

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

USA Discovery Program

April 14, 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

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify the appropriate vendor to help revamp and renovate Brand USA's online training program for travel agents, the USA Discovery Program. Currently, the program has market specific, in-language websites in 9 different markets as well as a global version. These markets include Mexico, Brazil, UK & Ireland, Germany, Italy, France, India, China, South Korea, and Australia & New Zealand. The program is currently held in English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, Italian, Mandarin, German and Korean.

The USA Discovery Program provides agents with the knowledge and skills needed to sell trips to the USA more effectively and the chance to learn about the varied holidays options and regions, as well as special holiday experiences, such as fly-drive and family holidays. The online modules give agents complete flexibility to complete the training in their own time, at their own pace. All of the training is bite-sized with quizzes broken down into different modules such as regions or experiences. After the agent passes a set of quizzes, agents are considered a USA specialist in that area and earn a badge of recognition for that area of expertise.

In some markets, the highly interactive program includes an online community and forum, where agents can ask questions and interact with their peers. Agents also have access to exclusive live events and webinars with partners direct from the USA including video training sessions and live Q&As. Additional program benefits include invitations to exclusive events and roadshows and the chance to participate in [MegaFams](#) to the USA. MegaFams are one of Brand USA's signature trade programs, where several familiarization trips to the USA take place at the same time.

The objective of the USA Discovery Program is to provide geographical, state, and city knowledge of the USA; information on different thematic travel in the USA; and awareness of different U.S. destinations to travel agents with the goal of increasing their familiarity and thus increasing their sales of U.S. product.



SCOPE OF WORK

The selected vendor will:

- Work with Brand USA to create, build, and maintain the USA Discovery Program globally. We welcome vendors to present a pre-existing educational website solution that can be modified to meet our specific needs
 - Have the ability to expand the program as required by Brand USA
- Review and audit the current version of the USA Discovery Program
- Provide and execute a plan to audit and refresh content, images, and videos on the USA Discovery Program
- Create a new advertising video for the USA Discovery Program directed towards the travel trade in all languages mentioned above
- Sites must be responsive for desktop, mobile and tablet
- Migrate all current content on the platform
 - This includes approximately 350 pages of content
- Ensure ease and best functionality of:
 - The agent experience of the site
 - The engagement between agents and content
 - Look and feel of the site
- Ensure ease and best functionality of:
 - Easy to use Content Management System (CMS)



- Editing and publishing updates to the site
 - Pulling and creating real time data reports off the site, as requested
- This data must be easily accessible and accurate to those managing the sites
- Create an API connection with:
 - Brand USA's corporate, consumer and travel trade site
 - Brand USA's partner portal, to provide partner badge information to partners
 - Brand USA's CRM system, Salesforce, to capture agent data from the program
- Create and provide biannual reports that include:
 - Market specific data, incentives, agent numbers, badge completions
 - Badge specific data including badge completions and new badges launched
 - Program and incentive overviews
 - MegaFam Integration (data on badges completed as part of the MegaFam incentive)
 - Onsite User Behavior including tagging for Google Analytics
 - Communications Data
 - Trainings and Events Data
 - Knowledge Forum Information
- Provide training to all those working on the USA Discovery Program covering:
 - Use of the CMS
 - Reporting and pulling data



- Editing content, images and video
- Provide tech support for the ongoing maintenance of the USA Discovery Program
 - 45-80 hours a month
- Join two 30-minute calls per month with the Brand USA team
- Provide support to:
 - Liaise with Brand USA's USA Discovery Program experts to continuously expand and improve the program
 - Create new modules or badges
 - Translate new content into different languages
- This multi-site environment must integrate a translations connector to our provider
- Liaise with Brand USA's international teams to:
 - Create biannual reports
- Solve any issues related to the program



QUALIFICATIONS

- A proven track record in online training programs.
- A strong institutional knowledge of the global travel trade industry would be an additional asset, but not required.
- Drupal development preferred.
- Responsive design for desktop and mobile, surfacing data/metrics.
- Database development and problem solving.
- Graphic design and hands-on content management implementation.
- Solid company with proven financial backing.
- Creative development expertise preferred.



PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SPECS

Please submit your response electronically, via email. Please limit the response to no more than 30 pages in length. Proposal format is open to presentation style, but it must include the following information:

- Company history and background.
- Employee biographies for those who may be responsible for the USA Discovery Program account.
- 3 Client references for companies that the vendor has provided similar work.
- 1 - 3 case studies exemplifying proven success in creating, developing, or revamping an online training program.
- Links to educational websites that your company has developed.
- Budget.



BUDGET

Vendors should build out a detailed plan and timeline covering deliverables across the USA Discovery Program initial build and further maintenance and upkeep. Vendors should include a breakdown of administrative expenses (incl. travel), staff time, and third-party expenses necessary to accomplish the goals set forth here.



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 April 26, 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 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 **May 12, 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. **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. 1 – 3 Case Studies.
 - c. Company References.
 - d. RFP Process Schedule.
 - e. **Contract Manager/Team:** identify one individual on the proposer's account team who will manage the contract work. Identify the role of each member who will service the account. Current resumes must be attached for each person who would in any way be associated with USA Discovery.
 - f. **No Conflict of Interest:** Client relationships that could potentially be considered a conflict of interest must be listed.



- g. 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.
 - h. 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	April 14, 2023
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	April 26, 2023
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA website	May 5, 2023
D. Notice of Intent to Bid Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	May 12, 2023
E. Proposal Due (due by 3:00 PM EDT)	May 26, 2023
F. Proposal Evaluation by Scoring Committee	June 12, 2023
G. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interview	June 14, 2023
H. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	June 26 - 30, 2023
I. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	July 7, 2023

DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Proposals should be e-mailed to RFPadmin@TheBrandUSA.com no later than May 26, 2023 (3:00p.m. EDT). 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: May 12, 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
Ability to meet requirements	50	
Design, User Interface	30	
Cost effectiveness	20	
Finalist Oral Presentation. (Not counted during initial proposal submission)	50	
TOTAL POINTS -100 for initial proposals. 50 only for those selected to present.	150	