



Goldbelt Heritage

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Boat Captain for 2026 Canoe Journey: Haines to Juneau

RFP Issue Date: January 16, 2026

Proposal Due Date: February 15, 2026

Contract Period: [Start Date] through June, 15, 2026 (approx. 5 months)

Anticipated Start Date: Upon contract execution

Point of Contact: Miranda Bell, Culture & Arts Program Manager miranda.bell@goldbelt.com (907)-790-1470

1. OVERVIEW

Goldbelt Heritage Foundation (GHF) is seeking proposals from qualified individuals to serve as a **Boat Captain** for a traditional canoe journey from Haines to Juneau, taking place late May/early June 2026, coordinated official Canoe Journeys before Sealaska Heritage Foundation's Celebration 2026.

The Boat Captain will be the primary authority during the journey on the water, responsible for coordinating with the canoe team and fleet to navigate safely, monitor weather conditions, and lead safety trainings prior to departure. The Boat Captain will also provide expert input and feedback to support planning alongside GHF staff, the Skipper, and the canoe journey Project Coordinator.

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

GHF is organizing a traditional canoe journey that will take place over approximately two weeks (including preparation and travel), culminating in Juneau as part of Celebration 2026. The journey will include a team of shareholder youth pullers and adult support participants.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

The Boat Captain will serve as the primary on-water safety and fleet coordination lead, supporting safe voyage operations and readiness planning.

A. Fleet Coordination & On-Water Leadership

- Serve as the primary on-water authority for safety and navigation coordination during the journey
- Coordinate with the entire canoe team and support fleet to support safe travel operations.
- Maintain communications (on-water and ship-to-shore) and check-ins during voyage (radio, satellite device, phone, etc.)
- Monitor weather conditions and recommend operational decisions and route adjustments as needed.

B. Safety Planning & Risk Management

- Aid in the development of a Safety Plan covering:
 - Required safety equipment and gear checklists
 - Emergency procedures and communications plan
 - Route risk assessment and contingency planning
 - Weather monitoring approach and decision-making authority
 - Coordination protocols with canoe and fleet personnel

C. Safety Trainings



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- Plan and lead training sessions for pullers prior to the journey (schedule and frequency to be determined with GHF)
- Provide instruction and leadership development for youth pullers (and adult support crew as appropriate)
- Verify participant readiness and maintain accountability for attendance and safe participation
- Coordinate any required certifications or preparedness training (as applicable).

D. Planning & Coordination Support

- Attend planning meetings organized by GHF and the canoe journey Project Coordinator
- Coordinate closely with the Skipper to align on-water leadership and communication expectations
- Provide expert input to support planning, risk assessment, and readiness decisions.

E. Post-Journey Wrap-Up and Reporting

- Provide a post-journey report to GHF that includes:
 - Summary of journey outcomes and participation
 - Safety issues or incidents (if any)
 - Assessment of readiness and training effectiveness
 - Lessons learned and recommendations for future canoe journey programming
- Participate in a debrief meeting with GHF staff

4. DELIVERABLES

The selected contractor will help provide the following deliverables:

1. Journey Plan & Proposed Route (within first 3-4 weeks of contract start)
2. Safety Plan & Emergency Communications Plan (within first 4-6 weeks)
3. Training Plan & Training Schedule (within first 4-6 weeks)
4. Gear & Equipment Checklist (prior to final procurement deadline)
5. Pre-Departure Readiness Summary (one week prior to departure)
6. Post-Journey Summary Report (by mid-June 2026)

5. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Proposals will be considered only from applicants who demonstrate:

- Proven experience as a Boat Captain and/or vessel lead for marine-based travel operations
- Strong safety planning, maritime experience, and situational decision-making skills
- Demonstrated ability to coordinate group/fleet operations in challenging environments
- Experience navigating coastal waters in Southeast Alaska
- Knowledge of or respect for Indigenous cultural protocols and community practices
- Current certifications preferred, including (or ability to obtain):
 - First Aid/CPR
 - Wilderness First Aid or higher
 - Boater safety training
 - Any applicable maritime licensing or documented experience

Applicants must be able to demonstrate prior relevant experience and provide references.

6. CONTRACT TERMS



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Contract Type: Independent Contractor (or firm)

Contract Period: As soon as possible upon contract execution through June 15, 2026

Estimated Level of Effort: Variable for first two months, based on planning needs and journey schedule. Expected to be full present for the duration of the canoe journey voyage until landing, and preparation (about a week out from launch).

Work Location: Hybrid/Remote, Juneau-based preferred + in-person training and journey travel

Travel Requirements: Must be available to travel for training sessions and for the canoe journey.

Meeting Requirements: Must be available to attend planning meetings organized by GHF and the canoe journey Project Coordinator.

7. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Please submit proposals in PDF format and include:

A. Cover Letter

The proposal must include a cover letter that introduces the proposer, describes their interest in serving as Boat Captain, and confirms availability for the contract period.

B. Relevant Experience

The proposal must include a description of the proposer's relevant experience as a baot captain or vessel lead for marine travel, including coordination and safety decision-making in challenging conditions.

C. Certifications and Credentials

The proposal must include copies of any relevant certifications and credentials supporting the proposer's ability to safely serve as Boat Captain.

D. References

Provide at least two references with contact information.

8. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Submit proposals to:

Miranda Bell

Culture & Arts Program Manager

Goldbelt Heritage Foundation

Email: miranda.bell@goldbelt.com

Subject Line: RFP – Boat Captain (Canoe Journey 2026)

Deadline: February 15, 2026

9. OPTIONAL ATTACHMENTS (Recommended)

- a. Draft Journey Overview & Intended Timeline
- b. Draft Route Map & Landing Points
- c. Safety Equipment Baseline List (if you have one)

10. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience and qualifications



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- Demonstrated understanding of the role
- Approach and professional capacity
- Availability and capacity

GHF may request an interview with finalists.

11. ADDITIONAL TERMS

GHF reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals
- Request clarification or additional information
- Modify the scope of work prior to contract award
- Award without interview if deemed appropriate



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