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## **True Patriot Love Foundation Signature Fundraising Event Request for Proposal**

### **1. Introduction & Overview**

#### **1.1 About True Patriot Love Foundation**

True Patriot Love is Canada's national foundation for the military community, working to support military members, Veterans, and their families at every stage of their journey. By working as a trusted partner with local charities, social enterprises, the Canadian Armed Forces and the federal and provincial governments, True Patriot Love advocates for the needs of military members and Veterans and ensures resources are directed where they are needed most. Since 2009, True Patriot Love has granted over \$47 million for Veterans and their families, reaching more than 41,000 beneficiaries and supported 1,065 community-based programs across the country.

From global initiatives like the Invictus Games – of which True Patriot Love is the main funder of Team Canada – to local wellness centres and mental health programs, True Patriot Love has a research-backed approach that provides ongoing funding, partnerships and knowledge sharing to Canada's most vital military and Veteran support programs.

#### **1.2 Background on the True Patriot Love National Tribute Dinner**

The True Patriot Love National Tribute Dinner is the Foundation's signature fundraising event and one of Canada's largest celebrations in support of military members, Veterans and their families. The event brings together influential business and community leaders, distinguished military representatives and dignitaries to pay tribute to the military community and honour the sacrifices they have made for our nation. Through powerful storytelling, the event showcases the critical issues facing the brave service men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Our first National Tribute Dinner took place 16 years ago and has since become our key fundraising event each year, with nearly \$25 million raised for military and Veteran families in need. Each year, the National Tribute Dinner features a particular theme to highlight the mission and vision of the Foundation.

True Patriot Love Foundation is hosting its 17<sup>th</sup> National Tribute Dinner in three cities, across three evenings, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> in Montreal, Toronto, and Ottawa, with the goal of raising \$1.4 million. The format of the National Tribute Dinner is a cocktail and networking reception followed by a multi-course dinner and formal program, which includes a number of special guest speakers, fundraising segments, and various forms of entertainment. Funds are also raised through the National Tribute Dinner Auction, which has been hugely successful over the years, and consists of an online silent auction, as well as the marquee annual "Helmet Auction," which showcases mission-inspired artwork of incredible Canadian artists using soldier helmets.

The sales / business model of the National Tribute Dinner follows the form of a traditional benefit event, with dinner tables available for purchase (branded as "Hero Tables") in addition to numerous exclusive sponsorship opportunities, which offer hospitality, on-site recognition, and marketing benefits. The sale of individual dinner tables and sponsorships comprises the majority of total revenue generated by the National Tribute Dinner.

The theme of this the 2025 National Tribute Dinner is "Honour the past, support the future", which will highlight the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of WWII while recognizing the support needed by Veterans today.

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### 1.3 Challenges Faced by the Current Event Model

While the National Tribute Dinner has been well-attended since its inception, we have yet to be able to achieve our revenue targets of pre-pandemic. The True Patriot Love volunteer Sponsorship Committee and Development Team are having to work harder to sell tables and sponsorships, which is resulting in a strain on resources. Increasing awareness by engaging Canadians in the mission of supporting those who serve us in uniform remains a core objective of this signature fundraising event.

The purpose behind conducting this Request for Proposal (RFP) process is to address a few challenges that are inherent with the current event model of the National Tribute Dinner that may be contributing to the decline in revenue. True Patriot Love has prioritized the need to refresh this signature event and fundraising platform based on the following factors:

- **Donor fatigue.** True Patriot Love has consistently approached the same donors and partners to support this event, and those who have supported year over year may have a feeling of exhaustion, especially given the event format has remained the same over the years.
- **Shift in philanthropic focus.** Many corporations are shifting their philanthropic focus / mandate to supporting other causes and initiatives.
- **Shift in event support.** Some corporations have ceased their support of fundraising Dinners and other events and prefer to invest in supporting initiatives that provide better opportunities for employee engagement.
- **Affinity for the cause.** The National Tribute Dinner has appealed to certain demographics / audiences that have a particular affinity to the Canadian military.
- **Internal resourcing.** The current National Tribute Dinner model requires a significant investment of internal resources and high operating costs to execute at the present scale. The fundraising ratio between revenue and expenses is of critical importance and is a key performance indicator and measure of success.

### 1.4 Project Summary

**True Patriot Love Foundation requires the services of an event management vendor and/or consultant to lead the conceptual design, planning, and execution of the Foundation's annual signature fundraising event(s) in 2026 and beyond.**

Furthermore, True Patriot Love Foundation is seeking vendors who demonstrate the ability to provide:

- Expertise in high-end fundraising / benefit events;
- Recommendations for alternative concepts and fundraising ideas to augment and/or evolve the National Tribute Dinner model;
- Event-focused strategic fundraising and revenue generation experience; and,
- High quality client service and collaboration

True Patriot Love Foundation will have internal staff as resources for some aspects of the event, such as development of theme, budget, sales strategy, marketing and promotion, and guest management. Additionally, the event relies on the use of volunteer leadership and a committee comprised of business and community leaders. The primary purpose of the committee is to support the sales effort and achievement of the overall budget targets. The successful event management vendor will be required to lead and manage pre-event planning, budgeting, logistics and production, and on-site event execution. Please refer to the Scope of Work section for additional details.

Should your company be interested in this opportunity and are positioned to offer the breadth of experience required to satisfy the above, we welcome you to submit a proposal in accordance with the requirements contained in this RFP.

### **1.5 Project Schedule & Key Dates**

The following schedule is based on current timelines but is subject to change at the discretion of True Patriot Love.

<b>Project Milestones</b>	<b>Deadline Date</b>
RFP Open Date	July 23, 2025
RFP Close Date	Sept 5, 2025
Start Vendor Evaluations	Sept 8, 2025
Complete Short Listing of Vendors	Sept 15, 2025
Short Listed Vendor Proposal Presentations	Sept 29- Oct 3, 2025
Start Final Vendor Evaluations	Oct 6, 2025
Award Contract to Vendor	Oct 17, 2025
Tribute Dinner	Nov 3, 6, 7, 2025
Commence Partnership	December 2025

Upon selection of a vendor and the awarding of the contract, True Patriot Love Foundation and the successful vendor will develop and agree to a detailed project timeline for concept development, event planning and execution.

## **2.0 Proposal Submission Procedure**

### **2.1 Statement of Confidentiality**

The contents of this document are intended for the sole purpose of the preparation of a response to this RFP by interested vendors. Should your company be selected to the short list of vendors, additional confidential and proprietary information may be shared by True Patriot Love Foundation with your company and must be maintained in confidence and not disclosed to any person outside of the group directly responsible for responding to this RFP. True Patriot Love Foundation agrees to maintain all information received as part of this RFP in confidence and shall limit its use for the sole purpose of this RFP.

### **2.2 Vendor RFP Receipt Confirmation**

All vendors are required to confirm in writing, by email to the RFP contact specified in this RFP, their intent to submit a proposal for this RFP.

By confirming intent to participate in this RFP, the vendor agrees to be responsible for fully understanding the requirements or other details of the RFP and will seek clarity to ensure full understanding prior to submission. True Patriot Love Foundation retains the right to disqualify vendors who do not demonstrate a clear understanding of the Foundation's needs. Additionally, the right to disqualify a vendor extends past the contract award period and True Patriot Love Foundation will be at no fault, cost, or liability.

### **2.3 Communication & Proposal Submission Guidelines**

Vendors are permitted to contact the RFP contact specified below to seek clarification on the information provided in this RFP. To ensure equitable treatment of all vendors, questions must be submitted in writing, by email, to the

RFP contact, and all vendors accept that True Patriot Love Foundation reserves the right to share responses and/or answers all submitted questions with all vendors that have confirmed their intent to participate in this RFP. During the solicitation period and up to the RFP Close Date, no phone calls will be permitted. Only once a proponent has been short listed shall communication by telephone be permitted.

All vendors are instructed to submit their proposal on or before **4:00 PM EST on September 5, 2025.**

Submission Method:

- Electronic version in PDF format.
- Proposals should include a letter signed by an officer of the organization in a position to legally bind the company to the statements contained within its proposal. Revisions to a submitted proposal must be received prior to the RFP Close Date.

Please send vendor proposals, and questions related to this RFP, to the RFP contact:

Jillian Thomson  
Senior Manager, Expeditions & Events  
True Patriot Love Foundation  
Email: [jthomson@truepatriotlove.com](mailto:jthomson@truepatriotlove.com)

## **2.4 Format for Proposal**

Proposals should follow the format presented below and be no longer than 35 pages:

- Executive Summary
- Vendor Information
  - Company Overview – legal name; year in business; number of employees;
  - Services – description of all services provided;
  - Markets Served – description of industries / client types; and,
  - Partners – list of current event-related vendors and partners
- Technical Expertise (in accordance with the needs outlined in Scope of Work & Business Requirements)
- Presentation of Event Concept to be delivered in multiple venues and cities
- Project Plan: Expected Timelines & Milestones
- Budget / Pricing
  - Present a forecast of Revenue & Expense;
  - Fundraising Business Model; and,
  - Vendor Management Fee Structure
- References
  - Qualifications & Experience: Examples of similar work completed;
  - Names, titles, and professional bio of all individuals who will work on the project; and,
  - Minimum of three (3) references of similar current or past event management contracts (provide name and contact information for each client)

## **2.5 Evaluation Criteria**

All proposals will be evaluated following the RFP Close Date, based on the following criteria. The purpose of the evaluation criteria is to identify vendors with demonstrated experience, capabilities, and creativity to position True Patriot Love Foundation to maximize fundraising revenue while delivering a truly world class signature event.

The key evaluation criteria are as follows:

- Connection to the True Patriot Love Mission (20%);
- Fundraising and revenue generation strategies (event focused) (20%);
- Competencies in event design and management (20%);
- Demonstrated experience with past events (15%);
- Budget (including fundraising ratio – Revenue: Expense) (15%);
- Quality of event (10%);

## **2.6 Short List Selection**

Vendors that demonstrate their capacity to meet the needs outlined in this RFP will be notified of their selection to move forward to the Vendor Presentation and Final Evaluation stages in the RFP process.

## **2.7 Cancellation**

True Patriot Love reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time and for any reason, and will not be responsible for any loss, damage, cost, or expense incurred or suffered by any proponent as a result of the cancellation.

True Patriot Love reserves the right to cancel the contract at its sole and absolute discretion within 30 days' written notice to the consultant. The approved candidate will be entitled to be paid for all authorized work and expenses up to and including the date of cancellation.

## **3. Scope of Work & Business Requirements**

True Patriot Love Foundation will require the successful vendor to provide full-service event planning and management for the annual signature fundraising event. The following section is intended to provide detail and direction for vendors responding to this RFP.

### **3.1 Mission-Centric Event Experience**

The mission of True Patriot Love Foundation is to inspire every Canadian to contribute to the resilience and wellbeing of military members, Veterans and their families. This RFP is intended to assist the Foundation in its pursuit of continuing to provide a meaningful platform to connect with its mission, by creating an event concept that will help achieve ambitious fundraising targets. The creative direction and experiential nature of the proposed event concepts should be consistent with the mission of True Patriot Love Foundation.

Vendors are encouraged to “think outside the box” in terms of reinventing or developing a new signature fundraising event, but all concepts must be viable. True Patriot Love Foundation is interested in using this event platform to create new interest in the corporate community and among the general public, while maintaining the rich tradition of the National Tribute Dinner and recognising the different elements of military culture and tradition.

### **3.2 Budget**

As a registered charitable organization, a significant portion of annual revenue is derived from fundraising events, activities, and campaigns. Since inception, the National Tribute Dinner has been a primary source of fundraising revenue for the Foundation. The Foundation is prepared to consider alternative event concepts to continue its pursuit of generating unprecedented funds to directly support community programs and initiatives that benefit

military and Veteran families across Canada. The successful vendor selected through this RFP process will play a major role in developing a strategic fundraising model as a core element to True Patriot Love Foundation's future signature fundraising event strategy.

Fundraising Costs and Administrative Cost Ratios are key performance indicators for True Patriot Love Foundation. Therefore, a key consideration in this RFP is the ability for vendors to deliver a budget that will satisfy the following:

- Gross Revenue: \$1,500,000\*
- Fundraising Cost Ratio: 35% or less

Proposals should be presented with the objective of maximizing revenue, minimizing expenses and resource investment, while delivering an all-round mission-centric experience. As such, all vendors must provide a breakdown of costs related to management of the event as outlined in the Services section.

*\*Gross Revenue includes all forms of revenue generated by the signature fundraising event, including but not limited to ticket sales, sponsorship, donations, auction, raffle/lottery.*

### **3.3 Services**

The vendor shall provide the following services:

- a. Signature fundraising event design
  - Lead the event design process (format, schedule, run of show);
  - Destination / venue selection;
  - Pre-event schedule development and management (project schedule with deadlines and key milestones for the event);
  - Present event "theme" options that will be incorporated in all promotions, materials, and on-site signage;
  - Develop the production plan for audio/video and other technical requirements;
  - Manage the overall budget throughout pre-event planning;
  - Lead the formal program and content creation, including identifying speakers and presenters; Work with the organizing team to confirm suitable contributors to the event; and,
  - Support the development of a promotion/marketing plan to generate maximum awareness of the event;
- b. Develop and maintain project planning processes, such as:
  - Prepare event agenda and content creation;
  - Manage the organizing team's regular meetings, agenda items and actions items;
  - Provide any update related to the agenda & actions items to the organizing team;
  - Support the client team organizing the coordination of presentation files, presentation times and locations;
  - Create a volunteer plan for employees' roles onsite and hiring event staff, from professional events staff agencies, for registration and other activities;
  - Prepare and distribute material/package/gift to attendees;
  - Venue (including but not limited to room, food, materials, equipment) organization;
  - Develop and monitor critical path and milestones;
  - Track expenditures;

- Provide project status updates to organizing team;
  - Venue expenditures - facility rental, catering, audio-visual, security, etc.;
  - Hotel expenditures (if required/applicable) - lodging nights, parking, and meeting space; and
  - Sub-vendor expenditures - décor, material design/development, printing, entertainment.
- c. Act as primary capacity for event logistics, such as:
- Venue coordination, including but not limited to event space, meeting space, catering, audio-visual, jointly with the organizing team;
  - Sub-vendor and sub-activity management including exhibitors, activations, valet, entertainment;
  - Registration and attendee management jointly with True Patriot Love Foundation;
  - Collateral development (such as program, design, invitations, signage) previously approved by the organizing team;
  - Presenter and special guest coordination (such as host/emcee, keynote, entertainment); and
  - Event preparation (such as banquet event order, floor plans, room assignments) jointly with the organizing team.
- d. Additional Requirements:
- Knowledge of True Patriot Love Foundation and the Canadian Armed Forces: current issues and initiatives;
  - Knowledge of True Patriot Love Foundation's history and current issues/opportunities for continuing its legacy supporting military members, Veterans and their families; and
  - A commitment from the vendor that should it be awarded a contract for services, it will only retain True Patriot Love as a client within the military community.

### **3.4 Insurance**

The approved candidate shall, at their own expense, provide and maintain liability insurance. All the insurance shall be primary and not require the sharing of any loss by any insurer of True Patriot Love.