



USA

DiscoverAmerica.com

Brand USA



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

China Seminar Toolkit

RFP Posted: May 11, 2016

Proposals Due: July 1, 2016



Request for Proposal

INTRODUCTION

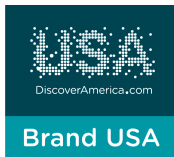
Brand USA is a public---private not for profit organization created by the Travel Promotion Act of 2009. The mission of Brand USA is to generate increased international visitation to the United States and to grow its share of the global travel market. Brand USA will accomplish this via marketing campaigns and programs and partnerships with the travel industry. The incremental increase in international visitation will generate billions of dollars of revenue, which will in turn create new American jobs.

While the United States welcomed 60 million visitors in 2010, its share of the international travel market has decreased significantly over the past decade. The U.S. share of long haul international travel fell from 17.2 percent in 2000 to 12.4% percent in 2010. Brand USA, the U.S.'s National Tourism Marketing Organization will reinvigorate the nation's image and recapture its share of the market.

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 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 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.



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WHY DOES A COUNTRY AS POPULAR AS THE U.S. 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 \$4,500 per trip and generate tax revenue in communities across the USA 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 more than 1 million American jobs and added \$181 billion to the U.S. economy. (Source: US Travel Association and NTTO 2013 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.



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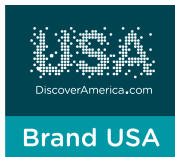
Who Pays for It?

International visitors and private contributions fund the work of Brand USA—with half of Brand USA’s budget generated by contributions from the private sector and matching funds provided by a \$10 fee paid by travelers from markets that are not required to have a visa to enter the United States. These markets are designated as visa--waiver countries. As a result, U.S. taxpayers contribute \$0 toward Brand USA’s marketing efforts.

BRAND USA IS BUILDING OUR 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.

In 2013, we were fully deployed (consumer, co--op, and trade marketing) in eight markets (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, and the United Kingdom)—and delivered a 47:1 return on marketing investment, 1.1 million incremental visitors, \$3.4 billion in direct travel spending, and \$7.4 billion total spending—which supported 53,000 new jobs. In 2014, Brand USA expanded the consumer campaign to China and Taiwan, and in 2015 will be fully deployed in 14 international markets (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom). Every 1 percent increase in travel from these markets fuels the nation’s economy by generating 500,000 additional visitors and \$1 billion in international visitor spend a year.



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PURPOSE

U.S. China Year of Tourism 2016

The Tourism Year is designed to effectively position the United States and China for increased trade in travel services by focusing on three mutually beneficial areas: enhanced travel and tourism experiences, cultural understanding, and appreciation of natural resources. Additionally, the Tourism Year leverages the opportunity created by the reciprocal extension of short-term tourist and business visas issued to each other's citizens from one to 10 years (effective November 12, 2014) and reciprocal extension of student visa validity from one to five years. Since these announcements, the State Department has seen nearly a 50 percent increase in Chinese applications for U.S. nonimmigrant visas.

The Tourism Year initiative is expected to result in new travel offerings for both the Chinese and U.S. markets to increase travel between the two countries. It will better prepare all segments of the U.S. travel and tourism industry and U.S. government agencies to attract and welcome Chinese guests. As part of its efforts to support the Tourism Year, Brand USA is developing a dedicated website to serve as an online resource center to the travel industry for up-to-the-minute information on official Tourism Year events and programs, as well as educational and training resources to help travel professionals, destinations, and other travel-related organizations to better understand the China market and effectively promote to and serve the traveler.

In addition, Brand USA and the Department of Commerce will work together to communicate best practices for each country to continue to appreciate and protect natural resources for the benefit and enjoyment of their people and their visitors.

Core Objective

In partnership with the DOC and CNTA Brand USA's focus is not only to increase incremental visitation to the United States from the China market but to enhance the visitor experience of the Chinese traveler while they are in the United States. In order to assist our destination partners to provide a great travel experience, Brand USA is putting an emphasis on creating a China tool kit to help our partners develop a greater understanding of China and the Chinese traveler. Brand USA wants to identify a partner with vast knowledge and experience with both the China market and Chinese travelers to educate our industry partners to enhancing visitor experience and ensuring our partners are ready to provide a great visitor experience. Brand USA is looking for knowledgeable partner who can provide up-to-date training through a series of in-person trainings as well as webinars and written material.



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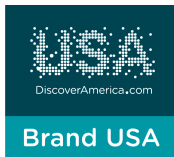
To be an effective partner the vendor requirements are:

- Established experience working directly with the Chinese market and knowledge and familiarity with:
 - Entry Policy
 - Chinese government regulations
- Proven track record from current and past training programs directly or indirectly connected to travel and tourism of building international business strategy to market and do business with the Chinese market:
 - Written materials
 - Presentations both live and webinars
- Event administration

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected vendor will provide:

- Written Materials
 - White paper: general best practices guide and tool for Brand USA partners
 - Destinations (city and state)
 - Attractions
 - Hotels
 - Rental Cars
 - Accreditation guidelines (if applicable)
 - Online training kit and materials
 - 1 hour in-person training materials (pre-written material)
 - ½ day in-person training materials (pre-written material)
 - Full-day in-person training materials (pre-written material)
- General Web training – Live on TheBrandUSA.com, across the below subject matter:
 - General information around conducting business in China
 - Economic changes and trends
 - Chinese travelers and cultural focus
- In-person Events and Seminars:
 - Launch in-person training to be live at ESTO 2016 (August 27 – 30, 2016)
 - Overview of the China Market (subjects listed above)



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- Built into a 1 hour program (time and place to be agreed upon)
- 6 Regional Seminars (to begin in September 2016)
 - Develop a strategy to host 6 in-person regional seminars across the United States. (Regions to be discussed and decided on with Brand USA)
 - Develop and provide the content for this program
 - 50-100 attendees
 - ½ Day to a full-day seminar (both options should be outlined)
- Suggested program Accreditation process
 - Develop the requirements and guideline on how to establish accreditation through the in-person seminars
- Event Coordination – across all in-person seminars
 - Ability to coordinate with state, local and regional DMOs (convention & visitors bureaus, chambers of commerce) and other businesses and membership organizations (e.g. retail groups, vintners associations), and work collectively with Brand USA for on-site registration, organization and follow-up survey

Deliverables:

RFP Response Deliverables:

The response should address the skill and knowledge the organization brings to the table:

- **EXPERIENCE:** Company background and statement of experience in connection to the Chinese market as well as the needs outlined in the above Scope of Work. Work experience directly connected with the travel and tourism industry is a plus. Event planning and coordination of seminars with 50 plus attendees
- **WRITTEN MATERIAL:**
 - Case studies and/or prior relevant work (minimum of two examples with demonstrated results)
 - Include tourism-related activities your team is or has engaged in china and/or to reach the Chinese market.
 - Planned accreditation process (if applicable)
 - Project plan including budget and price schedule
- **TEAM:** Staff plan and written bios including external resources that may play a role in the execution



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of the events. To demonstrate the strength of your team please include a minimum of two case studies with demonstrated results for contracts of a similar scope. In addition, please provide any relevant tourism---related activities your team is or has engaged in china and/or to reach the Chinese market

- OTHER: Any relevant information about the company that you would like us to consider in evaluating your response to this RFP.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SPECS

Please submit your response electronically, via email. At your option, you may additionally provide hard copies of the presentation. Should you elect to submit hard copies in addition to submitting your proposal electronically, please provide five copies to be distributed to the RFP review committee. Please limit the response to include examples to be no more than 30 pages in length. If you have example webinar material this is highly encouraged.

Proposal format is open to presentation style and delivery of the proposing team.

BUDGET

Based on the RFP requirements, the must submit a detailed, realistic budget with an estimated execution timeline. Please itemize the budget based on program cost, for example a budget cost for each individual seminars, should be funneled into an overall project budget estimate. Please provide an estimated budget per---seminar as well as a cost break down difference of a half---day and full---day seminar.



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MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must address each item listed in Scope of Work, giving specific details of techniques to be used in achieving each of 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 no later than May 31, 2016, (due by 5:00 pm, EST), and sent by email to rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com.

Costs for developing proposals are entirely the responsibility of the proposer and shall not be reimbursed by Brand USA.

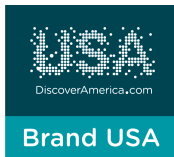
1. **Notice of Intent to Bid (Attachment 1)** must be received by June 11, 2016 (due by 5:00 p.m. EST).

The notice shall be emailed to rfpadmin@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
- b. Services and Activities: 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. Address how you will have the necessary personnel, experience, skill, and financial resources to perform the work in a satisfactory and timely manner.
- c. At least four examples of work that coincide with the requirements.
- d. No Conflict of Interest: Read and complete the Conflict of Interest Form. Client relationships that could potentially be considered a Conflict of Interest must be listed.
- 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 this account.

3. References: Provide at least three references who can assert that you have a satisfactory record of performance.
4. Budget
5. Timeline and/or Project Plan
6. **Certification Form (Attachment 2)** must be signed and accompany all RFP Response submission.



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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	May 12, 2016
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	May 31, 2016
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA Website	June 4, 2016
D. Notice of Intent To Bid Due (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	June 11, 2016
E. Proposal Due (due by 3:00 p.m. EDT)	July 1, 2016
F. Proposal Evaluation by scoring committee	July 11, 2016
G. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	July 12, 2016
H. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	July 18-22, 2016
I. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	July 25, 2015

DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Each bidder is required to deliver a PDF of its proposal to Brand USA's RFP Admin, no later than **July 1, 2016 (3:00 p.m. EDT)**. The PDF should be no more than three separate files. The proposal may not exceed 15 pages double-spaced at 12-point font, not including examples and case studies. Please submit written examples and case studies separately. Six printed copies of the proposal must be delivered **July 1, 2016** to Brand USA, 1725 I St NW, #8, Washington, DC 20006.

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.



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ATTACHMENT1

NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID

Due: June 11, 2016

SEND TO:

Brand USA Headquarters

C/O RFP Administrator

1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800

Washington, D.C. 20006

ATTN: RFP – China Seminar Toolkit

RFP Phone: 202.536.2060

Email:

rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com

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



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ATTACHMENT2

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:

- He/she has read and understands all commitments and terms of this Proposal.
- The information contained in this Proposal is accurate.
- Proposer's quote is valid for at least 120 days from the date of proposal's signature below.
- 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

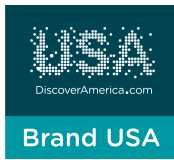
Phone Number

Official Contact Title

Facsimile Number

Email Address

Street, City, State, Zip



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ATTACHMENT3

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
1. Ability to meet specifications: examples of past work and relevant material	40	
2. Demonstrated training experience and staff background	30	
3. Experience working with the China market	20	
5. Cost effectiveness	10	
TOTAL POINTS	100	



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ATTACHMENT4

FOR BRAND USA USE ONLY

ORAL INTERVIEW / DEMONSTRATION CRITERIA

The evaluation committee may, if it deems necessary, select certain proposers for oral interviews and/or demonstrations. Interviews/demonstrations apply only to the top finalist(s), as determined by the evaluation committee. The oral interviews/demonstrations will allow finalists to demonstrate their understanding of the project objectives and to articulate their capability to meet or exceed the requirements of this RFP.

The evaluation committee reserves the option of conducting the oral interviews/demonstrations via teleconference, at the Brand USA office, at the finalist's and/or the proposed subcontractor's site, or other designated site.

The evaluation committee reserves the right to designate one or more members of the committee to perform the oral interviews/ demonstrations, if needed, so that grading of oral interviews/demonstrations may be done by fewer than the entire committee.

If interviews/demonstrations are not required, the maximum number of points is 100. If interviews/demonstrations are deemed necessary, the maximum number of points is 150.

If a finalist cannot meet on the designated interview/demonstration date, the evaluation committee reserves the right to disqualify the finalist as non-responsive.

The following criteria will be used for scoring the oral interview/demonstration:

	MAX.	SCORE
1. TBA with the notification and schedule	50	