

China RFP

Scope

Does the RFP include Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan markets?

The RFP is open to respondent's interpretation. Brand USA seeks the most effective use of funds to drive increased visitation and spend.

Are there new approaches BUSA will take in China market? E.g. What's the desired ratio of GIT&FIT?

Brand USA is looking for strategic guidance and feedback on the best way to reach and influence potential travelers. We are open to new approaches if they make strategic sense.

There is no indicated scope of work for consumer marketing within the RFP. Please confirm if there are any explicit services related to this scope of work.

No. This RFP is for trade and PR representation only. We have a consumer Agency in China that we would expect collaboration with.

Does the Proposer need to handle influencer marketing, such as influencer FAM trips, inviting influencers to media events, influencer relations, or influencer sponsored content to support Brand USA's consumer campaigns, etc.?

This RFP is for trade and PR representation only. At the present time we are not looking to include influencer marketing in this proposal, we have another agency that supports that work.

Does Brand USA plan to have another agency handle Brand USA's digital promotions in the China market?

Brand USA has an agency that handles digital promotions in China.

Are there specific market coverage expectations in China for fiscal year 2024/2025? And related to this, are there any staffing requirements in specific cities in China (e.g. Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu)? Or would you like us to suggest locations and staffing levels for each location?

The RFP is open to respondent's interpretation. Brand USA seeks the most effective use of funds to drive increased visitation and spend.

Is there any specific target for travel industry events such as COTTM in Beijing (October 16 to 18, 2024), CITM in Shanghai (November 2024), ITB China in Shanghai (May 2025), etc.?

Brand USA is looking for strategic guidance and feedback on what is the best use of time and financial resources to achieve our goals.

The RFP asks respondents to foster media relationships and create media ambassadors for Brand USA.” Please elaborate on what a “media ambassador” will include? Has Brand USA had a media ambassador program in China before? If yes, please share more details.

A media ambassador is a conduit between Brand USA’s HQ team and in-market media. This role would facilitate relationship development between the organizations. Brand USA has not had a media ambassador program in China before.

The RFP asks respondents to “Organize and execute a Brand USA media mission for Brand USA C-suite representatives focusing on business travel and consumer media. This can either be standalone or linked to the trade sales mission.” Can Brand USA explain USA C-suite representatives? Does Brand USA possess a list of C-suite representatives?

Brand USA is looking for strategic guidance and feedback on whether this should be standalone or linked to the trade sales mission. Please see the Brand USA website for a list of members of the C-Suite team.

Please provide the anticipated size (number of participants) of the two travel trade FAMs, as well as the size (number of participants) for the Mega FAMs

Size of fam groups are dependent on airline sponsorship and other considerations. Generally, groups range in size from 6-8 for product managers, 6-10 for travel agents, and 40-60 for MegaFams.

Are there specific KPIs for key activities in the four main areas of responsibility?

All Brand USA activities have KPIs that are specifically attributable to the marketing activity and linked to our desired business objectives.

In terms of the Monthly Progress Report and the KPI Report, would they be the same report with all required information, or would we have to deliver separate monthly reports?

There are multiple reporting mechanisms which will be discussed upon contracting.

We understand that travel trade and PR are the focus of this RFP, based on the overall requirements and the fact that 100% allocation is required for the trade and PR lead positions. Can you provide some guidance on the overall staff time/effort allocation for all four areas (e.g. 40% trade trade, 30% PR, 15% partnership marketing, 15% consumer marketing support)? Or would you like us to provide the allocation as part of our response?

Brand USA is looking for strategic guidance on how to appropriate hours of the team. Consumer marketing is not part of the breakout.

Are In addition to the four major areas of responsibility, are there expectations for proactive thinking in maintaining and improving U.S.-China bilateral relations in tourism?

Yes.

Is there any guidance on how to work with the U.S. Mission in China (Embassy and 4 Consulates General) and MCT & local cultural and tourism authorities to deliver the main scope of work?

While Brand USA will provide direction on co-led projects and events representatives should maintain a strong working relationship with relevant personnel at the U.S. Embassy and Consulates in China as well as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and local culture and tourism authorities.

Is there a media and PR function within consumer marketing? Is crisis management in the PR scope of work? Or does everything related to media and PR for Brand USA in China fall under the requirements of this RFP?

What specific PR goals does Brand USA aim to achieve in China? What are the current PR key performance indicators (KPIs) in China?

PR activities are the focus of this RFP. We have an existing consumer agency in-market and would anticipate some joint communication related to consumer campaigns and potential activations. PR goals are based on generating media stories about the USA and Brand USA Activities in the China market.

Can you provide more information about the visiting journalist program? How many people are generally invited each year, what are the main qualification requirements in the vetting process? What expenses are covered and what are excluded for journalists in this program? Are there quantifiable expectations for content production during and after their visits? The information we were able to find about the program on www.thebrandusa.com is quite limited.

We would expect any hosting of journalists to be included within the budget. All hosted journalists must have an approved US I-visa. Typically, we hosts journalists from top tier -publications.

Is the Visiting Journalist Program a key part of "fostering media relationships and creating media ambassadors for Brand USA" or do you expect us to create additional initiatives to achieve this goal?

This is included and we expect typical PR activities as well.

Does Brand USA consider MICE to be part of the travel trade scope or only leisure travel promotions?

For RFP purposes, this proposal is currently for leisure only.

Budget

For Partner Marketing Support, is there additional budget for co-op programs or would we use the funds from the US\$1,000,000?

There may be additional budget depending on direction from management and feedback and interest from Brand USA's many domestic travel and tourism partners.

The projects mentioned in Partner Marketing Support are not included in the RFP budget. Do we only need to state the planned partners, direction, and description in the submitted proposal, without indicating the cooperation budget and other details?

Brand USA is looking for strategic guidance and feedback only concerning our travel trade and PR partnerships.

Will the trade agency be responsible for any trade-related paid media buys? And are those media buys part of the budget?

Consumer media is independent from this RFP. Should any travel trade partnerships include a media buy, we will evaluate budget accordingly, but all trade partnerships will come from this budget.

The sample budget form is very high-level. Would you prefer us to follow this format or would you like a more detailed budget to coincide with a marketing plan (sales mission locations, partnership details, etc.)?

Brand USA is looking for strategic guidance and feedback.

Does Brand USA consider the cost for translation services for project related documentation, including those for materials provided by Brand USA in English that require translation for internal or external use, part of Account Administration expenses?

Brand USA's requirement is that all materials be provided in English and should be considered part of the administration expenses from the total budget.

Is media monitoring and clipping services provided by the representation agency or is it managed separately by Brand USA?

At the moment, all markets monitor and clip stories from each market. We are seeking a universal service provider though.

Technical

Does the USA Discovery Online Training Program mentioned on page 6 refer to the B2B WeChat mini program 玩美专家 (Back translation: USA Expert Player)? Will the agency manage and promote B2B training courses through this WeChat mini program?

Yes.

Who currently manages your WeChat B2B platform?

A third party currently manages the WeChat B2B platform.

The USA Discovery Program is the USA's official interactive online training tool. Who currently manages this program and do you have a Chinese version?

Please see <http://traveltrade.gousa.cn/info/become-usa-expert> for information on the USA Discovery Program.

In the "TRAVEL TRADE ACTIVITIES" section of the RFP, there is a link to the trade site: [visittheusa.com\traveltrade](http://visittheusa.com/traveltrade). Is there a Chinese version of this website available?

Yes- please see <http://traveltrade.gousa.cn/>

General

Is it possible for an outside mainland China entity (e.g. Hong Kong or Taipei) to participate in the tender and have the mainland China offices execute (e.g. Beijing/ Shanghai/ Guangzhou)?

The RFP is open to all respondents regardless of where they are located. Brand USA seeks to enter into contract with the vendor best situated to deliver against Brand USA's mission.

Will Brand USA have a staff person or contractor in the China market separate from the representation agency?

Brand USA China staffing is to be determined.

Proposal

Is it okay to submit a consolidated financial statement of all proposers in a joint proposal?

Yes

Will we need to submit supplementary documents for intent to bid or just fill in the form on Attachment 1?

Fill out and submit Attachment 1.

As for the final PDF version of the Proposal submitted, is it OK if it's converted from Word or PowerPoint?

Yes

"Please submit your responses in hard copy and electronic format." There is not a clear mailing address for hard copies. Can you please confirm if Proposers should submit hard copies?

Electronic copies are sufficient.

Do you prefer a narrative style (word format) or presentation style (powerpoint format) response?

Open to respondent's preference.

Given the 30-page maximum length requirement, are there specifications for font size and line spacing? Please confirm if case studies are inclusive of this page limit? Can financial statements, current client list be included in an appendix? Or do they count against the 30-page limit?

Case studies should be included in the 30-page limit. Financial statements and current client list can be included in the appendix. Please make the proposal readable.

Does the response have to follow the order of content specified in the "SUBMISSION DELIVERABLES & SCHEDULE " section?

Open to Respondent's preference. So long as all deliverables are provided the proposal will be accepted.

Do the Financial Statements need to be audited.

There is a preference for audited statements, but it is not required.