Goldbelt Heritage

One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 201
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 790-1460
GHF@goldbelt.com

Request for Proposal (RFP):

Traditional Tlingit Drum-Making & Northwest Coast Art Intensive Instructor

RFP Issue Date: November 17, 2026
Proposal Deadline: December 1, 2026
Contract Period: December 14, 2026 through January 15, 2027
Anticipated Start Date: Upon contract execution
Point of Contact: Miranda Bell, Culture & Arts Program Manager
miranda.bell@goldbelt.com

OVERVIEW

Goldbelt Heritage Foundation (GHF) is seeking a qualified individual to teach traditional Tlingit drum maker, Northwest Coast artist, and lead an art intensive for middle school band and orchestra students at Thunder Mountain Middle School in Juneau, Alaska.

During the intensive, students will learn about traditional Tlingit drums and the cultural knowledge connected to their making and use. With the guidance of the selected instructor, students will create their own drums and paint Northwest Coast formline designs on the drum faces. The intensive should combine hands-on making with age-appropriate instruction in art, cultural context, and respectful practice.

SCOPE OF WORK

The contractor will:

- Plan and lead a hands-on traditional Tlingit drum-making and Northwest Coast art intensive for middle school-aged students at Thunder Mountain Middle School.

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- Teach students about traditional Tlingit drums, including relevant cultural context, materials, techniques, and uses, as appropriate to the instructor's knowledge and cultural protocols.
- Guide students through the process of making a drum, including the steps and techniques appropriate to the project and students' age and experience.
- Teach students foundational Northwest Coast form line design principles and guide them in developing or selecting culturally appropriate designs to paint on their drum faces.
- Explain the cultural meaning and context of designs where appropriate, while respecting clan, family, community, and cultural protocols.
- Prepare or adapt demonstrations, design examples, templates, and instructional materials as needed to support student learning.
- Provide safe, engaging, age-appropriate instruction and supervise students in the proper use of tools, materials, and supplies.
- Coordinate with GHF staff and Thunder Mountain Middle School personnel regarding scheduling, classroom needs, materials, student participation, and project logistics.
- Identify all required materials, tools, and supplies in advance. GHF will make every effort to accommodate the artist's requests, while reserving the right to select materials that align with grant requirements and available funding.
- Complete any agreed-upon preparation, instruction, and project wrap-up within the approved hours and budget.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants should demonstrate:

- Strong knowledge and practical experience in traditional Tlingit drum-making and the materials and techniques involved.
- Proficiency in Northwest Coast art and formline design.

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- Knowledge of Tlingit cultural traditions and protocols relevant to drum-making and the use of form line designs.
- Experience teaching, mentoring, or working with middle school-aged youth, or the ability to demonstrate an effective approach to youth instruction.
- Ability to create a safe, welcoming, and culturally respectful learning environment.
- Ability to communicate project needs, including materials, tools, preparation time, and estimated costs.
- Willingness to collaborate with GHF and school staff and to adapt instruction to the school setting.
- Ability to successfully pass a criminal background check, as required for work with students.
- Arrange their own transportation to and from Thunder Mountain Middle School

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Previous experience teaching traditional arts or cultural practices to youth.
- Experience working in schools or Indigenous community settings.
- Enrolled tribal citizen of a federally recognized tribe, with preference for a citizen of a Southeast Alaska tribe or Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA), consistent with GHF program priorities.
- Certified Tribal Artist or other relevant artist credentials, where applicable.

CONTRACT TERMS

Location: Thunder Mountain Middle School, Juneau, AK
Contract Period: December 14-18, Monday-Friday, 8:30 AM-3:30 PM; January 4-14 (excluding weekends), 8:30 AM-3:30 PM.
Estimated Time: 3 weeks (adjusting as necessary for school calendar and when appropriate), approximately 8 hours of instruction and 30 hours of preparation time. Not to exceed 50 hours of work, unless otherwise arranged between contractor and GHF.

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With prior approval, contractors may schedule extra hours post-intensive to finish projects with students.

Additional Instructor Support

GHF is willing to provide up to $1,500 to compensate an additional teacher apprentice or classroom support person to assist with the art intensive. Any individual serving in this role must successfully pass a background check before working with students and must have prior approval from GHF before working with youth. GHF reserves the right for final approval of any teaching assistants or volunteers working under this contract. GHF supports the traditional passage of knowledge from artist to apprentice, and encourages apprentices in our work.

Artwork and Educational Use

The artist retains partial ownership of all original artwork and dance apron design created under this agreement. Goldbelt Heritage Foundation (GHF) is granted a non-exclusive, perpetual, royalty-free right to reproduce, display, adapt, and otherwise use the artwork/dance aprons for educational purposes, curriculum development, educational programming, student activities, and future educational work with students and Alaska Native youth. GHF shall not sell, license, or otherwise use the dance aprons or designs for commercial purposes without the artist's prior written permission. Any commercial use or sale of items must be explicitly approved by the artist. Any use of clan crests or culturally restricted designs must follow appropriate cultural protocols and be discussed with GHF before use.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience and qualifications
- Demonstrated understanding of the role
- Approach and professional capacity
- Availability and capacity
- References

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GHF may request an interview with finalists.

ADDITIONAL TERMS

GHF reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals.
- Request clarification or additional information from applicants.
- Modify the scope of work before awarding a contract.
- Award a contract without an interview if deemed appropriate.
- Require a background check before contract execution or the start of work.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Please submit:

- Letter of interest describing your approach to the intensive and your relevant cultural and artistic experience.
- Résumé, CV, or artist biography.
- Examples of traditional drum-making and/or Northwest Coast artwork, if available.
- Description of relevant teaching, mentoring, or youth experience.
- Proposed project cost, including hourly rate or total contract amount, estimated preparation and instruction hours, and any additional expenses.
- Proposed list of materials, tools, and supplies needed, with estimated costs and clarification of what the instructor would provide versus what GHF or the school would provide.
- Confirmation of availability for the proposed project period.

Submit to:

Miranda Bell
Culture & Arts Program Manager
Goldbelt Heritage Foundation
Email: miranda.bell@goldbelt.com

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Subject Line: RFP – Drum Making
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