listed:

- Description of overall services
- Venue Contact: name, address, phone, email address
- Date you started services
- Are you on an approved catering list OR is the venue open to any Caterers
- Any non-proprietary details about the financial relationship

Proposal Authorization and Signature

This proposal must be signed by a responsible official of the offering company and notarized. By signing below as an authorized representative, the Proposer agrees to be bound by the representations, terms and conditions contained in its proposal and agrees to enter into a contract based upon the terms, representations and conditions contained in the proposal with the Library if this proposal is approved and awarded by the Library.

Firm Name

Print name of signer

Date

Authorized Signature

Street Address

City, State and Zip Code

Telephone number

Email Address

Acknowledgement of Addenda

If issued, Proposer hereby acknowledges receipt of the Addenda issued. This form shall be signed by an authorized company representative and returned with the proposal response. Provide number of the Addendum you received, and the date received.

Addendum No. _____ Dated _____

Addendum No. _____ Dated _____

Company _____

Authorized Signature _____

Print Name _____

Email Address _____

Note: Please print clearly

Appendix A – Floor plans and equipment list

Please see separate file attachment for the Café and Catering Kitchen layouts, along with an equipment list.