

Business Development Opportunity

**Halifax Waterfront
1655 Lower Water Street**

BNS(BDO)-2324-0001

Closing date: Monday, April 24, 2023




The Opportunity

Build Nova Scotia is seeking a potential operator to lease 1655 Lower Water Street on the Halifax waterfront (formerly the Tourism Nova Scotia Visitor Information Centre). This unique space provides the opportunity to do year-round business along the vibrant and active Halifax waterfront and engage with the millions of people that visit it every year. Located on the Halifax boardwalk between the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and the iconic Wave, 1655 Lower Water Street offers potential operators a special opportunity to revitalize this building into a new waterfront destination that showcases unique Nova Scotian products and/or experiences.

Build Nova Scotia is looking for a creative and ambitious potential operator to deliver a truly unique public-facing operation from this space, potentially through a re-imagined layout of the space by way of operator investment. The building is capable of supporting a wide array of business operations, including but not limited to retail functions for makers and/or producers, experiences, or the provision of other locally made products.





Proposals are to be emailed to bdo@buildns.ca no later than Monday, April 24, 2023 at 2:00pm AST. Email subject lines must read “BNS(BDO)-2324-0001”. Late submissions will not be accepted.

An optional site visit will be conducted on Friday April 14, 2023 starting at 3:00pm AST.

The meeting point will be in front of 1655 Lower Water Street, across from the submarine playground.

Build Nova Scotia intends to evaluate submissions in a staged process to select an operator with whom to enter into negotiations with for the subject property. The expected result will be Build Nova Scotia entering into a lease with the successful operator to grow their business vision in this high-potential location. This BDO is the first stage of the process. Its purpose is to obtain innovative responses from qualified potential operators. The precise nature and timing of a second stage of the process is at Build Nova Scotia’s sole discretion. Invitations to participate in the second stage will be based on the responses to this stage of the BDO.

About Build Nova Scotia

A key role of Build Nova Scotia is to develop and oversee opportunities that provide opportunities for sustainable, inclusive, and diverse economic growth through the transformation of our province’s lands and properties. This unlocked potential will drive our economy forward and support local entrepreneurs and businesses.

An essential element of our work is developing, building, and renewing infrastructure that keeps Nova Scotians healthy, connected, and thriving no matter where they live. Through our continued stewardship of the Halifax waterfront, our work enables small businesses to start, grow, and thrive by providing partnership, support, and flexible platforms for growth.

Learn more about what we do and how we do it at buildns.ca.



GUIDING PRINCIPAL

Build Nova Scotia’s stewardship of the Halifax waterfront is committed to providing platforms for local business to thrive and actively contribute to building community.

Background

Build Nova Scotia's stewardship of the Halifax waterfront includes providing platforms for local business to operate and grow while actively contributing to building community.

South of 1655 Lower Water Street is Salt Yard, which is home to several kiosks and small businesses. In 2017, Build Nova Scotia transformed a former surface parking lot into a small business district showcasing Nova Scotia food, products, and services. Salt Yard is now one of the most popular areas on the waterfront and it continues to grow with the rise in visitation to the waterfront and thanks to the increase in events and activation at the water's edge. Each year, Salt Yard continues to evolve and expand both in physical area and in length of season, thanks to events like Open City and the Evergreen Festival.

To the north is Queen's Marque District—a public space opened in 2021 by Build Nova Scotia and Armour Group Limited that is peppered with restaurants, shops, and accommodations for both locals and visitors. Queen's Marque is also home to several art installations that pay tribute to Nova Scotia, its maritime identity, and its people.



Detailed Description of the Opportunity

The purpose of this BDO is to allow Build Nova Scotia to partner with the successful operator to deliver a unique experience to both locals and visitors of the Halifax waterfront, providing a space where the delivery of a quality local product can be done in an engaging way, while also offering the operator the opportunity to conduct direct consumer sales from the building. Creativity and the intention to serve the public year-round are key attributes of potential business concepts.

The minimum term of the lease agreement for this opportunity is five (5) years with an option to renew for a further five (5) years. Potential operators may propose longer terms if required to justify the successful operator's level of investment in the building. For longer terms, potential operators must clearly demonstrate that the proposed term length is commensurate with the proposed level of investment.

Description of the Building

Situated in the Sackville Landing area of the Halifax waterfront, 1655 Lower Water Street sits immediately between the Wave art structure and the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, with the Salt Yard small business district to the south and Queen's Marque district to the north. Built in 1990 with ~2,352 square feet of leasable space, the building most recently served as a provincial Visitor Information Centre operated by Tourism Nova Scotia.

The building features glass panel and metal frame curtain walls around its entire exterior, offering 360° views of Halifax Harbour and the surrounding waterfront boardwalk. Its current layout includes an open entry area in the western portion of the building's interior, an enclosed back-of-house area in the middle of the floor surrounded by access hallways on the north and south sides that connect to the east side of the building where the current washrooms and plumbing systems are located. The roof is a flat metal deck with a rubber-membrane roof system and the floor is concrete slab with steel frame on wood piles. The building is fed with a three-phase, 200-amp electrical service.



The building has electric baseboard heaters throughout and a rooftop AC unit installed by the previous occupant in 2002.

The building, its structural components, and all of its various systems (including but not limited to HVAC, electrical, plumbing, etc.), are provided to the selected operator as is and Build Nova Scotia makes no representation or warranty as to their condition or their sufficiency for the successful operator's proposed use of the building. The successful operator will accept the building and these systems as is and will be solely responsible for their maintenance, upkeep, or replacement.

There is approximately 700 square feet of exterior space on the north side that could be used to support a potential operator's business, but inclusion of this space within a lease is subject to Build Nova Scotia approval. Any intent to occupy space outside of the building's walls must be clearly outlined in the proposal, and Build Nova Scotia makes no guarantee that a request to occupy this exterior space will be approved.

Build Nova Scotia requires ongoing access to a small area within the building that houses power and IT systems that support neighbouring properties. Access details will be negotiated within the lease agreement with the successful operator.



Desired Outcomes

Build Nova Scotia's goal is to maintain and enhance the Halifax waterfront's status as a year-round destination with an attractive, welcoming, and safe environment for everyone. Build Nova Scotia seeks interested operators that share a desire to enhance the Halifax waterfront as a vibrant destination for locals and visitors by providing an engaging and memorable experience for the public.

Utilizing this prime location to highlight products from, or to encourage visitation to, other parts of the province would be highly desirable. Preference will be given to Nova Scotian produced, grown, or crafted products.

Proposals that do not meet Build Nova Scotia Operator Requirements and expectations will not be considered.

Should none of the proposals received satisfy Build Nova Scotia's outcome and or deliverable requirements, or for any other reason, Build Nova Scotia reserves the right to terminate this BDO without award.



Operator Requirements

The proposed operator should:

- operate a high-quality business that provides customers and visitors to the Halifax waterfront with a unique product. The operation should provide an opportunity for year-round public engagement and/or a visible demonstration into how the product is made and/or delivered.
- provide a memorable experience for the visitor with regard to product quality, perceived value, and likelihood for repeat purchase.
- have consistent and reliable hours of operation.
- complement other businesses on the Halifax waterfront.
- generate economic activity by creating sources of employment and income.
- encourage the production, use, and/or sale of Nova Scotian products whenever possible, providing an authentic experience that highlights the best of our province.
- employ business practices and engage in partnerships that are socially responsible and environmentally sustainable.





Process Outline and Selection Criteria

Potential operators are to submit a proposal no more than 15 pages in length. Proposals should include, and will be evaluated on, the following criteria:

Strategic Alignment (20% of overall score) – The operators Build Nova Scotia will partner with will understand what is important to Build Nova Scotia on the Halifax waterfront and will detail how they will accomplish the Operator Requirements detailed above. Proposals should address how the operator's values and goals align with Build Nova Scotia's.


Business Concept (20% of overall score) – Proposals must define what the potential operator proposes to do within the building, how they propose to do it, estimated costs of required investment in the building, proforma financial statements for the proposed operation and why the Halifax waterfront is the perfect place for us to partner. Potential operators should include a detailed description of the investment and improvements they intend to make to the building.

Potential operators should include proposed hours of operation, activities that would occur and how those activities further enhance the current business offerings on the Halifax waterfront. Operators should demonstrate how they will support year-round waterfront visitation, and include any other information relevant to the proposed operation.

If your business will be delivered in a phased approach to capitalize on the Summer 2023 season, please provide a detailed description on the phases including how your business and its offering will evolve over each phase.

Business Experience (20% of overall score) – Potential operators are to describe how their business experience is relevant to their proposed business concept, and how their successes have had a positive impact on their community.

Potential operators should include a description of their operational capacity and capability to proceed with the proposed operation, including but not limited to existing staff, infrastructure, and other resources available to the potential operators.




Potential operators should also include a description of the experience and expertise of the proposed management team that is relevant to and will be directly involved in the proposed operation.

Potential operators should provide a description of their financial capacity to carry out the business proposed, including available equity, lines of credit, business loans, etc. This can include such documentation as signed letters from banking institutions.

Added Value (20% of overall score) – What unique value would you bring to the Halifax waterfront that would elevate this initiative? This could include, but not limited to:

- **Accessibility.** Potential operators should include a description of how their proposed operation will prevent and remove accessibility barriers within the building and their operation.
- **Sustainability.** Build Nova Scotia seeks to work with suppliers and businesses who have the knowledge and capacity to support and apply the principles of sustainability to their own operations. Potential operators should describe how their operations will be delivered in a sustainable manner (e.g. considering greenhouse gas reduction, waste diversion and reduction, worker health and safety, and local economic development) and comply with our Blue Flag Marina designation.
- **Social Responsibility.** Social responsibility comes in many forms. Both large and small businesses, regardless of industry, can make a big difference in their communities. Potential operators should explain how they make a social difference. This could include, but is not limited to, your respect and support of social and cultural diversity and your commitment to equity and inclusion, charitable partnerships, and community and virtual volunteering.
- **Creativity & Innovation.** Potential operators should include the ways in which their operation is truly creative, innovative, and unique. This could include, but is not limited to aesthetics, layout, innovative technologies, green technologies, customer safety and experience, and entertainment value.



Financial Proposal (20% of overall score) – Submissions should include a base monthly rent proposal, no less than \$5,000 per month, and a proposed percentage of gross sales. A revenue forecast must be provided for the first five (5) years of the term.

As stated above, all tenant improvements and further building fit-up are the sole financial responsibility of the selected operator. All costs associated with business operations, including but not limited to utilities, repairs and maintenance, applicable taxes etc. are the sole financial responsibility of the selected operator. If a potential operator is seeking a rent offset based on investment, this should be clearly defined in the submission.

Appendix B – Submission Form, signed by an authorized organizational representative, are to be included with all proposals. [See form here.](#)

Terms and Conditions

All Build Nova Scotia [BDO terms and conditions](#) apply to this call for proposals.

Form of Lease

The form of lease that will be used to detail the relationship between Build Nova Scotia and the selected operators is available [here](#). This form of license is subject to change at Build Nova Scotia's sole discretion.

Questions

Questions related to this call for proposals should be directed to:

Courtney Ordway
Business Development and Program Manager

bdo@buildns.ca