

Race Director Contract Solicitation: 2026 Equinox Marathon and Relay

1. Background

Running Club North (heretofore referred to as “RCN”) is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. RCN seeks to engage the services of a Contractor composed of a team of at least two Directors to coordinate and procure all non-Director labor and supervision and effect the purchase/rental/use of supplies, material and equipment as necessary to support the planning and execution of the Equinox Marathon in Fairbanks, Alaska for 2026, with options to renew through 2028.

The Equinox Marathon is the signature event for RCN. The event was first held in 1964, with the 2025 event being the 62nd running of the event. RCN seeks to engage a team of at least two Directors who will update and continually refresh the Equinox Marathon experience to sustain its position as a notable community event. RCN wishes to maintain the basic character of the event, including the traditional course alignment, start/finish location and the event date. However, RCN wishes to modernize and expand the participant experience, possibly by developing additional supporting athletic and social events and other means of increasing the interest and participation in the event.

The two essential outputs of this solicitation are: a) excellence in race logistics management; and b) vision and foresight in suggesting to RCN refinements and adaptations to the Equinox Marathon to meet athlete expectations of the late 2020s.

2. The Successful Bidding Contractor

The successful bidder will:

- have had an established presence in Alaska north of the Alaska Range and have been incorporated there since January;
- clearly identify by name and specific responsibilities a team of at least two individuals (including at least one Alaska resident), and their respective duties on the race’s management (changes to persons and/or responsibilities will require RCN’s advance written concurrence);
- not receive any financial gain from the contract, directly or indirectly, aside from the fee paid by RCN to the bidder; and

- present a clear and cogent plan to vitalize and ramp up local, state and, potentially, non-Alaskan, participation in the race, including adding components such as (ex.) pre-race gatherings/feeds, an expo, etc.

3. General Requirements

- a. This bid is for a fixed price contract for services described in this solicitation.
- b. The Equinox Marathon and Relay courses will not deviate significantly from their “traditional” course, nor will the event date change from the traditional day (3rd Saturday in September), unless authorized by RCN.
- c. The base term of the contract will be from the date of award through one year thereafter with an anticipated option to extend for two additional years.
- d. The Contractor shall have applicable experience and/or training applicable to performing the duties described in the solicitation.
- e. The Contractor shall maintain general liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 during the term of the contract.
- f. RCN maintains Event Insurance covering the Equinox Marathon and associate activities. This coverage will be maintained continuously for the term of the contract (RCN will not require the Race Directors to maintain Event Insurance for the Equinox Marathon or any associated events).
- g. Interested parties shall submit a contract proposal, delineating vision and plan for the events described below and price. The proposal shall include a narrative description of the event as proposed by the bidder, a budget for items to be arranged by the Contractor and paid for directly by RCN (“disbursements”), by detailed cost category (race t-shirts, snacks at aid stations, photographer fees, etc.) and the Directors’ fee. The disbursement budget shall be based on 500 marathon and 300 relay participants and may be pro rata increased based on participant numbers. No cost or budget for registration and timing need be submitted as RCN will contract those services itself.

4. Scope of Services

The Contractor agrees to organize all aspects of the Equinox Marathon and Relay in 2026, and any other ancillary events (Events), which may be added.

Furthermore, the Contractor agrees to meet the following key milestones: (Exact dates shall be selected by the Board prior to execution of the Contract.)

- a. provide a full, detailed budget for all event costs (exclusive of registration/timing) presented in writing to RCN Board by April, 2026 and each April thereafter;

- b. distribute weekly calls for race support volunteers via email and social media starting August, 2026;
- c. organize significant pre-race social media outreach and publicity starting in April, continuing through race day;
- d. direct the Marathon, starting at UAF, turning around on Ester Dome, returning to UAF on the day of race September, 2026;
- e. direct the Marathon Relay with three legs, starting at UAF, Goldstream Sports area and atop Ester Dome for up to 96 teams on the day of race September, 2026;
- f. conduct the Marathon awards ceremony 2:00 pm AKST on the day of race near the finish area, under a tent or other suitable weather protection;
- g. provide food and refreshments for race participants, included in the race fee, near the finish area, under tents or other suitable weather protection on the day of race.
- h. provide participants technical fabric long-sleeved shirt (relay and full) and finisher patch for full marathon participants, and make the shirt and patch available for RCN review no later than July 15, 2026;
- h. participate in a debriefing with RCN Equinox Management Committee no later than 10 December, 2026, covering successes and stresses of the events and articulating key milestones for the races; and
- i. provide full, final accounting by December, 2026.

5. Contractual Specifics

- a. The successful proposal must include a team of at least two Directors. At least one shall be designated as the Race Director, and at least one other as the Deputy Race Director. The Deputy shall be capable and authorized to perform all duties of the Race Director at any time, if the primary Race Director is incapacitated or unavailable.
- b.. The timing contractor will be selected by RCN with input from the Directors and will contract directly with RCN. The timing contract will be entirely separate and discrete from this contract. RCN retains the right to approve or disapprove all aspects of the Equinox events. The Race Directors shall be responsible for coordinating all race activities with the timing contractor such that the race timing is seamlessly integrated with all aspects of the event.
- c.. The busing contractor will be selected by RCN with input from the Directors and will contract directly with RCN. The Race Directors shall be responsible for coordinating all

race day activities with the busing contractor such that the busing of participants is seamlessly integrated with all aspects of the event.

6. Renumeration

- a. The Contractor will submit an invoice to be paid for 60% the contract amount (the race director fees) after the race day event certifying achievement of the above key deliverables;
- b. The remaining contract deliverables including financial reporting will be completed by December, 2026, whereupon the Contractor will submit an invoice for the remaining 40%; and
- c. The Contractor will be paid a bonus of \$10 per participant for paid up participants for all race events in excess of 800 and if all contract deliverables are, in RCN's sole determination, completed by December, 2026 and December of subsequent contract years. This bonus will be paid when the RCN Treasurer has confirmed the number of paid-up race registrants as of race day and following a Race Directors'-initiated meeting with the RCN-designated Equinox Management Committee to delineate milestones and successes/weaknesses of the races' events.

7. Independent Contractor Status

The Contractor is an independent contractor, not employed by RCN, and assumes all responsibility for taxation and compliance with applicable labor laws. RCN provides no insurance coverage to the Contractor in performance of duties described herein. The Contractor may, at its discretion and expense, hire additional persons to assist. Expenses thereof are to be borne from the contract amount noted above.

8. Indemnification

The Contractor shall indemnify and hold harmless RCN against any claims resulting from damages or injuries caused by their work. Furthermore, the Contractor agrees to defend RCN against any claims arising in connection with their work. The Contractor shall be prepared to provide proof of insurance at the time of contract execution.

9. Non-assignability

Neither party shall have the right to assign the Agreement or any rights or obligations hereunder without the consent of the other party.

10. Cancellations/Postponements/Force Majeure

If natural causes such as smoke from forest fires, heavy snow, torrential rain, etc., or other unforeseen causes force consideration of a postponement or cancellation of the event,

that decision will be made by RCN in consultation with the directors. If a postponement is agreed upon, the postponement will be for not more than fifteen days. If the event cannot be held within fifteen (15) days of the originally scheduled date, it will be canceled.

In the event of race cancellation and in consideration of necessary work that must be undertaken in any case well prior to race day, payments will be made on a pro-rated schedule. Payments will be made upon submission of all required receipts and the Directors-initiated meeting with the RCN-designated Equinox Management Committee to delineate milestones and successes/weaknesses of the races' events (even if the race is canceled). No bonus will be paid in the event the race is not held. In the case of cancellation, there will be no refund of entry fees. Participant shirts that were not already picked up prior to cancellation will be mailed by the Contractor to registered entrants with one exception. For local registered entrants, t-shirts may be made available at a pre-designated pick-up location for a reasonable amount of time rather than mailed.

11. Required Submittals

The proposal shall include the following items:

- a. The names of the key personnel, with an individual identified as the Race Director, and others designated as Deputy Race Director(s). The Contractor, constituting this team, will provide an email address, phone number and mailing address for each key personnel.
- b. A statement of qualifications for all Directors and Deputies.
- c. A narrative describing the race as proposed by the bidders including a clearly articulated vision of the Race Directors for updating the Equinox Marathon from that which has been implemented between 2023 and 2025.
- d. The completed Bid Form (attached in Appendix C). As attachments, this form will include the Contractor's remuneration amount, plus a budget for all disbursements (see 3.g above), exclusive of timing costs.

12. Further Information

RCN will hold a public ZOOM meeting on Monday 15 December at 6:00 pm AK time to answer any questions and provide needed clarifications to all interested parties.

Interested parties shall submit bid forms to Arthur Hussey at arthur@runningclubnorth.org. Bids shall be submitted by Monday, 12 January 2026. RCN is not bound to accept the lowest or any bid.

Questions, including pertaining to the ZOOM link for the 15 December informational meeting, may be addressed to the RCN President, president@runningclubnorth.org.

Appendix A – Running Club North Responsibilities

Logistics

- Designate from two to four RCN BOD members to act as the point of contact within RCN (the Equinox Management Committee or EMC) for the Director Directors to relay requests, receive feedback, etc.
- Provide storage space for all race-related materials, including clothing, water-bottles, bags, and any other Equinox-specific materials.
- Make available to the directors, all non-Equinox-specific RCN race materials (tables, tents, finish chute materials, etc.) for the exclusive use of the Equinox Marathon on the weekend of the race.
- Contract with a busing contractor for the provision of buses for the Relay.
- Assist the Director Directors in tasks related to implementing the Marathon and Relay.

Accounting/Financial

- Perform all accounting tasks associated with income and expenses related to the Equinox Marathon, based upon documentation provided by the Director.
- Provide for payment of obligations associated with organizing the Equinox Marathon.
- Meet with the Director Directors to debrief the marathon/relay and delineate timing of all key milestones by 15 October at the latest.

Insurance

- Provide event insurance to cover the liability and safety issues inherent in the conduct of the Equinox Marathon and Relay.

Course

- To ensure sustainability and preserve tradition, RCN will have the ability to make long-term modifications to the Equinox course. However, RCN will ask for input from the Director Directors\ before making the final decision.

Other

→ Approve changes to the Equinox logo.

→ Before finalizing all major decisions regarding the Equinox, RCN will inform the Director Directors and solicit inputs. However, RCN will make the final decisions at its own discretion.

Appendix B – Bid Form

The undersigned propose a lump sum bid including all labor required as described in the Solicitation for Services of Race Directors of the Equinox Marathon in Fairbanks,

Alaska, dated

Bid amount for remuneration:

Amount for disbursements, based on 500 marathon and 300 relay participants, exclusive of timing/registration costs:

This bid is submitted by: _____

On this day: _____