

The logo consists of the letters 'USA' in a white, pixelated font, set against a solid blue square background.

VisitTheUSA.com

Brand USA



Brand USA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Pop Culture & Screen Tourism PR

January 2025



INTRODUCTION

As the destination marketing organization for the United States, Brand USA's mission is to increase incremental international visitation, spend, and market share to fuel the nation's economy and enhance the image of the USA worldwide.

Established by the Travel Promotion Act of 2009 as the nation's first public-private partnership to spearhead a globally coordinated marketing effort to promote the United States as a premier travel destination and communicate U.S. visa and entry policies, Brand USA began operations in May 2011.

As one of the best levers for driving economic growth, international travel to the United States currently supports 1.2 million American jobs* and benefits virtually every sector of the U.S. economy. Since its founding, Brand USA has worked with more than 900 contributing organizations to invite the world to explore the exceptional, diverse, and virtually limitless travel experiences and destinations available in the United States of America.

According to studies by Oxford Economics, over the past seven years Brand USA's marketing initiatives have helped welcome 7.5 million incremental visitors to the USA, benefiting the U.S. economy with nearly \$55 billion in total economic impact, and supporting more than 50,000 incremental jobs each year.

Brand USA's operations are supported by a combination of nonfederal contributions from destinations, travel brands, and private-sector organizations plus matching funds collected by the U.S. government from international visitors who visit the United States under the Visa Waiver Program.

For industry and partner information about Brand USA, please visit TheBrandUSA.com.

For information about exceptional and unexpected travel experiences in the United States, please visit Brand USA's consumer website at VisitTheUSA.com.



PURPOSE

Brand USA is seeking a Pop Culture & Screen Tourism PR Agency to position the United States as the ultimate travel destination for international audiences. The selected agency will leverage celebrity influence, pop culture moments, and screen tourism to craft culturally resonant PR campaigns that showcase the USA's diverse travel experiences and global appeal through film, music, and entertainment.

This includes collaborating with film studios, television networks, and streaming platforms to advocate for U.S. destinations to be featured in productions, as well as creating earned media opportunities that strategically align with celebrity and talent projects.

SCOPE OF WORK

- **Strategy Development**
 - Develop a global PR strategy that connects U.S. destinations with upcoming film releases, major music tours, and pop culture moments, to ultimately drive international visitation to the U.S. (e.g., Beyoncé's U.S. concerts attracting Canadian travelers, global film releases inspiring set-jetting, etc.).
 - Advocate for U.S. destinations in the entertainment industry by engaging with film studios, television networks, streaming platforms (e.g., Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+), and digital content creators to integrate U.S. destinations into TV, film, and digital content.
 - Develop strategic celebrity partnerships that extend beyond traditional talent fees, focusing on earned media and PR-driven collaborations
 - Identify opportunities to integrate into major entertainment award shows (e.g., Oscars, Golden Globes, Emmys, Grammys) through strategic brand partnerships, on-site activations, and talent engagement.
- **Campaign Execution**
 - **Film:** Promote U.S. destinations featured in blockbuster movies, encouraging international visitation through set-jetting
 - **Music & Events:** Develop campaigns tied to major events and iconic music destinations
 - **Pop Culture Moments:** Build a framework for agile responses to viral or spontaneous cultural events that can highlight U.S. destinations
 - **Celebrity & Talent Integration:** Generate earned media opportunities to leverage well-known celebrity talent in an organic way to promote campaigns in target markets
- **Media Familiarization Program**
 - Collaborate with Brand USA on designing a media familiarization program that showcases key filming locations across the U.S. in an effort to drive interest and visitation



- **Content Creation**
 - Develop compelling content (press releases, etc.) that showcase U.S. destinations tied to pop culture and entertainment
 - Develop tailored media kits and compelling story angles to engage press and influencers
 - Localize content for key international markets to ensure cultural relevance
- **Measurement & Reporting**
 - Provide analytics and reports on campaign success



FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Agencies must demonstrate the following:

- Expertise in entertainment-driven campaigns that intersect with destination marketing
- Proven ability to execute large-scale media relations efforts
- Strong relationships with talent, influencers, and international media
- A track record of reacting to global pop culture trends with agility and creativity
- Capacity to deliver localized, culturally relevant content for international audiences
- Highly qualified and skilled account team

QUALIFICATIONS

- Proven success with global destination marketing and/or travel and tourism campaigns
- Experience in media relations and earned media tied to entertainment and pop culture
- Strong connections with key stakeholders in the entertainment and tourism industries, including studios, influencers, and talent agencies
- U.S.-based agency with a strong international presence or partnerships to ensure that messaging effectively reaches key international markets.

BUDGET

The annual budget including retainer and PR activation is: \$450-500K. Proposers must submit a detailed and realistic budget breakdown, along with an estimated execution timeline.



SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals may be rejected if they do not include all deliverables. Proposers wishing clarification of this RFP must submit questions in writing to Brand USA, no later than **MARCH 21** and sent by e-mail to RFPadmin@TheBrandUSA.com. Questions will not be answered on calls, with the exception of meetings with scheduled finalists during, or after the meeting. Company names will be removed from the published question/answer document. Duplicative questions, irrelevant questions and questions already addressed in this RFP may not be published. Pitches will be not be accepted outside the RFP process. Costs for developing proposals are entirely the responsibility of the proposer and shall not be reimbursed by Brand USA.

1. **Notice of Intent to Bid** must be received by **MARCH 24** (due by 5:00 PM EDT).
The notice shall be sent by e-mail to RFPadmin@TheBrandUSA.com. The NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID, is nonbinding; however, it ensures the receipt of all addenda related to this RFP.
Proposals will be accepted only from applicants who submitted a timely NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID.
2. **RFP Responses** must contain the following information:
 - **Executive Summary:** A concise summary of the proposed approach.
 - **Conflict of Interest Declaration:** Identify any client relationships or projects that could be considered a conflict of interest.
 - **Key Personnel:** Identify the account director and team members assigned to this project, along with their relevant experience.
 - **Case Studies:** Provide examples of relevant past work that demonstrate expertise in entertainment, screen tourism, or destination marketing.
 - **Strategic Approach:** Proposers must outline their approach to managing Brand USA's account and executing the scope of work. This should include plans for developing and delivering campaigns aligned with Brand USA's goals, specific strategies for media relations, talent partnerships, and content creation, as well as any innovative ideas or unique value the agency can bring to the project.
 - **Detailed Budget:** Include a realistic breakdown of costs, covering all campaign elements, along with an execution timeline.
3. **Certification Form**: Must be signed and accompany all RFP Response submissions.



TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

This tentative schedule may be altered at any time at the discretion of Brand USA. Brand USA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or any part thereof; waive an informality in the proposals and accept the proposal that best meets the needs of Brand USA.

A. Proposal Released	March 12
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	March 19
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA website	March 21
D. Notice of Intent to Bid Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	March 24
E. Proposal Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	April 9
F. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	April 21
G. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	W/O April 28
H. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	May 2

DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Proposals should be e-mailed to RFPadmin@TheBrandUSA.com. We will acknowledge receipt, so if you do not receive a receipt notification within two business days, please contact us. If the file size of your proposal is too large to email, or send via a FTP service, contact us and we will make arrangements.

EVALUATION AND CONTRACTING

All proposals satisfying the requirements of this Request for Proposals will be evaluated to establish which of the providers best fulfills the needs of Brand USA and this project. This Request for Proposals in no way commits Brand USA to award a contract, to pay any costs in preparation of a proposal, or to contract for the goods and/or services offered.

Brand USA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with all qualified providers or to cancel this Request for Proposals. After awarding the contract, the schedule will include a period of collaboration between Brand USA and the selected Contractor to better define, elaborate upon, and fix the Contractor's final Scope of Work and general Terms and Conditions.



ATTACHMENT 1

NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID

Due: [Date]

SEND TO: rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com

NAME OF BIDDER / COMPANY:
CONTACT PERSON:
MAILING ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE:
FAX:
E-MAIL ADDRESS:
SIGNED:



ATTACHMENT 2

CERTIFICATION

Please include this statement as part of the Proposal

Certification Statement

By submission of this proposal and authorized signature below, Proposer certifies that the undersigned corporate officer has authority to bind the bidder to the terms of this Proposal and hereby certifies on behalf of the bidder that:

1. He/she has read and understands all commitments and terms of this Proposal.
2. The information contained in this Proposal is accurate.
3. Proposer's quote is valid for at least 120 days from the date of proposal's signature below.
4. Proposer understands that if selected as the successful Proposer, he/she will have ten (10) business days in which to complete contract negotiations, if any, and execute the final contract document. Date of execution can be extended by mutual agreement of contractor / Brand USA.

Authorized Signature

Typed or Printed Name

Title

Date

Official Contact

Brand USA requests that the Proposer designate one person to receive all communications for clarification and verification of information related to this proposal. Please identify this point of contact below:

Official Contact Name

Phone Number

Official Contact Title

Facsimile Number

Email Address

Street, City, State, Zip



ATTACHMENT 3 FOR BRAND USA USE ONLY

Bid/Proposal: _____

Evaluated By: _____

Date: _____

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation committee will judge each written proposal based on the following criteria:

	MAX. POINTS	SCORE
Creativity & Strategy (30 points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of proposed campaigns with Brand USA's objectives. Demonstrates ability to leverage entertainment, pop culture, and screen tourism effectively. 	30	
Media & Talent Expertise (25 points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proven track record of success with similar projects Experience collaborating with talent, influencers, and entertainment studios. Strength of relationships with media and entertainment stakeholders. 	25	
Staffing (20 points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of a staffing plan that meets requirements, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One (1) dedicated Account Director (100% allocation). One (1) Account Manager (100% allocation). 	25	
Cost Effectiveness (20 points): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realistic and detailed budget breakdown. 	20	
TOTAL POINTS	100	