

The logo features the letters 'USA' in a white, pixelated font against a blue square background.

VisitTheUSA.com

Brand USA



Brand USA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Creating a Captivating Feature Film or TV Series Celebrating America's
Semiquincentennial
September 21, 2023



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

This Request for Proposal (RFP) will identify a visionary partner for the creation of a feature film or episodic television series that showcases the United States' diversity, beauty, culture, and attractions through entertaining storytelling. This project will celebrate America's 250th birthday in 2026 and inspire international tourists to explore our nation.

BACKGROUND

Brand USA has a legacy of producing acclaimed IMAX® Giant Screen Films, including "National Parks Adventure," "America's Musical Journey," and "Into Nature's Wild." Also, we are the first and only national destination marketing organization with its own international television network: GoUSA TV.

Each film has successfully showcased various aspects of America, captivating global audiences and encouraging travel to the United States.

"National Parks Adventure," is a celebration of America's natural wonders, and its release was timed to the centennial of the establishment of the U.S. National Park Service. Narrated by Robert Redford, the film highlights amazing footage from more than thirty of America's national parks, including Yellowstone, Yosemite, Arches and Glacier.

"America's Musical Journey," traces the roots of America's diverse musical heritage through the places and people where various genres emerged and blossomed. Singer-songwriter Aloe Blacc hosts with narration by Morgan Freeman.

"Into Nature's Wild," explores the allure of the USA's wild places and the connection we share with nature. Native American astronaut John Herrington and Alaska Native Ariel Tweto introduce us to trailblazers past and present. Morgan Freeman narrates.

Film and television have proven to be highly effective in exposing potential international tourists to the vast possibilities available in the United States and motivating them to visit and explore our country.

Brand USA is now open to receiving proposals for a fourth IMAX® Big Screen Film, or a standard feature film, or a high-quality mini-series for a major global streaming platform or broadcast television. If desired, Producers may submit proposals for all three with distribution plans for each.



SCOPE OF WORK

The proposal should encompass the following key elements:

1. Content/Plot:

The objective is to entice viewers to want to discover more about the United States firsthand. The film or series must have a compelling story arc, well-defined characters, and a rich sense of place. The plot should cater to a diverse global audience, portraying America's cultural tapestry, offering unexpected visitor experiences and showcasing its welcoming atmosphere. The storyline must have a concrete beginning, middle, and end for viewers to follow, as well as engaging emotion through drama, conflict, fun, or comedy. Our goal is to prioritize story over typical travelogue fare. The release and marketing will center around celebrating America's 250th birthday in 2026. The intention is to create an evergreen celebration of America that can be viewed for years to come beyond its birthday.

2. Destinations:

The treatment must feature a minimum of fifteen locations across the United States and its territories.

3. Characters and Host:

Characters, including potential hosts or narrators, should be relatable to international audiences. They may be Americans or individuals from other countries, reflecting realism, relatability, and charisma. A brand-safe and diverse cast is crucial.

4. Tone:

The film/series should resonate with an upbeat, optimistic tone, emphasizing the joy and excitement of travel in the USA. It should cater to a broad demographic, transcending age, culture, and background.

5. Run Time:

Minimum run times: IMAX® Giant Screen Films – 40 minutes; Feature Film – 60 minutes; Mini-series – 23 minutes with at least 3 episodes.

6. Format:

Compliance with industry standards for the chosen medium.



7. Deliverables and Milestones:

A phased approach will be adopted:

- Discovery and pre-production: Research, planning, and proposal approval.
- Production: Scripting, filming, rough cut, and feedback sessions.
- Final production: Total team sign-off and quality check.

8. Distribution:

A comprehensive international distribution and marketing strategy should be proposed for at least the first year of the release. Exposure in the United States is a spillover benefit. Showing possibilities include traditional theaters, major streaming platforms, IMAX theaters, educational institutions, science centers, or a combination of these. Marketing should include a plan for public relations, advertising, reviews, and award submissions.

QUESTIONS FOR YOU

Answers required:

Answers to the below questions and prompts are required. Answer the questions directly under the question within your proposal. Do not scatter the answers throughout your submission. Your proposal will be considered incomplete without your answers.

- How many major films or television programs have you created? Provide examples.
- Do you have relationships with Netflix, Amazon, Apple TV, other streaming platforms, or broadcast stations/networks - especially those with significant international reach?
- Explain your most successful distribution plan.
- Previously, how have you measured success?
- Why do you wish to create a film or television show celebrating America?
- Briefly tell us how you feel about our three films.
- Do you have connections to celebrities for appearances in this film or television show?
- Which major awards have you earned for your previous work?
- What is your approach for sound and music utilized? Is a soundtrack for streaming services possible?
- How do you handle inclement weather situations?



OWNERSHIP

Right, title, interest and copyright to the work, collateral and derivatives are held by Brand USA in perpetuity.



BUDGET

Propose a realistic budget that is as specific as possible. Include talent, travel, production, marketing, distribution, etc. with payment timing expectations. Ability to bring major sponsors to assist in underwriting the project would be beneficial.



MINIMUM 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 **October 6, 2023**, 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 not be accepted outside the RFP process.

Proposals will 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 **October 27, 2023** (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:
 - a. Outline of the plot/storyline
 - b. Suggested host/narrator/characters
 - c. Tentative Title
 - d. Potential Directors and backgrounds
 - e. Distribution plan
 - f. Company history
 - g. Three relevant case studies
 - h. No Conflict of Interest: List of existing clients that could be considered a conflict of interest to Brand USA.
 - i. Overview of your staffing plan and specific individuals who will work on the project with their credentials. Specifically propose potential Director(s) and Writer(s). Brand USA is committed to diversity and inclusion with our vendor/partners and any subcontractors utilized.
 - j. Illustration of how we will interact as a part of the continued planning and creative process.
 - k. Detailed project management process, with timeline and workflow.
 - l. At least three relevant references.



- m. Direct answers from the “Questions for You” section. Include the question and your answer. Do not assume we will locate answers to these questions spread throughout your proposal. Failure to provide direct answers may negatively impact your submission.
 - n. Specific Monthly/Annual Budget.
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	Sept. 21, 2023
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	Oct. 6, 2023
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA website	Oct. 23, 2023
D. Notice of Intent to Bid Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	Oct. 27, 2023
E. Proposal Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	Nov. 13, 2023
F. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	Jan. 5, 2024
G. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	Jan. 10-11, 2024
H. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	Jan. 17, 2024

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 an 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 RFP.



ATTACHMENT 1

NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID

Due: October 27, 2023

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
Quality, compelling storytelling, originality of the proposal	50	
Experience and qualifications of the company	25	
Distribution platform(s)	15	
Feasibility of the budget, ability to provide sponsors, and timeline	10	
TOTAL POINTS	100	