



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**United States Public Relations Agency**

**Canada Public Relations, Travel Trade, Sales, & Marketing Agency**

**February 5, 2019**

**Table of Contents**

- Table of Contents ..... 2
- 1.0 RFP Overview..... 3
- 2.0 VISIT FLORIDA Overview..... 3
- 3.0 RFP Objectives..... 4
- 3.1 The Florida Brand and the VISIT FLORIDA Brand ..... 5
- 4.0 Scope of Work ..... 6
- 4.1 Canada Administrative Services ..... 6
- 4.2 Canada Public Relations Services ..... 8
- 4.3 Canada Travel Trade, Sales, and Marketing Services ..... 12
- 4.4 United States Administrative Services..... 14
- 4.5 United States Public Relations Services ..... 16
- 4.6 Monthly Reporting..... 19
- 5.0 RFP Schedule and Process ..... 19
- 5.1 Questions to VF ..... 20
- 5.2 Qualification and Proposal Submission Process ..... 20
- 5.3 Initial Evaluation, Presentations, Negotiations, Award and Contracting..... 21
- 5.4 Qualification Questionnaire ..... 21
- 6.0 Proposal Format ..... 22
- 6.1 Agency Overview ..... 23
- 6.2 Agency Capabilities ..... 23
- 6.3 Questions ..... 25
- 6.4 Pricing Information ..... 25
- 7.0 Evaluation Criteria..... 26
- 8.0 RFP Terms ..... 26

## 1.0 RFP Overview

VISIT FLORIDA (“VF”) is seeking agency services for its Public Relations (“PR”) business in the United States and Canada, and its Travel Trade, Sales, and Marketing business in Canada. Qualified agencies may submit proposals in the following formats:

- Consolidated bids for all services (proposal covering USA & Canada PR; Canada Travel Trade, Sales, & Marketing)
- Individual bids for any one or any combination of the following:
  - USA Public Relations
  - Canada Public Relations
  - Canada Travel Trade, Sales, & Marketing

For example, a public relations agency without a travel trade, sales and marketing arm could submit a bid for both USA and Canada public relations services, or a Canadian agency without a substantial United States presence could submit a bid for Canadian Public Relations, Travel Trade, Sales, and Marketing.

VF’s objective is to hire an agency (or agencies) that will seamlessly integrate with VF’s current team and campaign building process and provide strategic leadership that maximizes the effectiveness of VF’s public relations and travel trade, sales, and marketing activities in North America.

The RFP process shall consist of two phases. Phase one consists of agencies submitting a statement of qualifications and supporting documents, followed by written proposals in response to this RFP detailing agency capabilities and experience. Phase two will consist of more detailed submissions and in-person presentations by selected agencies.

## 2.0 VISIT FLORIDA Overview

VF is a public-private partnership established by the State of Florida that provides services to more than 12,000 Florida tourism industry partners (“partners”). It receives funding from the state each year which is matched dollar-for-dollar by partners through a combination of contributions, membership and service fees, and cooperative advertising participation. Public contributions include all state appropriations to VISIT FLORIDA and exclude taxes derived pursuant to Florida Statute 125.0104. The selected agency will be expected to play a role in securing event participation, creating cooperative advertising, and building promotions that support VISIT FLORIDA’s required match.

To review research reports or infographics, please click [here](#).

To review 2017-2018 Annual Report, please click [here](#).

To review our 2018-2019 Marketing Plan, please click [here](#).

To review our 2020 Strategic Plan, please click [here](#).

To view our consumer website, please click [here](#).

To view our business to business website, please click [here](#).

VF’s priorities include:

- Keeping Florida top of mind among target audiences;
- Protecting and growing visitor volume to Florida;

- Extending visitor length of stay and increasing visitor spend;
- Increasing visit frequency and visitor retention;
- Increasing travel to emerging Florida destinations;
- Growing brand awareness and engagement; and
- Promoting Florida tourism industry alignment.

### 3.0 RFP Objectives

The resulting agency/ies relationship is expected to last three to five years, but the contract will be renewed on an annual basis. VISIT FLORIDA is seeking a partner agency or agencies for public relations ("PR"), travel trade, sales and marketing initiatives in Canada, and for PR initiatives in the United States.

The selected agency/ies will be responsible for carrying out VISIT FLORIDA's strategic marketing plan and for achieving the following goals:

#### Canada

- Protecting and growing visitor volume from Canada to Florida.
- Extending the length of stay and increase spending by Canadian visitors.
- Increasing visit frequency and visitor retention.
- Increasing travel to emerging Florida destinations.
- Maintain and build positive brand awareness of Florida and brand engagement.
- Promoting industry alignment and collective impact through partner investment and thought leadership.

VISIT FLORIDA's objectives include:

- Selecting an agency to increase media impressions through proactively pitching relevant and meaningful Florida tourism related stories to media in order to support targeted demographic markets.
- Selecting an agency to facilitate media relations with key journalists and media in Canada through various marketing initiatives, including but not limited to, networking events, one-on-one appointments and familiarization tours.
- Selecting an agency to increase the utilization of VISIT FLORIDA planning resources by travel trade professionals across the target regions who promote and sell travel to Florida.
- Selecting an agency to increase the number of travel trade professionals in Canada who recognize VISIT FLORIDA as the trusted source for leisure travel planning leading to expanded knowledge of Florida's tourism product and industry through marketing initiatives including, but not limited to, Florida stand-alone missions, sales calls, tradeshow, familiarization tours, collaboration with national and international travel associations, such as U.S. Travel Association.
- Selecting an agency to increase the economic impact and gain by Canadian leisure travelers through marketing initiatives by VISIT FLORIDA and the tourism industry.

VISIT FLORIDA's audience includes:

- The Florida tourism industry at large (for partnership and cooperative advertising purposes);
- Consumers in the United States, Canada, and select international markets;
- Florida residents (currently through VISIT FLORIDA's "Share a Little Sunshine" campaign, which is designed to leverage social networks to reach outside of Florida);
- Decision-makers in the meetings and convention industry around the world; and
- International travel trade professionals.

More information can be found in our [Marketing Plan](#) (see section 2).

### United States

- Protect and grow visitor volume from other U.S. states to Florida.
- Extend the length of stay and increase spending by domestic visitors.
- Increase visit frequency and visitor retention.
- Increase travel to emerging Florida destinations.
- Maintain and build positive brand awareness of Florida and brand engagement.
- Promote industry alignment and collective impact through partner investment and thought leadership.

VISIT FLORIDA's objectives include:

- Selecting an agency to increase media impressions through proactively pitching relevant and meaningful Florida tourism related stories to media in order to support target markets and demographics.
- Selecting an agency to facilitate media relations with key journalists and media in the U.S. through various marketing initiatives, including but not limited to, networking events, one-on-one appointments and familiarization tours.
- Selecting an agency to increase the economic impact and gain by domestic leisure travelers through marketing initiatives by VISIT FLORIDA and the tourism industry.

VISIT FLORIDA's audience includes:

- The Florida tourism industry at large (for partnership and cooperative advertising purposes);
- Consumers in the United States, Canada and select international markets;
- Florida residents (currently through VISIT FLORIDA's "Share a Little Sunshine" campaign, which is designed to leverage social networks to reach outside of Florida);
- Decision-makers in the meetings and convention industry around the world; and
- International PR and travel trade professionals.

More information can be found in our [Marketing Plan \(see section 2\)](#).

The Canada Public Relations services to be provided by the Agency had a fiscal annual budget for the 2018 fiscal year of \$391,189 USD, which is inclusive of all agency fees and all expenses for projects/events, influencer efforts, and agency travel.

The Canada Travel Trade and Sales/Marketing services to be provided by the Agency had a fiscal annual budget for the 2018 fiscal year of \$243,036 USD, which is inclusive of all agency fees and all expenses for projects/events and agency travel.

The United States Public Relations services to be provided by the Agency had a fiscal annual budget for the 2018 fiscal year of \$1,164,225 USD, which is inclusive of all agency fees and all expenses for projects/events, influencer efforts, and agency travel.

VISIT FLORIDA's fiscal year is July 1 – June 30.

### **3.1 The Florida Brand and the VISIT FLORIDA Brand**

Florida has been promoted as a tourism destination for more than a hundred years by a variety of visitors and tourism businesses. Throughout its history, three themes have repeatedly emerged: (1) the sun; (2) fun; and (3) freedom.

In the 1950s, state license plates began proclaiming Florida as the “Sunshine State,” and Florida’s brand identity began to coalesce. Consumers now know that in Florida they will find sunshine any time of year, and will always enjoy vacations that let them experience and share their own internal “sunshine state.” Expressed visually, this is communicated through: bright and sunny landscapes; open vistas; sunny smiles and bright visages; settings that are bright and brilliant where visitors feel vibrant and alive as they give over to their own “sunshine state of mind.”

Key VISIT FLORIDA Brand Attributes:

Visual: bright open expanses, vivid colors, and a sense of movement and excitement.

Tone: passionate, fun, quirky and playful.

Characteristics: exciting and sensual in a believable way

Personality Snapshot: Florida is the exotic girl next door, exciting and approachable, with a quirky sense of humor.

Key Attributes: honesty, trustworthiness, and an authoritative source for information.

#### 4.0 Scope of Work

The anticipated scope of work for all services sought by VISIT FLORIDA is set forth below. This is an anticipated scope of work only, is subject to change, and shall not be finalized except until executed in a signed, written agreement between VISIT FLORIDA and the selected agency or agencies (listed below as Contractor).

#### 4.1 Canada Administrative Services

**Administrative Services.** Contractor shall:

- i. Provide VISIT FLORIDA a physical office located within Canada. This facility shall include a mailing address, a telephone system, and all other necessary office equipment, including computers, necessary to perform the functions contracted for herein. Contractor shall provide an office meeting space for professional business meetings relating to this Agreement, including meetings with members of the Florida tourism industry and the media. The facility described herein shall be capable of showing PowerPoint presentations with integrated high-definition video files and audio.
- ii. Provide a minimum of one managing director to oversee the VISIT FLORIDA account, with dedicated account representation to fulfill the marketing objectives and plan as directed by VISIT FLORIDA. Provide all necessary staff to complete tasks and services as outlined in this Scope of Work. Contractor shall provide VISIT FLORIDA with direct access to all persons providing services to or on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA.
- iii. Provide a comprehensive monthly report of all activities undertaken pursuant to this Agreement. This report shall be made on the third day of each month (or the following business day in the event that the fifth day falls on a weekend or holiday). This report shall include, but need not be limited to: the previous month’s activities undertaken in each targeted market, including market intelligence, feedback, and advice on strategies to capitalize on any opportunities; a recap of travel trade, sales, marketing, social media and public relations efforts and activities throughout the month; a recap of earned media results and include copies of clips generated during the month; images, photos, and planned programs generated or conducted pursuant to this Agreement; returns on VISIT FLORIDA’s investments; and any other material updates relating to activities conducted as a result of this Agreement. This monthly report will be used by VISIT FLORIDA in evaluating Contractor’s performance.

- iv. Transmit to VISIT FLORIDA an itemized monthly invoice for all fees and expenses billed, with supporting documentation no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> of each month for the prior month's services.
- v. Transmit to VISIT FLORIDA an itemized monthly report for any expenses incurred within that month that have yet to be billed to VISIT FLORIDA (accruals), including but not limited to subcontractor expenses. Accruals shall be submitted no later than the last day of the month. Submissions of accruals to accounting each month is required, unless an invoice covering such expenses has already been provided.
- vi. Review all monthly invoices and financial reports for accuracy against invoices and incurred expenses, and immediately report any discrepancies to VISIT FLORIDA upon discovery.
- vii. Participate in regular status calls with VISIT FLORIDA, at the direction of VISIT FLORIDA. Status calls should include budget updates for all projects, updates on projects, tasks, and services, and any material updates relating to this Agreement.
- viii. Provide administrative support for accounting and monthly reporting tasks conducted pursuant to this Agreement.
- ix. Prepare annual proposed PR, travel trade, sales, and marketing plans and budgets for each targeted market to be used in the development of the Scopes of Work for subsequent fiscal years.  
 These proposals shall include a detailed list of all activities and projects Contractor plans to undertake pursuant to the Agreement between Contractor and VISIT FLORIDA, including a detailed and comprehensive itemization of all costs to be incurred. This itemization shall include general overhead costs. These proposals shall include, with supporting documentation, estimated return on investment and revenue generated. All budgets must be submitted to VISIT FLORIDA and approved by VISIT FLORIDA via the execution of subsequent Scopes of Work prior to any costs being incurred. Any revisions to an approved budget, including but not limited to budget overages, must be additionally approved by VISIT FLORIDA. Failure to obtain the requisite approval of VISIT FLORIDA in advance of any costs, fees, or other charges being incurred may result in Contractor bearing full financial responsibility for such charges. In developing the proposed budget, Contractor shall give consideration to cost and efficiency and shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure cost savings.
- x. Develop relationships with key consumer media in the Canadian market, and maintain a database and develop contacts with key trade, outbound travel agents, tour operators, airlines, government officials, airline officials, meeting professionals, and trade and consumer travel and other media that will increase positive exposure for VISIT FLORIDA.
  - A. Contractor shall transmit to VISIT FLORIDA the most current version of such database and all contacts following events and/or upon request by VISIT FLORIDA.
- xi. As necessary and as directed by VISIT FLORIDA, assist with physical storage, fulfillment, and distribution services of VISIT FLORIDA's publications and promotional materials, including, but not limited to, storage and shipping of such materials to events.
- xii. Provide translation services as directed by VISIT FLORIDA.
- xiii. Respond to all inquiries from media and VISIT FLORIDA Marketing Partners within 3-5 business days.
- xiv. Assist VISIT FLORIDA with crisis management (including, but not limited to, responses to natural disasters and other acts of God), including strategy and communication services.
- xv. Manage receptive/tour operator, media requests, press activities, and events in Canada.
- xvi. Attend annual meeting at VISIT FLORIDA's Tallahassee headquarters.

- xvii. Monitor revenue and expenses for each program, service, and activity from beginning to end to ensure that the approved budget is not exceeded. Any change in revenue, expenses, program format, or any other material change should be reported to management in writing in advance for prior approval from VISIT FLORIDA. Contractor will be responsible for bearing any additional costs if approval is not obtained.
- xviii. Contractor shall carry out all tasks, programs, projects, events, and activities provided for herein and as directed by VISIT FLORIDA. If any required activity is cancelled for any reason, Contractor shall complete another similar activity within the Agreement period with prior approval from VISIT FLORIDA. Failure to perform Contractor's duties pursuant to this Agreement may result in a reduction in Contractor's fee or in termination of this Agreement, as outlined in Section 5 of the Agreement.
- xix. Submit a post-event report including final budget no more than five days after the end of the event to VISIT FLORIDA.

## 4.2 Canada Public Relations Services

**Public Relations.** Contractor shall provide the following public relations ("PR") services:

- i. **Media Relations.** Contractor shall:
  - a. Collaborate with VISIT FLORIDA's PR Department to develop PR initiatives and goals for this Agreement. At a minimum, these shall include:
    - 1. Identifying and executing agreements with key influencers in market to spread awareness of Florida across social media channels;
    - 2. Planning and executing in-market event activations;
    - 3. Organizing, planning, executing, and/or attending:
      - i. Media Familiarization ("FAM") Tours
      - ii. Individual Press Trips
      - iii. Media Missions
      - iv. Media Receptions
      - v. Press Conferences
      - vi. Media Appointments
  - b. Identify and select Canadian media to attend and cover VISIT FLORIDA's priority events, not to exceed three (3) events, which include, but are not limited to, Florida Huddle and U.S. Travel Association's IPW;
  - c. Prepare press releases around major themes based upon market insights, as outlined in subsection (ii) below;
  - d. Prepare and proactively pitch press releases to garner earned media impressions in both traditional and non-traditional media outlets;
  - e. Participate in weekly calls with VISIT FLORIDA's PR Department;
  - f. Provide market insight and guidance, based on demonstrated facts and research, to help grow awareness and visitation to Florida;
  - g. Provide creative input and ideas to develop tactics, propose strategy that drives awareness, engagement and conversion among target audiences;
  - h. Respond to media inquiries and influencer inquiries within 3-5 days, and share the nature of such inquiries and any results and responses with VISIT FLORIDA in Contractor's monthly reporting;
  - i. Build and maintain a database of consumer media in the Canada market and facilitate introductions and communication between said media and the VISIT FLORIDA public relations staff via e-mail, phone calls, in-person appointments, and other means, including but not limited to setting up appointments with said media and VISIT FLORIDA's executive staff;



- j. Work with VISIT FLORIDA's destination and industry partners, as needed and as directed by VISIT FLORIDA;
  - k. Work with VISIT FLORIDA's other agency partners including, but not limited to, domestic agency, creative agency, and other international markets' agencies, in order to develop strategies, plans, execute elements of a campaign, align messaging, or for other reason(s) approved by VISIT FLORIDA;
  - l. Collaborate with VISIT FLORIDA's staff outside the PR department, as needed;
  - m. Speak on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA, as directed by VISIT FLORIDA;
  - n. Vet foreign media and media requests on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA, by providing qualifying profiles on media contacts and media outlets: including impression numbers, examples of work (if available), and letters of assignment from editors, if applicable;
  - o. Monitor editorial calendars of Canadian outlets for travel story opportunities and create annual editorial calendar for VF. Proactively pitch story ideas to media in Canada via phone, email or in-person meetings, as further detailed in subsection (ii) below. Contractor should schedule and attend at least 6 appointments per quarter with in-market publications and secure at least 2 stories and/or press trips. Contractor must include details and results in its monthly reporting to VISIT FLORIDA;
  - p. Assemble and fulfill traditional and electronic press kits, as needed, and develop, maintain, assemble, and fulfill an evergreen press kit;
  - q. Forward inquiries along to the appropriate Partner to respond accordingly and copy VISIT FLORIDA staff on responses;
  - r. Monitor Canadian clippings and travel websites, travel blogs, and travel talk columns to include results with VISIT FLORIDA via Contractor's monthly report; and
  - s. Attend networking events, such as media missions and receptions in the United States and/or Canada, as directed on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA, including Visit Florida's Governors Conference, Leadership Summit/Encounter, Florida Huddle, IPW, and IMM NYC.
- ii. **Proactive Press Releases.** Contractor shall prepare press releases around major themes to garner earned media coverage in traditional and non-traditional media outlets. The Contractor shall prepare a minimum of ten (10) press releases per year. Contractor shall:
- a. Develop an annual editorial calendar based on target publications calendars and provide same to VISIT FLORIDA for approval. Contractor shall include a list of topics and research to support calendar.
  - b. Write, proactively pitch to VISIT FLORIDA, and release a minimum of ten (10) consumer press releases during the term of this Agreement.
  - c. Secure and report on earned media coverage of the press releases each month to VISIT FLORIDA in Contractor's monthly reporting.
- iii. **Individual Press Trips.** VISIT FLORIDA will provide travel assistance to qualified journalists on assignment in Florida covering topics germane to VISIT FLORIDA's goal of increasing travel and tourism to and within Florida. A qualified journalist must cover multiple destinations throughout the state. Contractor shall coordinate and facilitate a minimum of fifteen (15) individual press trips to various regions of Florida. Contractor shall:
- a. Recommend top journalists and publications to VISIT FLORIDA for individual press trips.

- b. Develop and plan itineraries for press trips, working with VISIT FLORIDA Partners to secure complimentary or discounted travel means, lodging, meals, and activities whenever possible.
  - c. Report on earned media coverage and/or any other return on investment relating to the press trips in Contractor's monthly reporting.
- iv. Group Media Familiarization Tour ("FAM").** Contractor shall develop and oversee two (2) Group Media FAMs with a minimum of five (5) journalists attending for the purpose of providing the attending journalists the opportunity to experience Florida travel destinations and activities. With prior VISIT FLORIDA approval, Contractor shall:
- a. Recommend top journalists and publications to VISIT FLORIDA to attend FAMs; transmit to VISIT FLORIDA a list of journalists with biographical and publication details.
  - b. Develop and plan itineraries for FAM tours, working with VISIT FLORIDA Partners to secure complimentary or discounted travel means, lodging, meals, and activities.
  - c. Arrange airfare for journalists, send approved itineraries and updates to journalists, and advise journalists of expectations.
  - d. Provide staff to attend FAM tours in representation of VISIT FLORIDA.
  - e. Follow up with journalists to secure a minimum of 500,000 earned media impressions per FAM tour.
  - f. Contractor shall secure two (2) Canadian media to attend a pre- or post-Encounter FAM at a date to be determined by VISIT FLORIDA.
  - g. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA a report, which shall include (but shall not be limited to) FAM highlights, a list of participating Partners, a list of participating journalists (with information such as first and last name, publication/company name, title and any other relevant information), earned media impressions, estimated return on investment, and any other relevant information.
- v. Canada Media Mission.** Contractor shall coordinate and implement a minimum of one media mission that includes a minimum of one media event per key market that provides VISIT FLORIDA Partners an opportunity to network with key media outlets in specified Canadian markets. In furtherance of this goal, Contractor shall:
- a. Provide options for media mission and media event dates. The mission and reception should tie into a travel trade or PR event, whenever possible.
  - b. Secure a minimum of thirty (30) top journalists for the mission and related events.
  - c. Develop presentation materials for VISIT FLORIDA
  - d. Secure venue, speakers, event equipment, decorations, and food and beverages necessary for the mission and reception.
  - d. Develop and submit run-of-show itinerary
  - e. Work with VISIT FLORIDA PR team to secure a minimum of three (3) Destination Partners.
  - f. Provide staff to represent VISIT FLORIDA during mission and reception.
  - g. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA, which shall include highlights, a list of participating Partners, a list of participating journalists (with information such as first and last name, publication/company name, title and any other relevant information), estimated return on investment, and any other relevant information.

- vi. Canada Media Reception.** Contractor shall coordinate and implement one media reception in one key Canadian market that provides VISIT FLORIDA Partners an opportunity to network with journalists and influencers. In furtherance of this goal, Contractor shall:
- a. Provide options for media reception dates and locations. The reception should tie into a travel trade event or brand campaign, whenever possible.
  - b. Secure a minimum of thirty (30) top journalists and influencers.
  - c. Develop presentation materials
  - d. Secure venue, speakers, event equipment, decorations, and food and beverages necessary for the reception.
  - d. Develop and submit run-of-show itinerary
  - e. Work with VISIT FLORIDA PR team to secure a minimum of five (5) Destination Partners.
  - f. Provide staff to represent VISIT FLORIDA during reception.
  - g. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA a report, which shall include highlights, a list of participating Partners, a list of participating journalists (with information such as first and last name, publication/company name, title and any other relevant information), estimated return on investment, and any other relevant information.
- vii. Canada Influencer Campaign.** VISIT FLORIDA will work with qualified influencers to create and publish Florida content germane to VISIT FLORIDA's goal of increasing travel and tourism to and within Florida. A qualified influencer must cover a minimum of two destinations throughout the state. Influencer trips should align with integrated campaigns, when possible. In furtherance of this goal, Contractor shall:
- a. Coordinate and facilitate a minimum of two (2) influencer trips to various regions of Florida.
  - b. Recommend top influencers to VISIT FLORIDA.
  - c. Negotiate deliverables and contract with influencer.
  - d. Develop and plan itineraries for influencer trips, working with VISIT FLORIDA Partners to secure complimentary or discounted travel means, lodging, meals, and activities whenever possible.
  - e. Report on social media coverage and/or any other return on investment relating to influencer trips must be included in Contractor's monthly reporting.
- viii. Travel Media Association of Canada ("TMAC") Conference.** Contractor shall develop and execute media activities at the TMAC conference and sponsor a TMAC monthly meeting. In furtherance of this goal, Contractor shall:
- a. Schedule 20+ media appointments for VISIT FLORIDA staff during TMAC conference.
  - b. Create and distribute media kit at TMAC conference.
  - c. Attend TMAC and assisting with appointments and other on-site details.
  - d. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA a report, which shall include highlights, a list of participating Partners, a list of participating journalists (with information such as first and last name, publication/company name, title and any other relevant information), estimated return on investment, and any other relevant information.
  - e. Secure sponsorship of TMAC monthly meeting.
  - f. Create and distribute media kit at TMAC monthly meeting.

### 4.3 Canada Travel Trade, Sales, and Marketing Services

**Travel Trade, Sales and Marketing. Travel Trade, Sales and Marketing.** Contractor shall:

- i. Assist with planning and execution of VISIT FLORIDA events in Canada to fulfill VISIT FLORIDA sales and marketing objectives, as directed by VISIT FLORIDA.
- ii. Promote Florida tourism through travel trade channels and be responsible for product development and promotion in collaboration with key tour operators/wholesalers, retail travel agencies, online travel agencies (“OTAs”), airlines, traditional and non-traditional industry suppliers, and other distribution intermediaries. To accomplish these activities, Contractor shall:
  - a. Provide local market insights and intelligence on travel trade trends, distribution, consumer confidence and competitor analysis;
  - b. Identify new initiatives to promote Florida to consumers and the travel trade industry for future budget planning;
  - c. Identify key travel trade accounts and develop strategies and tactics to cultivate leisure business from the accounts;
  - d. Develop business relations with Canada industry partners and other travel associations to increase brand and destination awareness;
  - e. Develop and coordinate an educational strategy to train tour operators (product development, reservationists, etc.) and retail agents about Florida, including but not limited to road shows, sales missions, workshops, familiarization tours to Florida (“FAM tours”), webinars, and other creative vehicles to effectively communicate Florida’s tourism product offerings and VISIT FLORIDA’s resources for travel planning;
  - f. Attend networking events such as major trade and consumer fairs, roadshows, seminars, and workshops, in Canada as directed on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA, including but not limited to partner meetings and IPW events;
  - g. Provide support for VISIT FLORIDA’s Air Team Florida initiative through development of airline relationships and activities that support existing airline routes and encourage route development. Provide airline intelligence to VISIT FLORIDA. This will include monitoring of airline passenger load factors and new route development to competing travel destinations;
  - h. Promote attendance of key accounts to buyers and media to Florida Huddle;
  - i. Provide assistance in reviewing and editing travel trade and consumer collateral for international publications; and
  - j. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA on a quarterly basis an updated database of top-producing tour operators, OTAs, retail agents, and other qualified leads.
- iii. **Canada Travel Trade Roadshow:** Contractor shall assist in the development of a travel agent roadshow at a date to be determined by VISIT FLORIDA during the term of the Scope of Work, to train travel agents on Florida tourism. VISIT FLORIDA will visit call centers and host events in several markets targeting agents who have completed FLORIDA Travel Pro and/or top selling agents. The contractor will meet with trade and airlines during this event to promote Florida tourism. With VISIT FLORIDA’s approval, the Contractor shall assist VISIT FLORIDA in the planning and execution of the roadshow, including:
  - a. Selecting dates for the call center visits and VIP Dinners;
  - b. Ensuring that there are no other travel trade events happening in each city on the dates selected;
  - c. Confirming dates and number of attending agents with call centers;
  - d. Recommending and securing venues;

- e. Secure qualified agents
  - f. Develop event materials, including but not limited to invitations, welcome posters, sponsorship posters, menus, nametags, decorations and email communications;
  - g. Create talking points for VISIT FLORIDA Representatives;
  - h. Create a briefing book for Participating Partners including: a final list of travel agents attending, venue address and details, agenda, list of participating Florida Partners, and host contact information
  - i. Managing the receiving and distribution of Partner materials for the event. In addition, the contractor will coordinate logistics with the VISIT FLORIDA warehouse.
  - j. Share pre- and post-event details via press release to trade media in each destination.
  - k. Submit all event invoices and budget sheets (actuals).
  - l. Provide a final list of all agents and media from the VIP Event.
  - m. Provide a post-event report
- iv. Travel Trade Events and Trade Shows:** Contractor shall coordinate and execute participation in several trade shows throughout the term of the Contract. The Contractor shall assist VISIT FLORIDA in the planning and execution of the following:
- a. Secure approved booth space for the event.
  - b. Order equipment for the booth.
  - c. Work with show manager to schedule a presentation on the show floor.
  - d. Where applicable, work with show representatives to include VISIT FLORIDA in any value-added media program.
  - e. Provide suggestions to VISIT FLORIDA on the booth design.
  - f. Manage the receiving and distribution of Partner materials for the event. In addition, the contractor will coordinate logistics with the VISIT FLORIDA warehouse. The purchase of any additional materials or business promotion items must be approved in advance by VISIT FLORIDA for reimbursement.
  - g. Contractor shall attend event on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA.
  - h. Attendance shall include pre-event booth set-up and breakdown as needed.
  - i. Submit all event invoices and budget sheets (actuals).
  - j. Provide a post-event report
- v. VISIT FLORIDA E-Learning Program.** VISIT FLORIDA will utilize the new e-learning program to engage and educate Canadian agents on the different aspects of Florida and destinations within Florida. Contractor shall promote this program on VISIT FLORIDA's behalf. Contractor's duties shall include the following:
- a. Complete the VISIT FLORIDA E-Learning program.
  - b. Develop a communications plan promoting the program.
  - c. Collaborate with VISIT FLORIDA to create a monthly eNewsletter to be sent to Canada travel agents and tour operators encouraging industry professionals to complete the Florida Travel Pro e-Learning Program.
  - d. Coordinate press releases to encourage agents to complete the program for FAM trip consideration.
  - e. Provide any earned media coverage generated from press releases.
  - f. Ensure that a minimum of 120 in-market travel agents and/or tour operators complete VISIT FLORIDA's E-Learning course.
- vi. Contractor shall attend and provide wrap-up reporting for the following VISIT FLORIDA events:**

- a. Florida Huddle – January, 2020
  - b. IPW - May-June, 2020
  - c. Annual meeting held at VISIT FLORIDA’s Tallahassee headquarters, as directed by VISIT FLORIDA.
- vii. Ongoing Sales Calls and Training.** Contractor will target national key retailers and key agents in cities across Canada (held in conjunction with on-site trainings & sales missions). In so doing, Contractor shall:
- a. Conduct at least 12 monthly sales calls on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA to be recorded in the monthly report. Each of the 12 monthly sales call should result in a strategy with tactics to cultivate leisure business from the accounts.
  - b. Provide VISIT FLORIDA a list of scheduled meetings
  - c. Provide “Lunch and Learns”, webinars and training support for the following agency groups: Expedia (OTA), Flight Centre, Worldview (Virtuoso) CAA Agencies, TTAND (Virtuoso), Vision Travel (Virtuoso) and Maritime (Virtuoso).
  - d. Work to secure Florida booking packages.
  - e. Provide monthly recaps of all sales calls and trainings.
- viii. VISIT FLORIDA FAM Tours:** Contractor shall work with VISIT FLORIDA to coordinate and execute a specified number of trade FAM tours in Florida, (one in temporal proximity to Florida Huddle), for qualified travel agents for the purpose of providing the attending agents the opportunity to experience Florida travel destinations and activities. Each FAM tour shall include up to ten (10) travel professionals to include travel agents, tour operators and wholesalers, who sell the Florida product and/or have completed the VISIT FLORIDA eLearning Program.
- a. Secure travel professionals who have completed the VISIT FLORIDA eLearning Program.
  - b. Provide a list of agents
  - c. Work with airlines to secure complimentary airfare for FAM participants.
  - d. Handle booking of participants’ travel arrangements.
  - e. Develop materials for events.
  - f. Create talking points for VISIT FLORIDA representatives.
  - g. Create a briefing book for Participating Partners including: a final list of travel agents attending, itineraries, list of participating Florida Partners, and host contact information.
  - h. Create a comprehensive itinerary book for FAM participants to include at minimum an etiquette guide, contact list, packing list and destinations itineraries.
  - i. Submit all event invoices and budget sheets (actuals).
  - j. Provide a final list of all attendees and locations visited.
  - k. Provide a post-event report.

#### 4.4 United States Administrative Services

- Administrative Services.** Contractor shall:
- i. Maintain a physical office in the Market. This facility shall include a mailing address, a telephone system, and all other necessary office equipment, including computers, necessary to perform the functions contracted for herein. Contractor shall provide an office meeting space for professional business meetings relating to this Agreement, including meetings with members of the Florida tourism industry and the media. The facility described herein shall be capable of showing PowerPoint presentations with integrated high-definition video files and audio.

- ii. Provide sufficient account representation to oversee the VISIT FLORIDA account to fulfill the marketing objectives and plan as directed by VISIT FLORIDA. Provide necessary staff to complete tasks and services as outlined in this Scope of Work. Contractor shall provide VISIT FLORIDA with direct access to all persons providing services to or on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA.
- iii. Provide the comprehensive monthly report described in 5(c).
- iv. Transmit to VISIT FLORIDA an itemized monthly invoice for all fees and expenses billed for the prior month, with supporting documentation, no later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> of each month.
- v. Transmit to VISIT FLORIDA an itemized monthly report for any expenses incurred within that month that have yet to be billed to VISIT FLORIDA (accruals), including but not limited to subcontractor expenses. Accruals shall be submitted no later than the last day of each month. Submissions of accruals to accounting each month is required, unless an invoice covering such expenses has already been provided.
- vi. Review all monthly invoices and financial reports for accuracy against invoices and incurred expenses, and immediately report any discrepancies to VISIT FLORIDA upon discovery.
- vii. Participate in status calls with VISIT FLORIDA, at least 2 per month. Status calls should include budget updates for all projects, updates on projects, tasks, and services, and any material updates relating to this Agreement.
- viii. Provide administrative support for accounting and monthly reporting tasks conducted pursuant to this Agreement.
- ix. Prepare annual proposed PR budgets for the target market to be used in the development of the Scopes of Work for subsequent fiscal years. The proposed budgets required to be delivered during the term of this Scope of Work shall be transmitted to VISIT FLORIDA at date agreeable between both parties.  
 These proposals shall include a detailed list of all activities and projects Contractor plans to undertake pursuant to the Agreement between Contractor and VISIT FLORIDA, including a detailed and comprehensive itemization of all costs to be incurred. This itemization shall include general overhead costs. These proposals shall include, with supporting documentation, estimated return on investment and revenue generated. All budgets must be submitted to VISIT FLORIDA and approved by VISIT FLORIDA via the execution of subsequent Scopes of Work prior to any costs being incurred. Any revisions to an approved budget, including but not limited to budget overages, must be additionally approved by VISIT FLORIDA. Failure to obtain the requisite approval of VISIT FLORIDA in advance of any costs, fees, or other charges being incurred may result in Contractor bearing full financial responsibility for such charges. In developing the proposed budget, Contractor shall give consideration to cost and efficiency and shall make all reasonable efforts to ensure cost savings.
- x. Develop relationships with key consumer media in the market and maintain a database of contacts for consumer media and other media that will increase positive exposure for VISIT FLORIDA.
  - A. Contractor shall transmit to VISIT FLORIDA the most current version of such database and all contacts following events and/or upon request by VISIT FLORIDA.
- xi. Respond to all inquiries from media and VISIT FLORIDA Marketing Partners within 3-5 business days.
- xii. Assist VISIT FLORIDA with crisis management (including, but not limited to, responses to natural disasters and other acts of God), including strategy and communication services.
- xiii. Manage receptive/tour operator, media requests, press activities, and events in Market.
- xiv. Attend/Participate agency summit meetings hosted by VISIT FLORIDA. Contractor must attend at least three (3) meetings in person. Agency summit meetings are to educate

- attendees about the VISIT FLORIDA's campaigns, including: target audience, the campaign concept(s), and how they align to consumer needs, overarching media strategy and campaign integration.
- xv. Attend VISIT FLORIDA hosted events at least three (3) per year, such as Leadership Summit, Governor's Conference, VISIT FLORIDA Board Meetings, or VISIT FLORIDA's annual "Brand Camp."
  - xvi. Monitor revenue and expenses for each program, service, and activity from beginning to end to ensure that the approved budget is not exceeded. Any change in revenue, expenses, program format, or any other material change should be reported to management in writing in advance for prior approval from VISIT FLORIDA. Contractor will be responsible for bearing any additional costs if approval is not obtained, as outlined in subsection (x) above.
  - xvii. Contractor shall carry out all tasks, programs, projects, events, and activities provided for herein and as directed by VISIT FLORIDA. If any required activity is cancelled for any reason, Contractor shall complete another similar activity within the term with prior approval from VISIT FLORIDA.
  - xviii. Submit a post-event report including final accounting of expenses no more than five days after the end of the event to VISIT FLORIDA.

#### 4.5 United States Public Relations Services

**Public Relations.** Contractor shall provide the following public relations ("PR") services:

- i. **Media Relations.** Contractor shall:
  - A. Collaborate with VISIT FLORIDA's PR Department to develop more detailed PR initiatives and goals for this Agreement. At a minimum, these shall include:
    - 1. Identifying and executing agreements with key influencers in market to spread awareness of Florida across social media channels;
    - 2. Organizing, planning, executing, and/or attending:
      - i. Media Familiarization ("FAM") Tours
      - ii. Individual Press Trips
      - iii. Media Missions
      - iv. Media Receptions
      - v. Press Conferences
      - vi. Media Appointments
  - B. Identify and select U.S. media to attend and cover VISIT FLORIDA's priority events, which include, but are not limited to: Florida Huddle and U.S. Travel Association's IPW.
  - C. Prepare press releases around major themes based upon market insights, as outlined in subsection (ii) below;
  - D. Proactively pitch and distribute the prepared press releases to garner earned media impressions in both traditional and non-traditional media outlets;
  - E. Provide market insight and guidance, based on demonstrated facts and research, to help grow awareness and visitation to Florida;
  - F. Provide creative input and ideas to develop tactics, propose strategy that drives awareness, engagement and conversion among target audiences;
  - G. Respond to media inquiries and influencer inquiries within 3-5 days, and share the nature of such inquiries and any results and responses with VISIT FLORIDA in Contractor's monthly reporting;
  - H. Build and maintain a database of consumer media in market and facilitate introductions and communication between said media and the VISIT FLORIDA public relations staff via e-mail, phone calls, in-person appointments, and other



means, including but not limited to setting up appointments with said media and VISIT FLORIDA's executive staff;

- I. Work with VISIT FLORIDA's destination and industry partners, as needed and as directed by VISIT FLORIDA;
  - J. Work with VISIT FLORIDA's other agency partners including, but not limited to, domestic agency, domestic social media agency, and other international markets' agencies, in order to develop strategies, plans, execute elements of a campaign, align messaging, or for other reason(s) approved by VISIT FLORIDA;
  - K. Collaborate with VISIT FLORIDA's staff outside the PR department, as needed;
  - L. Speak on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA, as directed by VISIT FLORIDA;
  - M. Vet media and media requests on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA, by providing qualifying profiles on media contacts and media outlets: including impression numbers, examples of work (if available), and letters of assignment from editors, if applicable;
  - N. Monitor editorial calendars of media outlets for travel story opportunities and proactively pitch story ideas to media via phone, email or in-person meetings, as further detailed in subsection (ii) below. Contractor should coordinate and participate in at least six (6) appointments per quarter with in-market publications and secure at least two (2) stories and/or press trips per quarter. Contractor must include details and results in its monthly reporting to VISIT FLORIDA;
  - O. Assemble and fulfill traditional and electronic press kits, as needed, and develop, maintain, assemble, and fulfill an evergreen press kit;
  - P. Forward inquiries along to the appropriate Partner to respond accordingly and copy VISIT FLORIDA staff on responses;
  - Q. Monitor clippings and travel websites, travel blogs, and travel talk columns to include results with VISIT FLORIDA via Contractor's monthly report; and
  - R. Attend networking events, such as media missions and receptions in the United States, as directed on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA.
- ii. **Proactive Press Releases.** Contractor shall prepare press releases around major themes to garner earned media coverage in traditional and non-traditional media outlets. Contractor shall:
- A. Develop an annual editorial calendar
  - B. Contractor shall include a list of topics and research to support calendar.
  - C. Write, proactively pitch, and release a minimum of twelve (12) consumer press releases during the term of this Agreement.
  - D. Secure and report on earned media coverage of the press releases each month.
- iii. **Individual Press Trips.** VISIT FLORIDA will provide travel assistance to qualified journalists on assignment in Florida covering topics germane to VISIT FLORIDA's goal of increasing travel and tourism to and within Florida. A qualified journalist must cover multiple destinations throughout the state. Contractor shall coordinate and facilitate a minimum of twelve (12) individual press trips to various regions of Florida. Contractor shall:
- A. Recommend top journalists and publications for individual press trips.
  - B. Develop and plan itineraries for press trips, working with VISIT FLORIDA Partners to secure complimentary or discounted travel means, lodging, meals, and activities whenever possible.
  - C. Report on earned media coverage and/or any other return on investment relating to the press trips in Contractor's monthly reporting to VISIT FLORIDA.

- iv. **Group Media Familiarization Tour (“FAM”).** Contractor shall develop and oversee two (2) Group Media FAMs for the purpose of providing the opportunity to experience Florida destinations and activities resulting in earned media coverage. Contractor shall:
  - A. Recommend top journalists/publications and influencers to attend FAM.
  - B. Develop and plan itineraries for FAM tours, working with VISIT FLORIDA Partners to secure complimentary or discounted travel means, lodging, meals, and activities whenever possible.
  - C. Arrange airfare for journalists, send approved itineraries and updates to journalists, and advise journalists of expectations.
  - D. Provide staff to attend consumer media FAM tour in representation of VISIT FLORIDA.
  - E. Follow up with journalists to secure a minimum of 750,000 earned media impressions per FAM tour.
  - F. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA a project wrap-up report.
  
- v. **Integrated Audience Segmentation Campaigns.** At the direction of VISIT FLORIDA, Contractor shall coordinate and implement a PR plan in conjunction with the VISIT FLORIDA’s five (5) audience segmentation campaigns, which include Family Memory Makers, Winter Sun Seekers, Adventure Seekers, Experience Seekers and Impulse Getaways. Contractor shall:
  - A. Develop and propose PR plan that outlines goals, strategies, objective and tactics, as part of the campaigns. The plan presented should include expenses, not to exceed budgets outlined in Exhibit A-1. Tactics and deliverables contained in audience segmentation campaigns shall be in addition to other deliverables specifically stated herein.
  - B. Execute approved five (5) audience segmentation campaign plans.
  - C. Report on earned media coverage and/or any other return on investment relating to each Campaign in Contractor’s monthly reporting to VISIT FLORIDA.
  
- vi. **Media Reception.** Contractor shall coordinate and implement one media reception in one key domestic market that provides VISIT FLORIDA Partners an opportunity to network with journalists and influencers. Contractor shall:
  - e. Provide options for media reception dates and locations. The reception should tie into a travel trade event or brand campaign, whenever possible.
  - f. Secure a minimum of forty (40) top journalists and influencers.
  - g. Develop presentation materials.
  - h. Secure venue, speakers, event equipment, decorations, and food and beverages necessary for the reception.
  - i. Develop run-of-show/itinerary
  - j. Secure a minimum of ten (10) Destination Partners.
  - k. Provide staff to represent VISIT FLORIDA during reception.
  - l. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA a project wrap-up report.
  
- vii. **Media Mission.** Contractor shall coordinate and implement a minimum of one media mission that includes a minimum of one media event per key market (minimum two markets) that provides VISIT FLORIDA Partners an opportunity to network with key media outlets in those markets. Contractor shall:
  - A. Provide options for media mission and media event dates and locations.
  - B. Secure a minimum of forty (40) top journalists for the mission and related events.
  - C. Develop presentation materials for VISIT FLORIDA.

- D. Secure venue, speakers, event equipment, decorations, and food and beverages necessary for the mission and reception.
  - E. Develop run-of-show/itinerary.
  - F. Secure a minimum of three (3) Destination Partners.
  - G. Provide staff to represent VISIT FLORIDA during mission and reception.
  - H. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA a project wrap-up report.
- viii. Florida Encounter.** Contractor shall secure a minimum of three (3) domestic media who cover meetings and conventions to attend Florida Encounter and a pre- or post-Encounter FAM. Contractor shall:
- A. Recommend top journalists and publications to attend Encounter and a pre- or post-Encounter FAM; transmit to VISIT FLORIDA a list of journalists with biographical and publication details.
  - B. Arrange airfare for journalists, send approved itineraries and updates to journalists, and advise journalists of expectations.
  - C. Follow up with journalists to secure a minimum of 250,000 earned media impressions.
  - D. Provide to VISIT FLORIDA a project wrap-up report.
- ix. Influencer Program.** Identify and contract with qualified influencers to create and publish Florida content germane to VISIT FLORIDA's goal of increasing travel and tourism to and within Florida. A qualified influencer must cover a minimum of two destinations throughout the state. Influencer trips should align with integrated campaigns, when possible. Contractor shall:
- A. Coordinate and facilitate influencer trips upon request by VISIT FLORIDA to various regions of Florida.
  - B. Recommend top influencers to VISIT FLORIDA.
  - C. Negotiate deliverables and contract with influencer.
  - D. Develop and plan itineraries for influencer trips, working with VISIT FLORIDA Partners to secure complimentary or discounted travel means, lodging, meals, and activities whenever possible.
  - E. Report on social media coverage and/or any other return on investment relating to influencer trips must be included in Contractor's monthly reporting to VISIT FLORIDA.

#### 4.6 Monthly Reporting

Contractor shall prepare a comprehensive monthly report that will include highlights of services provided which may include status of securing individual press trips, copy of press releases distributed with earned media coverage, status on event participation or event production, market intelligence, post-event reporting including any feedback and evaluations of programs, and advice on strategies to capitalize on any opportunities. The monthly report shall be submitted electronically by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of each month and report on the previous month's activities. This monthly report will be used by VISIT FLORIDA in evaluating Contractor's performance.

#### 5.0 RFP Schedule and Process

##### Schedule

Activity	Dates
RFP Issued	February 5, 2019
Deadline For Written Questions To Be	February 15, 2019

Submitted	
Estimated Response Date To Written Questions	February 18, 2019
Deadline For Agency Qualifications To Be Submitted	February 25, 2019
Invitations For Qualified Agencies To Submit Proposals	February 26, 2019
Proposals Due	March 18, 2019
Estimated Date Initial Evaluations Will Be Concluded	March 22, 2019
Invitations to Selected Agencies for In-Person Presentations	March 25, 2019
Estimated time period for presentations	Week of April 22, 2019
Agency/ies Selected to Negotiate for Contract	Week of May 3, 2019

### 5.1 Questions to VF

Agencies may submit written questions up until 5PM EST of the deadline noted in the schedule. Please submit all questions to [purchasing@visitflorida.org](mailto:purchasing@visitflorida.org). Please include “North America RFP” in the subject line and be as clear and specific as possible when wording the question. Additionally, please be sure to include contact information – Company Name, Name, Title, Telephone, and E-mail address. VF may contact the agency to ensure clarity in VF’s response based on the question.

VF will respond to questions received by the deadline listed in the schedule and will post a copy of each question and response on <http://www.visitflorida.org/work-together/submit-a-proposal/rfps-RFPs/>.

The question and answer process is “blind.” The identity of the person and/or agency submitting a question will be kept confidential while the RFP is ongoing (even from VF team members) and will be known only to VF’s purchasing coordinator who will work with the VF team to gather information and post answers.

### 5.2 Qualification and Proposal Submission Process

Responses to this RFP shall be in two phases. First, agencies shall review the list of minimum qualifications set forth in section 5.4 below. **On or before 5 PM Eastern Standard Time on February 25, 2019, agencies shall respond to the agency qualification questionnaire set forth in section 5.4 of this RFP.** Responses should be submitted electronically via Box. For any question in which the agency does not meet the requested qualifications, the agency shall provide an explanation of how it believes that it may have the capability to meet VISIT FLORIDA’s needs despite lacking the listed qualification. Responses must be submitted no later than close of business (5 PM EST) on the date specified in the schedule above. Responses submitted after that deadline may be rejected and the submitting agency removed from consideration. All responses should be submitted electronically via Box, [click here to access upload instructions](#).

Based upon the responses to the qualification questionnaire, VISIT FLORIDA shall invite agencies that it believes will be able to meet its needs under this RFP to submit formal proposals. Proposals from invited agencies must be submitted no later than close of business (5 PM EST) on the date specified in the schedule above. Proposals submitted after that deadline may be rejected and not considered. All proposals should be submitted electronically via Box, [click here to access upload instructions](#).

Please note, agencies submitting confidential information should mark the information confidential

at the time of submission and should submit two copies, a clean copy and a copy with the confidential information redacted (see RFP terms below).

VF will notify each agency that their proposal has been received via email within two business days. Please be sure to include email address with proposal.

### 5.3 Initial Evaluation, Presentations, Negotiations, Award and Contracting

VF will evaluate written proposals and notify agencies selected for in-person presentations, if necessary. Members of the VF team may contact agencies during this period to obtain further clarification to assist with its initial evaluation.

If necessary, selected agencies will present to the VF team in Tallahassee, Florida. The potential proposed account team lead must attend. VF will provide additional requests for information for discussion at the presentation.

Final negotiations. VF will conduct final negotiations with one or more agencies, select one or more agencies for an award, and execute a contract.

VISIT FLORIDA will notify agencies as to their status and next steps as the process proceeds.

### 5.4 Qualification Questionnaire

On or before February 25, 2019, interested agencies shall submit responses to the following questions. Your response must only relate to the portion of the RFP for which you intend to provide a proposal (i.e., if you intend to provide a proposal for all three categories, you must provide a response to all questions below; if you intend to provide a response only to the U.S. PR category, you may provide only a response to the questions under that subheader). Responses should include answers to each of the following questions in Word or PDF format, plus any requested materials (i.e., financial statements):

#### Canada Travel Trade

- Can your agency provide evidence of financial stability, specifically: (1) documentation of sufficient financial resources to perform all services outlined in this RFP; (2) a minimum of three years of audited financial statements; and (3) if available, the agency's Dunn & Bradstreet number so that a report can be requested by VISIT FLORIDA? **If so, please attach these materials to your response to this questionnaire.**
- Can your agency provide an in-country office with a dedicated phone line for the VISIT FLORIDA account?
- Can your agency provide at least one managing director to oversee the VISIT FLORIDA account with dedicated account representation?
- Can your agency maintain, either directly or through a subcontract, storage inventory and fulfillment or distribution services in-country of VISIT FLORIDA's publications and promotional materials?
- Are you able to provide references for at least two current clients and two former clients that VISIT FLORIDA may contact?

#### Canada Public Relations

- Can your agency provide evidence of financial stability, specifically: (1) documentation of sufficient financial resources to perform all services outlined in this RFP; (2) a minimum of three years of audited financial statements; and (3) if available, the agency's Dunn & Bradstreet number so that a report can be requested by VISIT FLORIDA? **If so, please attach these materials to your response to this questionnaire.**
- Can your agency provide an in-country office with a dedicated phone line for the VISIT

FLORIDA account?

- Can your agency provide at least one managing director to oversee the VISIT FLORIDA account with dedicated account representation?
- Does your agency have the capability of providing crisis management (i.e., hurricane response)?
- Does your agency have at least five years of public relations experience?
- Are you able to provide references for at least two current clients and two former clients that VISIT FLORIDA may contact?
- Provide a list of existing and former clients.
- Describe any specific knowledge of Florida tourism and familiarity with Florida travel destinations.

### United States Public Relations

- Can your agency provide evidence of financial stability, specifically: (1) documentation of sufficient financial resources to perform all services outlined in this RFP; (2) a minimum of three years of audited financial statements; and (3) if available, the agency's Dunn & Bradstreet number so that a report can be requested by VISIT FLORIDA? **If so, please attach these materials to your response to this questionnaire.**
- Can your agency provide at least one managing director to oversee the VISIT FLORIDA account with dedicated account representation?
- Does your agency have the capability of providing crisis management (i.e., hurricane response)?
- Does your agency have at least five years of public relations experience?
- Are you able to provide references for at least two current clients and two former clients that VISIT FLORIDA may contact?
- Provide a list of existing and former clients.
- Describe any specific knowledge of Florida tourism and familiarity with Florida travel destinations.
- Does your agency have experience working with influencers?

## 6.0 Proposal Format

Agencies which are invited to submit proposals should submit proposals in the format described below and include all of the information requested below. Please limit proposals to no more than fifteen pages in total (excluding samples of previous work).

No.	Proposal Section	Content
1.	Authorization Letter and Signature	Include a letter signed by an authorized agency representative with authority to negotiate on behalf of the agency. The letter should include a statement of acceptance of VF's standard terms and conditions or proposed alternative terms.
2.	Table of Contents	No explanation required.
3.	Executive Summary	Include a summary of proposal that is no more than one page in length.
4.	Agency Overview	Provide the information requested in section 6.1.
5.	Agency Capabilities	Provide the information requested in section 6.2.
6.	Agency Experience	Provide the information requested in section 6.3.
7.	Pricing	Provide the information requested in section 6.4.

## 6.1 Agency Overview

- A. Provide company legal name, parent company, and ownership structure, mailing address, main phone number, fax number and email address.
- B. Provide primary contact.
- C. Total employees – whose primary function is:
  - a. Public Relations
  - b. Marketing & Sales
  - c. Advertising
  - d. Online Marketing
  - e. Promotions
- D. Provide senior staff bios, including links to their social media profiles on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube, as appropriate. Include their location.
- E. Explain the primary company location that will be used to support the VISIT FLORIDA account.
- F. Provide contact information for at least **two current clients and two former** clients that VISIT FLORIDA can contact. If possible, please include travel industry or destination marketing clients as references. For each reference, please indicate the following:
  - Contact Name and Title;
  - Contact Agency Name;
  - Contact Phone Number;
  - Industry of Client;
  - Service Description;
  - Length of Relationship; and
  - Brief explanation regarding the end of the business relationship, if applicable.
- G. List all destination marketing and tourism industry clients, and any other clients that may compete with VISIT FLORIDA, as well as any conflict mitigation strategies. A potential conflict will not necessarily disqualify a respondent, however, VISIT FLORIDA may exclude a proposal from consideration at any point in the review or negotiation process should the conflict(s) of interest be deemed unacceptable.
- H. Indicate the number of years and nature of your experience in the tourism industry.
- I. Canada Only: Provide a list of languages for translation services.
- J. Describe the agency's ability to provide services to VISIT FLORIDA during an in-country crisis.
- K. PR Only: Provide an overview of tourism-related PR clients in U.S. and Canada and include the length as a client and the general strategies for each. Include results.
- L. Provide a list of current clients of the agency, including, if applicable, any clients with which the agency provided influencer initiatives and the duration of the relationship.
- M. Canada Trade Only: Describe the agency's ability to provide oversight with storage and fulfillment of VISIT FLORIDA publications and promotional materials. Include any current business relationship with fulfillment centers or warehouse facilities.
- N. Proposals must provide evidence of financial stability. The agency must document sufficient financial resources to perform all services outlined in this RFP. Audited or reviewed financial statements are required for the three most recent years of operations. If available, provide the Agency's Dunn & Bradstreet number so that a report can be requested by VISIT FLORIDA.

## 6.2 Agency Capabilities

### Canada Travel Trade

- A. Provide a marketing and sales plan for VISIT FLORIDA's presence in Canada to

give a sense of the agency's thinking and approach. For insight on these markets please refer to the Marketing Plan, see section 2.

- B. Provide examples of marketing and sales campaigns that represent work the agency has done in Canada. Include results.
- C. Provide examples of sales and trade development programs or initiatives the agency executed in Canada. Include results.
- D. Provide an example of a FAM that the agency has executed with travel trade professionals in order to promote a destination.
- E. Provide an example of the agency managing a major global tradeshow presence for a destination. Include number in attendance for tradeshow, booth/floor space occupied, and number of staff attended.

### **Canada Public Relations**

- A. Provide a public relations plan for VISIT FLORIDA's presence in the Canada to give a sense of the agency's thinking and approach. For insight on these markets please refer to the Marketing Plan, see section 2.
- B. Provide an example to demonstrate the agency's success in launching Influencer efforts in Canada. Include campaign details such as the agency's decision making process, budget levels, any additional media support and results.
- C. Provide a list of clients the agency currently holds, which the agency provided Influencer initiatives with, and for how long.
- D. Provide an example of a recap report the agency distributed to clients with Influencer results and public relations activities.
- E. Provide an example of a press release.
- F. Provide an example of the agency's organization and planning a media reception. Include budget levels, attendance count, and staff involvement.
- G. Provide an example of a media FAM. Include the agency's process during the selection of the media that would attend the FAM.
- H. Provide a basic overview of tourism-related PR accounts currently held in Canada and include the length as a client and the general strategies for each. Include results.

### **United States Public Relations**

- A. Provide a public relations plan for VISIT FLORIDA's presence in the U.S. to give a sense of the agency's thinking and approach. For insight on these markets please refer to the Marketing Plan, see section 2.
- B. Provide an example of a successful campaign or tactic that represents the agency's creativity or ability to develop an innovative approach. Describe the goal, measurement of success, timeline, results, and any obstacles. Include budget levels and staff involvement.
- C. Provide an example to demonstrate the agency's success in launching Influencer efforts in the U.S. Describe the goal, measurement of success, timeline, results, and any obstacles. Include campaign details such as the agency's decision making process, budget levels, any additional media support and results. Provide copy of a results report.
- D. Provide an example of the agency's organization and planning a media reception. Describe the goal, measurement of success, timeline, results, and any obstacles. Include budget levels, attendance count, and staff involvement.
- E. Provide an example of a media FAM tour. Include the agency's process during the selection of the media that would attend the FAM. Describe the goal, measurement of success, timeline, results, and any obstacles. Include budget levels, attendance count, and staff involvement.



- F. Provide an example to demonstrate the agency's ability to coordinate a PR effort when the agency was not the lead agency, but a collaborator. Describe the goal, measurement of success, timeline, results, and any obstacles.
- G. Provide an example of a content calendar.
- H. Provide an example of a recap report the agency distributed to clients with public relations activities.
- I. Provide an example of a press release.
- J. Provide information on how the agency tracks earned media.
- K. Provide information on the tool used by the agency for clipping services in the U.S.
- L. Provide an example of the agency's ability to provide an experiential activation for a client. Describe the goal, measurement of success, timeline, results, and any obstacles. Include budget levels, consumer count, and staff involvement.

### 6.3 Agency Experience

- A. How would the agency assign account support and account management and team structure for VISIT FLORIDA?
- B. How many employees would be devoted to the VISIT FLORIDA account? What are their credentials and experience?
- C. If the agency solution involves subcontracting with other agencies, respond to the following:
  - a. What services will be subcontracted?
  - b. What percent of services will be subcontracted?
  - c. Where are the subcontractor(s) located?
  - d. How will the agency manage the subcontractor(s) so that VISIT FLORIDA has outstanding representation?
- D. How will the agency work with Florida industry partner representatives?
- E. Does the agency have any experience working with in-country Visit U.S.A. committee?
- F. What experience does the agency have with working with in-country Brand U.S.A. representatives?
- G. [Canada PR only] What tools does the agency use for clipping services in Canada?
- H. What tools does the agency use to track earned media?
- I. Detail the process for training and onboarding a new client, such as VISIT FLORIDA. What does the agency require from VISIT FLORIDA to onboard as an agency?
- J. [Canada PR only] What is the vision for a successful PR presence in Canada?
- K. [Canada trade only] What is the vision for marketing and sales in Canada?
- L. [Canada only] What is the vision for promoting Florida to the Canadian market? What steps would the agency recommend to achieve that vision? How would you execute your vision? Include timeline and costs.
- M. [USA only] What is the agency's vision for a successful PR presence in the U.S.? What steps would the agency recommend to achieve that vision? How would you execute your vision? Include timeline and costs.
- N. [USA only] Provide a recommendation on how the agency could work with VISIT FLORIDA to enhance their PR presence in the U.S. Are there projects, programs or events VISIT FLORIDA should be attending or be part of?
- O. [USA only] Provide a recommendation for a Florida experiential activation for VISIT FLORIDA in one of our key markets. What are the related costs associated with such activation?

### 6.4 Pricing Information

VISIT FLORIDA requests each agency to provide detailed pricing for account management and fees for services outlined in the RFP. Pricing should be a monthly retainer approach with a list of services provided to VISIT FLORIDA, and should be inclusive of all services set forth in this RFP. Included in the pricing should be an hourly rate for services not included in the retainer or projects outside the assigned scope of work. Additional

information and backup detail should be included as appropriate with your proposal.

## 7.0 Evaluation Criteria

Written proposals will be evaluated with the following criteria in mind:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Weight</b>
<b>Team Quality and Experience</b>	Heavy
<b>Agency Capabilities</b>	Heavy
<b>Pricing Information and Value</b>	Moderate to Heavy
<b>Quality of Reference Feedback</b>	Light
<b>Depth of Tourism Industry Knowledge</b>	Moderate to Heavy
<b>Experience Managing Public Relations and Influencer Campaigns/Initiatives (Canada and U.S. PR Only)</b>	Heavy
<b>Relationship with Press (Canada and U.S. PR Only)</b>	Heavy
<b>Ability to Integrate with VF Staff and Other VF Agencies</b>	Moderate
<b>Financial Stability</b>	Heavy
<b>Experience in Marketing and Sales (Canada Trade Only)</b>	Heavy
<b>Experience Coordinating Co-Op Advertising Programs (Canada Trade Only)</b>	Moderate

## 8.0 RFP Terms

VF may adjust the specifications of this RFP throughout the process. This RFP does not constitute an offer by VF to contract, but rather represents a definition of the specific services being sought and invites agencies to submit proposals. Issuance of this RFP, the agencies' preparation and submission of proposals and the subsequent receipt and evaluation of any such proposals by VF does not commit VF to award a contract to any agency. Agencies, by submitting a proposal, agree that any cost incurred by it in responding to this RFP or participating in the RFP process, is to be borne solely by the agency. VF shall incur no obligations or liability whatsoever to anyone by reason of the issuance of this RFP or the actions of anyone relative thereto. Only the execution of a written agreement with an agency related to one or more services described herein will obligate VF and then only in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such agreement.

Proposals, and any subsequent material submitted, will be considered complete and binding offers by the proposing agencies to contract for a period ending on the earlier of ninety (90) calendar days from their submission and the date the contract(s) is executed with the selected agency relating to the services covered by this RFP. No action or communication of VF other than the execution of a written contract shall constitute acceptance of such offer, and even then shall legally obligate VF only in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in the written contract.

VF reserves the right to enter into discussions and/or negotiations with more than one agency at the same time. VF may contract with one or more agencies at the same time, with no agencies, or with any party who did not submit a proposal, should it determine that such actions are in its best

interest. VF reserves the right to reject any or all proposals in response to this RFP, waive any informality or irregularity in any proposal received and to award a contract to the agency or agencies of its choosing without explanation. VF will notify unsuccessful participants upon execution of the contract(s) awarded as a result of this RFP.

Interested respondents must direct any and all communications relating to this RFP to:

Meg Yariv, Senior Transactional Counsel  
[purchasing@visitflorida.org](mailto:purchasing@visitflorida.org)  
Subject Line: North America PR/Trade RFP  
850-583-5661

Ms. Yariv is the sole contact for agencies. All other VF team members, including evaluators, are prohibited from discussing the RFP with agencies outside of the scheduled process.

Proposals must state that the agency will execute a contract containing VF's standard terms and conditions which have been published alongside this RFP (and may be reviewed [here](#)), or include a mark-up of those terms with specific language changes that the agency would require in order to execute a contract. All proposed changes should include explanations of why they are necessary. Requiring substantive changes to the published terms may place a proposal at a significant disadvantage. Many of the terms contained VF's standard terms and conditions are either non-negotiable or are required by special provisions of Florida law that apply to VF (e.g., contingent liability, indemnification, assignment, public records, termination, conflict of interest, non-solicitation, legal requirements, non-discrimination, contract eligibility, record maintenance, E-verify, minority vendors).

**Confidentiality:** VF adheres to the State of Florida's broad open records law. That means records sent or received by VF in connection with its business must be provided upon request unless specifically made confidential or exempt from such requirement by a Florida law. This requirement includes materials you submit to VF in connection with this RFP. Agencies may mark information submitted to VF that qualifies as a trade secret, proprietary confidential business information, or some other exemption under Florida law ([LINK](#)) as "CONFIDENTIAL." Agencies should only mark information "CONFIDENTIAL" if they believe that it satisfies a specific Florida public records exemption and should state the specific legal exemption relied upon. Agencies should ensure confidential information is appropriately marked at the time it is initially delivered to VF, as failure to do so may destroy the confidential nature of the information. Agencies submitting proposals containing confidential information should submit two versions, a clean version for VF review and a version with all the confidential information redacted. Should VF receive a public records request once the RFP has concluded and VF has issued an award it will provide the redacted version and notify the agency (note: VF will not disclose RFP materials while the RFP is ongoing). Should the requestor dispute the applicability of the asserted public records exemption, VF will notify the agency which must then take the appropriate course of legal action if it wishes to continue to assert the claimed exemption. For more information on Florida public records laws generally, see the "Sunshine Manual" at [Sunshine Manual](http://www.myfloridalegal.com/sun.nsf/sunmanual) ([www.myfloridalegal.com/sun.nsf/sunmanual](http://www.myfloridalegal.com/sun.nsf/sunmanual)). Finally, please note that the final contract terms awarded to the winning agency or agencies will be a public record and will be posted on VISIT FLORIDA's .org website as required by law and VISIT FLORIDA's standard contract terms (which must be agreed to upon submission of a proposal). VISIT FLORIDA's contract with the selected agency shall include a section regarding financial consequences, i.e.:

- a. **Financial Consequences.** For each month in which Contractor fails to perform as specified herein by the established deadline, unless such failure is solely attributable to VISIT

FLORIDA or its agents, VISIT FLORIDA may withhold five percent (5%) of Contractor's monthly representation fee for that month and for every month thereafter until such time as Contractor has performed. Upon performance, Contractor's monthly representation fee will resume as listed above, but Contractor will not be reimbursed for prior withholdings. In the event Contractor has several current instances of deficient performance or nonperformance, VISIT FLORIDA may withhold five percent (5%) of the monthly representation fee for each instance, up to a maximum of twenty-five percent (25%) in any given month. Nothing in this paragraph shall limit VISIT FLORIDA's termination rights set forth in Section 5 of this Agreement.