



Date: Wednesday, February 26, 2020

RE: Request for Proposal: 2021 Host City for The International Dota2 Esports Championship

## **SUMMARY**

In August of every year, Valve Corporation runs a multi-week esports tournament for its game Dota 2 called "The International." Valve is in the preliminary stages of selecting a host city for The International for 2021.

As you will see below, there are some specific requirements that a host city for The International needs to have, and there are a number of benefits a host city can expect to see. Please provide a detailed proposal addressing all of the items mentioned below. Please also provide us with any additional information you think would help us make our decision, including details on ways your city can help Valve, and The International contestants and fans, feel welcome. No specific format of response is required, but a detailed response would be appreciated. In order to be considered, potential host cities must ensure that their initial proposal is delivered no later than:

**March 31, 2020**

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

## **BACKGROUND**

Valve is an entertainment software and technology company located in Bellevue, Washington, USA. In addition to creating numerous award-winning game franchises (Dota 2, Half-Life, Half-life 2, Half-Life: Alyx, Portal, Portal 2, Left 4 Dead, Left 4 Dead 2, Counterstrike, Counterstrike Source, Counterstrike: Global Offensive, to name a few), Valve is also the developer of Steam, a leading online platform for PC, Mac, and Linux games.

One of Valve's most popular games, Dota 2, involves teams of 5 players squaring off against each other. Historically, between 50,000 and 60,000 unique attendees, based on an 18,000 capacity arena, congregate at The International to watch their favorite professional Dota 2 teams battle to determine which team gets the title of International champion and the multi-million dollar top prize. The International is the most prestigious Esports event in the world and has been awarding the largest prize pool in all of Esports for several years running (total prize pool of USD 34.3 million in 2019).

In terms of global viewership, international draw, and attendance, The International is comparable to the NFL Superbowl, U.S. Open Golf Championship, or the Eurovision Song Contest. For a good sense of the energy and scale of The International, check out this [video](#).

These press articles can also help you understand what The International is all about:

- [The Verge](#)
- [CBS News](#)

- ['Wish they'd do this every year': The International Dota 2 Championship a boost for Vancouver tourism](#)

## SCHEDULING AND ADDITIONAL DETAILS

The International is typically held over a two week period, and consists of a four day group stage and a six day main event. The group stage is typically held in hotel or other conference rooms without spectators present, and the main event is held in a large arena with tens of thousands of screaming fans. In addition to the arena, the main event also typically includes vendor villages, fan zones, merchandise shops, a full-scale festival event space, and nightly after parties and post-game shows hosted at unique venues in the city. A world-wide broadcast serving over 31 languages runs through the duration of the event, averaging 12 hours per day.

A typical schedule for The International looks like this:

August 1:	Valve and local skilled labor force begin groundwork for event
August 9:	Players and hosting/broadcasting talent arrive
August 12-15:	Group stage
August 16:	Rehearsal for main event
August 17-22:	Main Event
August 23-26:	Valve and local skilled labor force tear down after event

## HOST CITY BENEFITS

This year's International will be held in Stockholm, and past host cities of the International include Seattle, Vancouver, and Shanghai. Each of these cities has seen an influx of visitors (about half of the attendees) that patronize their hotels, restaurants, and other tourist attractions. Moreover, Valve works with local suppliers to source equipment such as lighting, rigging, broadcast equipment, and internet bandwidth. Valve also hires local skilled laborers to handle catering, construction, décor, printing, marketing, security, transportation, and entertainment.

All of this typically results in a significant boost to the host city's economy. As an example, Tourism Vancouver estimated that hosting The International injected 7.8 million dollars into their local economy.<sup>1</sup>

## REQUIREMENTS & OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There are certain things a host city must have in order to handle an event the size and scope of The International, including:

- A modern indoor arena or stadium with a capacity between 15,000 and 80,000 (which must be available for at least a 10 day period in August 2021)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/i-kind-of-wish-theyd-do-this-every-year-the-international-dota-2-championship-a-boost-for-vancouver-tourism>

- As an example, The 2020 International is being held at the Ericsson Globe in Stockholm; The 2019 International was held at Mercedes-Benz Arena in Shanghai
- Additional space for ancillary events (*e.g.*, vendor villages, fan zones, after parties)
- Ample hotel space for upwards of 30,000 individuals
- Fiber network connectivity from a local service provider
- Proximity to an International Airport
- A strong local transportation system

In addition to those must-have requirements, there are other specific considerations that we will consider in choosing a host city, including the city and national governments' ability to:

- Ensure the safety of The International's contestants, workers, and fans
- Maintain clear and continuous communication with Valve leading up to and during the event
- Assist Valve with permitting and negotiating local regulations
- Help Valve navigate immigration and visa issues for The International's contestants, workers, and fans
- Support potential road closures
- Commit to unfettered movement of event trucks on surface roads

In your response to this RFP, please address each of the items listed in this section.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Please also provide us with any additional information you think would help us make our decision, including details on ways your city can help Valve, and The International contestants and fans, feel welcome.

### **SELECTION PROCESS AND TIMELINE**

1. Initial Selection – Completed
2. Questions about RFP submission deadline – March 15, 2020
3. RFP submission – March 31, 2020
4. Review of submissions by Valve and follow-up – April 1, 2020 through May 15, 2020
5. Final selection of host city – by June 15, 2020
6. Public announcement of 2021 host city – August, 2020, at this year's International

### **QUESTIONS?**

All questions related to this RFP must be submitted by no later than **March 15<sup>th</sup>**. Questions should be delivered by email to the following:

[TheInternationalRFP@valvesoftware.com](mailto:TheInternationalRFP@valvesoftware.com)

## **SUBMISSION**

In order to be considered, potential partners must ensure that their proposal is delivered no later than:

**March 31, 2020**

Each submission should be delivered by email to the following:

[TheInternationalRFP@valvesoftware.com](mailto:TheInternationalRFP@valvesoftware.com)

## LIMITATIONS

This Request for Proposal is an open and competitive process.

This Request for Proposal in no manner constitutes a contract or an offer of a contract to potential partners who receive and/or respond to this RFP (“Respondents”). No contract will be implied by the selection of a Respondent’s proposal. Also, no contract will exist until both the selected partner and Valve have reached an agreement and signed a formal contractual document, which will include Valve’s standard business terms and conditions.

Valve reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, as well as the right to cancel the selection process at any time. Respondents will not be reimbursed for any costs associated with the preparation or submittal of responses to this RFP.

Valve reserves the right to “over-look” any minor irregularities or informalities in any proposal, and/or to request clarification of information from any Respondent.

All statements made herein are based upon Valve’s past experiences and are not a guarantee of future results. The International 2021 may not be exactly the same format or as successful as prior Internationals, and your host city may not have the same experience as prior host cities.

Respondents will at no time issue any advertising and/or news releases and/or provide media interviews in association with this project without the prior written approval of Valve which may be withheld in Valve’s sole discretion.

Respondents shall not use the VALVE Corporation name, logos or trademarks without prior written consent from VALVE.

All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of Valve.

Prospective Respondents should state in writing that all furnished information will remain valid and applicable for a minimum of one-hundred and eighty (180) days from the date their proposal is received by Valve.

The information contained in this RFP is proprietary to Valve Corporation and must be treated by the Respondent as confidential. The information is to be used by each Respondent only for the purpose of preparing a response to this RFP. The information may not be used or shared with other parties for any other purpose without Valve’s written permission.