



# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

## **Event Production Services for The RAMMYS Awards Show & Gala and RAMW Event Suite**

RFP Issued by: Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW)

Proposal Submission Email: [rfp@ramw.org](mailto:rfp@ramw.org)

Proposal Submission Deadline: February 27, 2026

Initial Contract Term: One (1) Year (2027 RAMMYS)

Renewal Options: Three (3) One-Year Renewal Options (at RAMW's discretion)

# 1. About RAMW

The Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington (RAMW) is the leading trade association representing the restaurant and foodservice industry across the Washington, DC metropolitan region. RAMW supports more than 1,500 member businesses through advocacy, workforce development, education, and high-profile industry events.

Among these events, The RAMMYS Awards Show & Gala stand as the Association's signature program and one of the most prominent hospitality award ceremonies on the East Coast.

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## 2. Background & Purpose

RAMW is soliciting proposals from qualified event production companies to serve as its production partner for The RAMMYS and related events.

The RAMMYS convenes restaurant and nightlife leaders, chefs, sponsors, media, and public officials from across the region. The event is highly visible, operationally complex, and food- and beverage-driven, requiring a production partner with strong project management, creative vision, and executional rigor.

RAMW seeks a partner that can support the continued evolution of The RAMMYS while maintaining fiscal discipline and operational efficiency. The Association is particularly interested in working with a firm that is eager to grow alongside the event and views this engagement as a long-term strategic partnership.

To ensure continuity and a seamless transition, RAMW will utilize a structured shadowing period during the 2026 event cycle, followed by full assumption of responsibilities beginning with the 2027 RAMMYS.

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## 3. Events Covered Under This RFP

The selected firm will be responsible for full-service event production for the following:

### Primary Event

- The RAMMYS Awards Show & Gala (historical attendance between 2,000 to 2,500 guests and held annually between June and August)

## **Ancillary Events**

- RAMW Annual Meeting
- The RAMMYS Finalist Announcement & Celebration (historical attendance between 300 to 500 guests and held annually in April)
- The RAMMYS Honors (historical attendance between 200 to 300 guests and held annually between May and July)

Each event requires comprehensive planning, vendor coordination, food and beverage management, on-site execution, and post-event close-out.

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## **4. Scope of Services**

The Event Production Company (EPC), is expected to provide full-service event production and management for The RAMMYS Awards Show & Gala and all related ancillary events. Scope includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

### **A. Ancillary Events**

#### **1. Included Events**

- RAMW Annual Meeting & ProStart Local Invitational Competition
- The RAMMYS Finalist Announcement & Celebration
- The RAMMYS Honors

#### **2. Responsibilities for Each Ancillary Event**

- Develop diagrams that meet the needs of each ancillary event and the venue standards.
- Manage creative and graphic design workflows with RAMW-approved designers.
- Coordinate development of materials including invitations, presentations, videos, and event graphics.

- Hire and manage event vendors including but not limited to photographers, DJs, and entertainers.
- Manage and oversee all food and beverage services both in pre-planning and onsite.
- Provide on-site staffing and event execution.

### **3. Additional Responsibilities for The RAMMYS Honors**

- Manage honoree engagement and personalized program elements.
  - Coordinate historical content and storytelling elements.
  - Support speaker identification, invitations, and stage flow.
  - Provide input on script and presentation order (scriptwriter provided by RAMW).
  - Deliver on-site management and staffing.
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## **B. RAMMYS Awards Show & Gala**

### **1. Pre-Event Project Management**

- Provide comprehensive project management using planning software and shared timelines.
- Maintain schedules, deadlines, and communication across all event workstreams.

### **2. Pre-Event Sponsorship Planning & Support**

- Advise on sponsorship levels, benefits, and packages.
- Manage development of the annual sponsorship prospectus.
  - Oversee graphic designer to create sponsorship prospectus and deliver final product to RAMW.
- Facilitate sponsor signings and coordinate handoff from RAMW to EPC for fulfillment.

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# 1. Sponsorship Contracting, Management & Fulfillment

The EPC will support RAMW's sponsorship program through contracting assistance, planning, deliverable tracking, and on-site activation management. RAMW retains responsibility for sponsorship sales.

## Responsibilities

- Prepare operational content, activation details, and deliverable descriptions for sponsor agreements using RAMW-provided contract templates.
  - Submit all sponsorship agreements to RAMW staff and/or legal counsel for review and final execution.
  - Conduct onboarding with each sponsor to confirm brand requirements, activation needs, timelines, and deliverables.
  - Serve as primary day-to-day sponsor contact from contract execution through event completion.
  - Track and manage all sponsor deliverables including: signage, digital assets, script mentions, product placement, activation visibility, and VIP hospitality elements.
  - Coordinate with designers to ensure accurate sponsor representation across printed materials, digital screens, signage, and event collateral.
  - Manage all F&B sponsor integrations including quantities, delivery coordination, bar programs, tasting activations, and culinary partnerships.
  - Lead on-site sponsor activation management including installation, staffing coordination, layout, and troubleshooting.
  - Produce post-event sponsor recaps summarizing deliverables, metrics (when applicable), and activation documentation.
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## **2. Budget Management**

- Develop and manage event budget with RAMW's approval.
  - Track expenses, vendor invoicing, and payments.
  - Support fundraising timeline management and internal milestone tracking.
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## **3. Vendor Management**

- Research, recommend, and manage vendors including AV, décor, entertainment, and registration.
  - Support RAMW with venue contract finalization.
  - Prepare event timelines, production schedules, and floor plans.
  - Hire and manage volunteer coordinators.
  - Coordinate hotel needs and after-party logistics.
  - Review and confirm vendor contracts and specifications.
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## **4. Event Design & Program Development**

- Collaborate with RAMW on themes, show flow, guest experience, décor alignment, and storytelling.
- Manage event-wide branding and narrative development.
- Coordinate award categories, program structure, video needs, and presenter preparation.
- Ensure all awards are ordered, checked, and labeled.

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## **5. Food & Beverage Planning**

- Lead menu development in collaboration with venue F&B teams and sponsors.
- Manage all food stations, bars, and service flow.
- Coordinate sponsored F&B donations and culinary activations.
- Design bar layouts, VIP experiences, and specialty food activations.

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## **6. Creative, Design & Content Production**

- Oversee creative design for print and digital assets.
- Manage production of signage, graphics, and event materials.
- Lead video production coordination including filming, scripting, and editing.
- Oversee voiceover scripting and recording.
- Create detailed event floor plans.

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## **7. On-Site Event Operations**

- Manage load-in, staging, décor, installation, and activation buildouts.
- Oversee registration and volunteer teams.
- Lead VIP and presenter management, including briefings and backstage coordination.
- Oversee F&B operations and entertainment.
- Coordinate event load-out.

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## **8. Technical Production**

- Oversee technical production from selected AV vendors including all lighting, sound,, and video.
- Provide stage management and show director for the event.
- Manage rehearsals, run-of-show, and talent movement.

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## **Post-Event Responsibilities**

- Reconcile budgets and close out vendor accounts.
- Manage post-event donation transport.
- Prepare RAMMYS recap and committee reports.
- Prepare sponsor recap reports.
- Conduct debrief meetings with Events DC and key stakeholders.

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## **Transition & Shadow Period (2026)**

RAMW will conduct a structured transition and onboarding period during the 2026 RAMMYS event cycle.

The selected firm will be required to shadow the incumbent production team from February through July 2026, encompassing the full planning cycle, execution of the 2026 RAMMYS (anticipated for late June), and post-event close-out activities.

### **Time Commitment**

During the 2026 shadow year, the EPC is required to participate in RAMMYS planning and coordination activities led by Stratus. This includes observing and participating in key

milestones, vendor workflows, and production processes necessary to ensure a smooth transition into full responsibility in 2027.

The EPC should anticipate participating in:

- **10–12 planning meetings and vendor coordination calls** throughout the 2026 RAMMYS cycle, spanning pre-production, mid-cycle check-ins, creative development, sponsor management, and F&B planning.
- Venue walkthroughs, design sessions, and production meetings as scheduled.
- Sponsor onboarding and activation-planning calls as permitted.
- Some ancillary event planning touchpoints in coordination with RAMW and Stratus. 2-3 meetings in Spring 2026.
- Full on-site engagement for the 2026 RAMMYS, including load-in, rehearsals, show execution, and load-out.

## **Monthly Time Expectation**

Approximately **25–35 hours per month** from February through October 2026.

## **Purpose of Shadow Period**

The shadow period is intended to prepare the selected firm to independently manage all RAMMYS production responsibilities beginning in 2027.

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## **Compensation During Transition Year (2026)**

RAMW anticipates that the 2026 period will function as a shadowing and onboarding year, with primary production fees commencing in 2027.

Proposing firms should account for this structure in their staffing and resource plans and describe how they will ensure a successful transition during the 2026 cycle.

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# Creative Concept Requirement

Proposals must include a sample creative concept for the 2027 RAMMYS, addressing:

- Overall theme or narrative direction
- Guest experience vision
- Approach to sponsor integration
- Food and beverage storytelling
- Tone, pacing, and production flow

This concept is intended to demonstrate creativity, strategic thinking, and understanding of the RAMMYS brand; it does not need to include final designs or detailed budgets. Proposals should also address how the creative concept can scale or evolve across the Primary and Ancillary Events over three potential renewal years while maintaining freshness and audience engagement.

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## Compensation & Cost Expectations (2027 and Beyond)

RAMW is seeking a cost-effective and sustainable production model that aligns with the scale and complexity of the RAMMYS.

- The total production fee for the 2027 RAMMYS shall not exceed \$100,000, exclusive of direct, pass-through event expenses
- Proposals should clearly define:
  - Services included in the base fee
  - Staffing assumptions and on-site resource allocation
  - Optional or add-on services with pricing
  - Proposed pricing for renewal years (2028–2030), if applicable

RAMW will prioritize firms that demonstrate efficiency, transparency, and long-term partnership thinking.

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## Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals should include:

1. Company overview and background
2. Relevant experience with large-scale, high-production events
3. Proposed approach to the 2026 shadow period and transition
4. Staffing model and key personnel bios
5. Sample creative concept for the 2027 RAMMYS
6. Proposed fee structure for 2027 and renewal years
7. Portfolio samples (photos, videos, or links)
8. Three professional references from clients with comparable event scale (1,000+ guests, \$500,000+ production budgets, food-and-beverage driven events). Include: organization name, event type, dates of service, contact name, email, and phone number

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## Evaluation Criteria

### 1. Relevant Experience & Operational Capacity — 40%

Includes:

- Proven experience producing large-scale events (1,000+ attendees)
- Demonstrated ability to manage complex logistics, technical production, F&B coordination

- Evidence of delivering similar work for associations, nonprofits, galas, or hospitality industry events

## **2. Approach to Shadow Year & Transition Plan — 20%**

Includes:

- Understanding of RAMMYS complexity
- Clear methodology for knowledge transfer
- Ability to integrate efficiently with Stratus during the 2026 season
- Realistic staffing approach for shadow and takeover

## **3. Sponsorship Contracting & Management Capability — 15%**

Includes:

- Experience managing sponsor deliverables
- Ability to coordinate activations, branding, and fulfillment
- Ability to work with designers and F&B partners
- Professionalism of proposed communication structure

## **4. Creativity, Guest Experience & Event Vision — 15%**

Includes:

- Design sensibility
- Approach to storytelling, flow, and program enhancement
- Ability to elevate guest experience while maintaining RAMW brand integrity

## **5. Cost Proposal & Value — 10%**

Includes:

- Reasonableness of pricing
- Alignment with RAMW's move away from high-cost consulting models
- Demonstrated efficiency and value

RAMW is an equal opportunity organization. All qualified vendors will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, personal appearance, matriculation, political affiliation, or status as a veteran or member of the armed forces, in accordance with District of Columbia Human Rights Act standards.

RAMW strongly encourages submissions from minority-owned, women-owned, disadvantaged, veteran-owned, and local small businesses.

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## **11. Submission Instructions**

Proposals must be submitted electronically to [rfp@ramw.org](mailto:rfp@ramw.org) by February 27, 2026.

Additional deadlines, interview timelines, and next steps will be communicated following RFP release.