Strategic Review and Business Plan Development
Provision of Ongoing Leadership and Administration

Invitation brief for expressions of interest: January 2013

Background

The International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration (Ifpra) is seeking to engage an organisation/individual to conduct a strategic review of Ifpra, followed by the production of a new business plan and, potentially, the delivery of the plan and associated initiatives and administrative services to support the new directions of Ifpra.

Ifpra is a unique international organisation that represents parks, recreation, amenity, cultural, leisure and related services. Ifpra was created at the first International Congress on Public Administration in London in 1957. The current work of Ifpra can be summarised as:

- Sharing best practice
- Promoting research
- Organising congresses and meetings
- Publishing bulletins and web site
- Development of an international network of individuals and organisations dedicated to parks and recreation

At the Ifpra Europe Congress 2012 in Switzerland, the Ifpra Chief Executive announced his intention to stand down at the 2013 World Congress in Canada.

The Ifpra World Commission subsequently authorised the Ifpra Executive Committee to review arrangements for the leadership of Ifpra and to implement a succession plan. This presents an opportunity to review Ifpra to secure the long term viability, financial security and sustainability of a world urban parks body.

The Ifpra Executive Committee are seeking to work with an organisation/individual that can offer leadership and inspiration to the Ifpra membership, with wide interest and appreciation across all of Ifpra's work, and the proven ability to support Ifpra's objectives through engaging collaboratively and sensitively with a wide range of stakeholders across the world.

This offers a wonderful and creative challenge to review and grow an organisation that has a clear ambition to improve and evolve. If you share this view, and feel that you can meet the challenge, the Ifpra Executive Committee would welcome your expression of interest for this work.

Current situation

As with many membership bodies, there are some clear challenges for Ifpra. However, there are also many reasons to be optimistic about a future for a world urban parks organisation:

- The current Ifpra membership, although reducing in number, feel that sharing knowledge and being part of an international network are a real benefit of membership.

- The Ifpra Executive Committee and World Commissioners are committed to a number of important initiatives such as the world urban park portal, world urban parks initiative, the Ifpra Academy, the Scientific Task Force and an advocacy scheme.

- The urban parks profession is in real need of a body to properly and professionally represent them on a world stage.

- The existing national 'peak bodies' are enthusiastic about improving international networks and building on the Parks 4 Life movement.

- Ifpra has endured for over fifty years, and currently receives enough income to fund a part time secretariat/ Chief Executive role, and has a modest reserve fund that could provide a means of initiating its future development and evolution.

However, there are within Ifpra many areas where improvements and development are needed on a fundamental basis, in addition to the current initiatives taking place, to ensure that the organisation remains relevant, respected and required within the parks profession.

In addition, Ifpra is clearly suffering from 'volunteer fatigue', and there is a limit to what its Commissioners and Executive Committee members can achieve on top of their existing professional commitments.

The departure of the current Chief Executive in 2013 provides an opportunity for a major strategic review of the organisation and the development of a new business plan to improve the organisation's capacity and future viability.

Strategic review

Before any long term decisions are made on succession for the Ifpra secretariat role, it is proposed that a strategic review and business planning process is undertaken ***first***, and that an organisation/individual is sought in early 2013 to begin this task. Through this, there is clear potential for Ifpra to make more rapid progress in 2013, and have a defined business and development plan in place ***before*** any commitments are made to engage a replacement staff resource long term.

Scope of work

The scope of the review will be to critically review Ifpra and set out recommendations for its future in the form of a business plan. This will be explored in more depth following appointment. However, it should include:

- A review of all recent World and Regional Commission papers and minutes.
- Dialogue and consultation with Commissioners and Executive Committee, including a review of recent Ifpra discussion papers proposed by key members.
- Survey work with all Ifpra members (building on the brief 2012 Europe members survey results).
- A review of the current scope of the Chief Executive role and remuneration.
- Dialogue with the outgoing Chief Executive to determine the scope of the Ifpra secretariat and administration role, and to make recommendations for how this should be carried out in future.
- A full external audit of Ifpra accounts and financial systems (potentially through a separate engagement), and research on future funding models and income streams (advertising, sponsorship, grants, legacies, etc).
- A full review of the Ifpra constitution and governance arrangements, including the roles of the Commissioners and Executive Committee, and recommendations for the future structure and status of Ifpra.

The above components should be completed as part of the initial work by May 2013, as set out in the proposed timescale on page 5. The remaining components will need to be developed and completed by October 2013:

- Discussion with the three peak bodies within Parks 4 Life (*GreenSpace, City Parks Alliance and Parks Forum*) plus other national organisations such as the NRPA, NZRA, KPN and GALK to determine the demand for a world parks body and future opportunities and synergies.
- The potential to extend the reach of Ifpra to the numerous countries not currently represented within the membership.
- Discussions with *Europarc* to determine the applicability of their business model, as well as similar professional membership bodies in other disciplines such as IUCN and IUFRO.
- A critical appraisal of all current Ifpra initiatives to determine their future viability and sustainability, and their inclusion in the forward business plan, as appropriate. (To assist in this, Ifpra Executive Committee project leads will continue with any appropriate development work throughout the review process).

- Proposals for improvement of the Ifpra web site and publications (including Ifpra World) to make much better use of modern communications technology, and a more attractive, modern offer.

- Review of member benefits, so that they can be ‘sold’ to prospective members, existing ones retained, and the reach of membership extended to the numerous countries worldwide not currently represented.

- A wider rethink of the organisation itself, including its name and ‘brand’.

- The potential for Ifpra to become a powerful coalition and advocacy body. A policy and framework for this has recently been developing by the World Executive,

- The opportunities for Ifpra to showcase best practice, and teach by example.

- A review of current Ifpra Congress arrangements.

- The opportunities to further research, and add value by connecting existing parks organisations and data.

- The provision of an expert panel (possibly fee earning) to advise, mentor and troubleshoot.

- Other income earning possibilities, including a review of the Yardstick agreement.

Based on the findings and recommendations from the above work, which should be developed and refined through discussions and meetings with the Ifpra Executive Committee, a fully costed five year Ifpra Business Plan should be produced.

This should include financial projections, income assumptions, staffing requirements, risk analysis, development plans, name/branding, membership arrangements, marketing, events, IT solutions, risk analysis, location, governance arrangements and constitution.

Subsequent work may then include the delivery of the plan through the recruitment of any personnel and/or technical expertise required, and/or the continued engagement of the organisation/individual selected to carry out the review.

For the review and business plan production process to be effective, regular dialogue will be required with the Ifpra Executive Committee throughout its production. Although much of this may be possible via email, conference calls and Skype, it is envisaged that workshop style meetings will also be required. However, these may be combined with existing Ifpra commitments, as set out in the schedule below.

Proposed timescale

It is important that significant progress is made before the 2013 Ifpra World Congress in October. The following timetable is therefore proposed, although the appointee will be expected to develop a more detailed work programme as part of the final appointment process.

January 2013	Issue of the development brief. Deadline for expressions of interest: **3 February 2013.**
February 2013	Analysis of expressions of interest, development of proposals through phone/Skype discussions with the Executive Committee. Invitation for preferred bidder(s) to attend a meeting in early March.
7/8 March 2013	Discussions/project engagement meeting with preferred bidder(s). This will potentially take the form of interviews on day 1 and a project initiation meeting on day 2 for the successful bidder. The location of this will be determined in early February based on consideration of the geographical spread of the bidders and the Ifpra Executive Committee.
March – May 2013	Completion of initial strategic review tasks.
June 2013	Further development work, and presentation of initial findings at Ifpra Executive Committee workshop and Ifpra Europe Commission meetings scheduled in Hamburg on 5 – 7 June.
July 2013	Further development work, and presentation of initial findings at a potential Ifpra Asia Pacific Commission meeting. To be confirmed nearer the time.
August – October 2013	Further development of draft business plan based on feedback from the regional meetings. Consideration and draft business plan by the Executive Committee.
22 – 26 October 2013	Presentation and formal adoption of the new Ifpra business plan at the 2013 World Congress in Canada.
November 2013 onwards	Potential further engagement for implementation of new business plan and associated projects

Project budget

Ifpra will be funding this project through its modest development reserve, and will be seeking to work with bidders to develop a 'best value' approach to this work, based on bidders assessments of the work involved, the most efficient fee and expenses charging structure, and any potential for savings through joint working and hosting through other established bodies.

As part of the initial expression of interest, bidders should indicate their initial thoughts on this and, if applicable, a suggested day rate and the scale of discount that will be available on this based on a sliding scale of number of days utilised.

This will then be developed with the preferred bidders to develop a clear project budget and allocation for additional expenses anticipated in relation to this engagement, prior to formal appointment in March 2013.

Expressions of interest

Expressions of interest are required by midnight (UK time) on **3 February 2013.** These should be sent as an electronic copy to the Ifpra Europe Secretary, Dr Christy Boylan at secretariat@ifpraeurope.org.

As part of your initial expression of interest, please include details of:

- a supporting statement (of no more than 1000 words) setting out why you would like to be considered for this project based on the scope outlined in this brief, and why Ifpra should consider you for this engagement.
- references based on two organisations that you are currently or have recently been assisting with comparable work.
- qualifications, experience and professional membership of the lead staff member that would be assigned to this project.
- a broad indication of the likely fee structure for this work (as a basis for further discussion). Please note that this should be in £ sterling, as Ifpra is currently based in the UK.
- examples of similar work you have undertaken.
- insurance and professional indemnity arrangements.

Key selection criteria

Ifpra is seeking to engage an organisation or individual with:

- extensive experience in member based organisations at least at a national level.
- experience in urban parks and related fields.
- leadership and business management experience and capability.
- an extensive professional network.
- capacity to provide membership services for Ifpra.

Further information

Further information on Ifpra is available through the web site: www.ifpra.org.

Questions regarding this opportunity can be directed to the Ifpra Europe Secretary, Dr Christy Boylan via: secretariat@ifpraeurope.org or +353 (0) 1 8212917.

This will be then be directed, if necessary to the Ifpra Executive Committee, which is currently:

- Torgeir Sørensen (Norway): Ifpra President
- Emmanuel Trueb (Switzerland): President Elect
- Neil McCarthy (Australia): Chair, Ifpra Asia Pacific
- James McCulloch (UK): Chair, Ifpra Europe
- Christy Boylan (Ireland): Secretary, Ifpra Europe
- Cecil Konijnendijk (Denmark)
- Cliff Lacey (Canada)
- Noor Azlin Yahya (Malaysia)