

Bid Document for

Discovery Room Design at Dinosaur State Park

The Friends of Dinosaur State Park and Arboretum, Inc. (FDPA)

The FDPA is seeking bids from exhibit design firms that will be able to put together a design to renovate what is now called the “Demonstration Room” into a true “Discovery Room.”

Project Background/Goals – The FDPA, in keeping with its mission, has the intent to support improvements to the park’s Demonstration Room. The room is used for a wide variety of functions including: meetings, teacher workshops, classroom for school groups, and interactive learning for visitors. Its primary use is as an interactive learning center and secondarily as a classroom. The other uses are occasional. The Friends have funding to purchase design services but plan to pursue grant funding for the actual fabrication of the new exhibits and renovations to the room. We hope to have multiple sponsors. **A bidders’ conference will be held on Monday, January 10, 2011 (snow date January 24th), to give firms an opportunity to view the room, main exhibit area, and to speak with park staff and FDPA Board members.** The conference will be held at Dinosaur State Park on 400 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067 at 10:00 a.m. The FDPA will consider firms that have a proven track record designing displays for museums whose visitor base includes family groups as a major component. The Board is especially interested in firms that have completed design work for science and natural history museums. **Bids must arrive at the park by the close of business on February 11, 2010. Send to Attn: Meg Enkler, Dinosaur State Park, 400 West Street, Rocky Hill, CT 06067. Questions contact Meg Enkler at (860) 529-5816 or margaret.enkler@ct.gov.**

Additional information:

The design will incorporate the following elements:

- An update to the lighting, ceiling, carpeting and walls. No structural changes can be made. At least two options should be presented with updated color schemes. Window treatments should be included to enable darkening the room for classroom presentations. All cabinets must be replaced. Cost estimates must include removal and disposal of old cabinets, light fixtures, carpeting, etc.
- The design must include estimated costs of all major components. These costs must be itemized and not presented as a total, or overall, cost.
- The design should incorporate movable elements to maximize the ability to use the room for various uses.
- All components must be extremely durable and able to withstand constant use. Minimal maintenance should be a consideration since exhibit maintenance will be limited to one day a week when the park is closed.
- The centerpiece of the design should be a series of “pull and learn” drawers that will cover the entire back wall. The drawers will be used to hold much of the park’s fossil,

rock and mineral collections. Drawers of varying sizes are needed and all should have a Plexiglas insert covering the specimens contained within, which will allow them to be viewed, but not removed. It is essential that the design is attractive and encourages visitors to open and explore the contents. A transparent outer panel could be used on some drawers. This should be a user-friendly exhibit; it should not look like a storage area.

- A “young visitor area.” On a typical summer day, approximately 50 percent of the visitors under 12 are preschoolers. A small table with a whimsical design is needed to seat 4-6 small children. The table should have a built in area for art supplies, crayons, markers, etc. The chairs could be designed to look like familiar dinosaurs, etc. This area should be visibly separated from the rest of the room and must include activities for this age group. (For example, exhibit features could include a set of soft blocks with designs on all sides that functions as a multi-sided puzzle creating many different dinosaurs.) This area could also include an attractive storage area for toys and other items that encourage free play. A thematic and creatively designed “toy box” could be incorporated into this area.
- A seating area with tables. The room must seat 24 people when needed. However, chairs can be high quality foldable or stackable so that they could be removed. To avoid moving the tables, we would like to utilize the tables in display areas.
- Storage area – A limited amount of storage area is-needed.
- A central presentation counter must be provided. This counter should be movable and small enough to be rolled out of the room. The front and sides of the counter should be used for exhibit space.
- An area for a small animal collection. We would like to make improvements to our current display so that small children are able to view the animals without assistance. There are no plans or intent to expand the existing animal collection.
- The vendor will be provided with photographs and dimensions of the Park’s specimen collection that will be showcased in this room. Examples include our collection of Connecticut Rocks and Minerals, animal skulls, and some smaller dinosaur footprints. The vendor should utilize remaining space to exhibit these specimens in a way that is appealing to all ages.
- The room must have a unifying theme that ties the individual displays together into a cohesive unit. Our committees have suggested the incorporation of timelines. This would coordinate with the timelines that are used at the entry to the museum and in all of our trail signs. The room must also incorporate the theme of the entire museum which is narrowly focused on the early Jurassic in Connecticut. The emphasis should be placed on footprints and not reproductions of skeletal remains. Although fossils from other time periods will be displayed occasionally, the fossils and geologic specimens from this location and period must be the predominant features.
- The room must have exhibits that appeal to all ages. The vendor may want to separate the room into 2 zones visually – a lower zone for young children and an upper zone for

older children and adults. Accessibility of the exhibits for visitors with disabilities must be taken into account in all aspects of the design. The vendor should choose energy-efficient lighting and environmental preferable materials whenever possible.

- Finally the room must have an entry way that is inviting and exciting for visitors. The empty wall by the restrooms should also be utilized as part of the entry way into the room.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive Vendor whose offer will be the most advantageous to the Friends in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

The FDPA reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential Vendor,
- Accept other than the lowest priced offer,
- Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers,
- Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of creativity, references from similar museums and examples of past work.
- Treat the initial design as a draft and make suggestions for changes to the second, and final, design.
- Give preference to the design firm to supervise fabrication and installation of design components, but is not obligated to select this firm.

Vendor's proposals shall be submitted in several parts as set forth below. The Vendor will confine its submission to those matters sufficient to define its proposal and to provide an adequate basis for the FDPA to evaluate of the Vendor's proposal. If the design firm routinely works with other vendors to complete this type of project, potential partners should be identified in the RFP.

The submitted proposals are suggested to include each of the following sections:

1. Executive Summary
2. Schedule for delivery of design draft and final design.
3. Detailed and Itemized Pricing
4. Examples of past work
5. Estimate for time required for installation
6. Appendix: References
7. Appendix: Project Team Staffing
8. Appendix: Company Overview