



USA

VisitTheUSA.com

Brand USA



# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Global Trade Development Contractor  
Re-issued May, 6 2019



## INTRODUCTION

Brand USA is the destination marketing organization for the United States with the mission of increasing 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 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. 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 1.8 million American jobs (directly and indirectly) and benefits virtually every sector of the U.S. economy. Brand USA works in close partnership with more than 700 partner organizations to invite the world to explore the exceptional, diverse, and virtually limitless travel experiences and destinations available in the United States of America.

Brand USA is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors. Each director is appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce. Each director represents a sector of the travel and tourism industry as identified by the Travel Promotion Act. The executive leadership team possesses strong expertise and experience in the travel, tourism, and advertising industries.

Brand USA delivers a dynamic marketing program that includes, but is not limited to, a global advertising campaign, earned media and public relations strategies, a robust social media outreach plan, promotional and incentive campaigns, trade shows and sales missions, and educational campaigns about U.S. entry policies. Brand USA carefully selected its marketing tools and target audience after vigorous analysis of existing and original market research.

Brand USA is committed to including diverse firms as an important part of its sourcing and procurement activities. In furtherance and support of this goal, we encourage minority, women and locally-owned firms to pursue business opportunities with us. Minority and women-owned firms who otherwise meet the minimum requirements set forth in this Request for Proposal are encouraged to submit a Notice of Intent to Bid. In addition, Brand USA also seeks to do business with firms that also recognize the value of diversity and inclusion in the composition of their workforce and in their own contracting, subcontracting or teaming activities. We encourage such firms who meet the minimum bidding requirements (regardless of size or ownership) to also submit a Notice of Intent to



Bid. Brand USA reserves the right to give weight or allocate bidding credit to diverse firms or those with a demonstrated commitment to inclusion as part of its evaluation process.

## WHY DOES A COUNTRY AS POPULAR AS THE USA NEED A MARKETING PROGRAM?

Although the United States remains one of the world's most popular travel destinations, during the first decade of this century, while the global travel market was booming, the USA's share of international travelers declined 37 percent—from 17.2 percent in 2000 to 12.4 percent in 2010. The resulting impact on the U.S. economy was an annual loss of 467,000 jobs and \$606 billion in lost revenue. In addition to being seen as unwelcoming (resulting from increased security measures that came following 9/11) and too familiar, the United States was also one of the world's only industrialized nations without a national tourism board to attract international travelers to its shores in order to fuel the nation's economy by inspiring the world to visit the U.S.A.—to see it again, or for the first time.

With the strength of a national marketing effort from Brand USA now in place, the United States is working to regain its share of the global travel market. By welcoming more international visitors to the USA, Brand USA is supporting U.S. economic growth, helping to spur job creation, and creating a more positive impression of the United States around the world.

## WHY IS INTERNATIONAL VISITATION SO IMPORTANT TO THE NATION'S ECONOMY?

### International visitation helps local communities.

On average, overseas visitors spend nearly \$4,400 per trip and generate tax revenue in communities across America without burdening local services, such as public schools and fire departments. When international travelers spend this kind of money in our communities, it lessens the tax burden on U.S. citizens.

### International visitation supports American jobs and economic growth.

When international visitors come to the U.S.A., the money they spend directly supports about 1.2 million American jobs and added over \$180 billion to the U.S. economy. Overseas arrivals represent



around 50% of all international arrivals, yet account for over 85% of total international travel spending. (Source: US Travel Association and NTTO 2016 Data)

## International visitation enhances the image of the United States worldwide.

Surveys show that international visitors to the United States are 74 percent more likely to have a favorable view of America and 61 percent more likely to support U.S. policies.

## Who Pays for It?

International visitors and private contributions fund the work of Brand USA— no U.S. taxpayer dollars are used to fund Brand USA’s marketing efforts. Instead, the organization is supported by contributions from partnering organizations that are matched by fees paid by international travelers to the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) program.

ESTA is an automated system implemented by the Department of Homeland Security in 2008 that determines the eligibility of visitors from 38 international markets to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). ESTA authorizations are generally valid for multiple trips over a period of two years or until the traveler’s passport expires, whichever comes first.

## BRAND USA IS BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Brand USA is delivering on a dynamic marketing strategy that includes, but is not limited to, a global advertising campaign, earned media and public relations strategies, a robust social media outreach plan, promotional and incentive campaigns, trade shows and sales missions, and educational campaigns about U.S. entry policies. Brand USA carefully selects its marketing tools and target markets and travelers after vigorous analysis of existing and original market research.

Brand USA with and through the support of more than 700 partners worldwide has made notable progress towards our mission of increasing international visitation to the United States and by all accounts, our efforts are working. Since we began operations in 2011, Brand USA has:

- Established consumer and trade marketing initiatives in more than 30 international markets, which generate 90% of all inbound travel to the United States.
- Expanded our USA consumer campaign to 16 key markets that generate more than 85% of the United States’ international visitors.



- Significantly increased the effectiveness of our consumer campaigns during FY2016 that helped drive increases in international traveler intent to visit the USA ranging from 7% to as high as 99%.
- Established the nation's largest in-market representation network to work directly with the international travel trade in 20 top travel markets.
- Increased partner program participation in Brand USA cooperative marketing programs by 13% from 245 in FY2015 to 277 in FY2016, which demonstrated value for partners.

According to studies by Oxford Economics, in the past four years alone (fiscal years 2013 through 2016), Brand USA's marketing initiatives are responsible for welcoming 4.3 million incremental visitors to the USA, benefiting the U.S. economy with more than \$13.6 billion in incremental spending; and nearly \$30 billion in total economic impact, which has supported, on average, nearly 51,000 incremental jobs per year.



## PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify the appropriate vendor to assist the Global Trade Development team in the development of global strategic planning and execution in Asia, to include specific programming and standard operating procedures described below. Vendor will be required to provide a high level of strategy and oversee the Brand USA offices in the following Markets: China, Japan, South Korea, India and South East Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan).

## SCOPE OF WORK

The selected vendor will:

- Together with the Global Trade Development Vice President and other Brand USA staff, develop annual marketing plans pertaining to trade activities for various international travel markets.
- Other responsibilities include:
  - Oversee implementation of trade related advertising and marketing programs.
  - Develop with Brand USA management travel trade strategy and participate in key trade shows, sales missions and events in these regions as necessary.
  - Work with Global Trade Development Team to liaise with U.S. partners, and representation offices, to help organize logistics of fam tours, and industry and client events.
  - Communicate Brand USA's priorities and goals to the international teams.
  - Create measurable ROI for all programs with the international teams.
  - Review and administer the annual budget and forecast for each Asia market.
  - Responsible for keeping programs on deadline and on budget ensuring that cross-functional and cross departmental teams meet all goals.
  - Support the Vice President Global Trade Development to ensure integration and communications among Brand USA departments to coordinate cooperative marketing platforms.
  - Attend industry functions as needed to represent Brand USA and its partners, and encourage industry leaders to become partners, sponsors and participants in events and programs.
  - Work with the Partner Marketing team to develop cooperative partnership programs with international trade and media partners.
  - Work with Partner Marketing team to evaluate and negotiate potential deals and partnerships in support of Brand USA initiatives.
  - Provide leadership to contracted Manager and/or coordinator – supervise, mentor and ensure



- compliance with all company policies and procedures.
- Conduct performance evaluations of contractors supervised based on feedback from others, as appropriate.
- Guide team in establishing goals that align and support the Brand USA business plan.
- Maintain communication with commerce entities promoting economic development (In- country).
- Other duties as assigned.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Market Experience
  - A specialization in Asia travel trade markets of China, Japan, South Korea, India and South East Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan) . Limited or no experience in one of these markets will not necessarily disqualify vendor.
  - A strong network of contacts in the global travel trade industry.
  - A demonstrated capacity to work with DMOs, CVBs, hotels and attractions.
- Strategic and Critical Thinking
  - Experience in managing global trade offices and developing strategic plans.
  - Experience in developing and presenting training materials.
  - A demonstrated capacity for creating organizational standard operating procedures.
- Program Management & Planning
  - A strong institutional knowledge of the product development and creating market itineraries.
  - Oversee content development for trade product education and client selling tools such as videos and images.
  - Strong organizational skills, and ability to stick to deadlines.
  - Experience working in teams and comfortable working independently.
  - Experience in managing teams.

Please submit your response electronically, via email. Please limit the response to no more than 15 pages in length. Proposal format is open to presentation style, but it must include the following information:

- Company history.
- Relevant CV / resume of contractor.
- List of Asia market/s and relevant experience by market.



- 3 Client references from companies that the vendor has provided similar work.
- At least 2 case studies exemplifying proven success in creating SOPs, developing strategic plans, or growth plans, managing global trade offices, and staff management experience.
- Brief insight into the Asia markets and proposal on how Brand USA should work in each market to gain market share.

## BUDGET

Vendors should build out a detailed plan and timeline covering deliverables across Brand USA's requests for \$160,000/year. Individuals/vendors should include a breakdown of administrative expenses, staff time, and third-party expenses necessary to accomplish the goals set forth here (Travel expenses outside of home city reimbursed in accordance with Brand USA's Travel & Expense Policy.)

## MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must address each item listed, giving specific details of techniques to be used in achieving these requirements. Proposals may be rejected if minimum requirements are not met. All proposers wishing clarification of this RFP must submit questions in writing to Brand USA, and sent by email to [rftadmin@thebrandusa.com](mailto:rftadmin@thebrandusa.com).

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 (Attachment 1) must be received by May 10, 2019 (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT). The notice shall be sent by email to [rftadmin@thebrandusa.com](mailto:rftadmin@thebrandusa.com) at the Brand USA office. 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. Executive Summary. Provide description of the nature of the organization's services and activities. Note when the business was established, brief history and location. List the location(s) of the office(s) from which the primary work on this contract would be performed.
  - b. At least two case studies.
  - c. 3 company references.
  - d. Detailed international market experience stated per market.
3. Budget, including timeline and project plan.



4. No Conflict of Interest: Client relationships that could potentially be considered a conflict of interest must be listed.
5. Certification Form (Attachment 2) 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 re-released	May 6
B. Intent to Bid due by 5:00 p.m. EST	May 10
C. Proposal Due (due by 3:00 p.m. EDT)	May 24
D. Proposal Evaluation by Scoring Committee	May 28
E. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	May 30
F. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	Week of June 10
G. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	June 14



## DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Each bidder is required to deliver a .pdf of its proposal to Brand USA's RFP Admin, no later than May 24 (3:00 p.m. EDT). The .pdf should be no more than three separate files. The proposal may not exceed ten pages double-spaced at 12-point font.

Proposals must be e-mailed ONLY to [rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com](mailto:rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com):

Brand USA Headquarters

C/O RFP Administrator

1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800

Washington, D.C. 20006

ATTN: RFP – Global Trade Development Consultant

Phone: 202.536.2060

Email: [rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com](mailto:rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com)



## 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: May 10, 2019

**SEND TO:**

Brand USA Headquarters

C/O RFP Administrator

1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800

Washington, D.C. 20006

ATTN: RFP Asia Global Trade Development Consultant

Phone: 202.536.2060

Email: [rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com](mailto: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
Program Management and Planning	30	
Strategic and Critical Thinking	30	
Market Experience and Vendor Reputation	40	
TOTAL POINTS	100	