



USA

VisitTheUSA.com

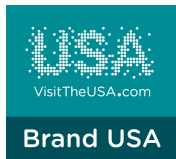
Brand USA



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

CONTENT CREATION

JANUARY 5, 2018



INTRODUCTION

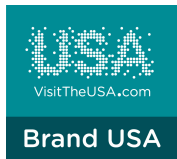
Brand USA is the destination marketing organization for the United States with the mission of increasing incremental international visitation, spend, and market share to fuel the nation's economy and enhance the image of the USA worldwide. Established by the Travel Promotion Act as the nation's first 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?

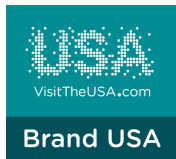
International visitation helps local communities.

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.

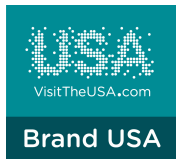
BRAND USA IS BUILDING ON SUCCESS

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.

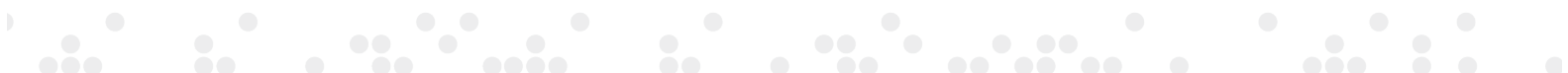
PURPOSE

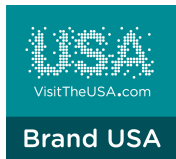
Brand USA is interested in contracting Content Creators to produce video, articles, images, graphics and art that will inspire visitation to the United States.

SCOPE OF WORK

Functional Requirements

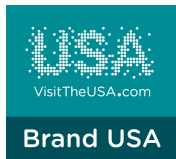
Content Creators may specialize in any single endeavor, or in all of the content creation areas. For example, you may choose to provide Brand USA with video and not articles or images. Or, you may have the capability of producing articles, images, video, graphics and art. Either way, you are welcome to participate in this RFP. Agencies and individuals may participate in responding to this RFP. Single-discipline creators are welcome (you don't have to be both a graphic designer AND a videographer).





The selected vendors will:

- Create high-quality, experiential travel content that aligns with Brand USA's visuals, voice, mission, personas and market preferences.
 - Content must establish a sense of place and be uniquely USA.
 - Content must be compelling to international audiences.
 - Content must be entertaining.
- Manage the entire content creation process from concept - to draft- to revisions - to delivery of final product, across any single-area of focus.
- Create channel-specific content for GoUSA-TV, VisitTheUSA.com, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, WeChat, Sina Weibo, Snapchat and other platforms.
- Craft journalistic-style articles with insider information that's more than research aggregated from web searches. Superior editing skills are a must.
- Produce immersive video that tells an entertaining story.
- Shoot and edit amazing photos that make the viewer want to visit the featured location.
- Create unique art (graphics, infographics and custom art) that has a purpose in motivating travel.
- Secure content creation release forms, model releases and obtain licenses, or permits as needed.
- Collaborate with several Brand USA agencies - in a fast-paced, multi-agency environment.
- Have experience working with content management systems, digital asset management platforms and content marketing software.
- Come from one of these disciplines: Videographers, Video Editors; Photographers, Photo Editors; Graphic Designers; Writers; or Copy Editors. All should be storytellers.



Our Questions (Direct answers are required in your proposal).

- What is your specific specialty? Is it videography, journalism, photography, art/graphics – or the entire spectrum?
- Do you have experience creating international travel content? If so, include links to examples. If not, show comparable experiential content.
- Do you have experience creating episodic video for television, or digital distribution?
- How do you ensure that your content is factually accurate? Describe your verification process.
- Do you create content in languages in addition to English?
- Are you able to provide a response to a brief with pricing within 5 business days? If not, what is your typical timetable?
- What has been the biggest issue you've encountered with content creation and how did you solve it satisfactorily?
- Do you own content that's available for international licensing?

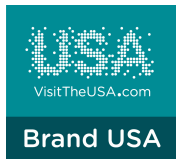
Your Questions

- Questions you have concerning this RFP must be submitted to rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com by the date listed in the schedule. Answers to questions will be published on www.thebrandusa.com. Company names will be removed. We do not accept questions via phone calls and do not conduct interviews, or have conversations prior to selecting finalists.

QUALIFICATIONS

- A minimum of five years of demonstrated experience creating content, distributed via a variety of channels.
- Significant project management experience.
- Superior references from large consumer brands currently utilizing your services.





PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SPECS

Proposal format is open to presentation style and delivery of the proposing team, but it must include the following information:

- State unique selling proposition over competitors.
- Provide background information on your company, including a list of current clients.
- Demonstration of an ability to meet the qualifications and specific answers to the questions presented. (If you choose not to answer the specific questions above, your proposal may be rejected).
- Showcase studies (minimum of two) with demonstrated results relevant to Brand USA (scale, industry, and/or similarity).
- Illustrate how we will interact for execution and optimization. For example, how do you deal with revisions?
- Describe your experience working in a multi-agency, fast-paced and integrated marketing environment.
- Provide three client references.
- Answers to our questions are required.
- Proposal should not exceed 20 pages.

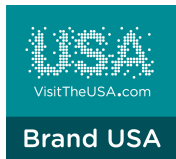
BUDGET

Based on the RFP requirements, the proposer must submit a realistic pricing matrix, or rate card for content creation by type.

NOTES

- Brand USA selects multiple agencies with whom to work on creating content. This work will be on a project basis, so we will not be considering a retainer-based relationship.





TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

A. Proposal Released	January 5, 2018
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	January 10, 2018
C. Written Questions Answered and Posted to Brand USA Website	January 16, 2018
D. Notice of Intent To Bid Due (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	January 24, 2018
E. Proposal Due (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	February 1, 2018
F. Proposal Evaluation by Scoring Committee	February 8, 2018
G. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	February 9, 2018
H. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	February 13 & 14, 2018
I. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	February 16, 2018

DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

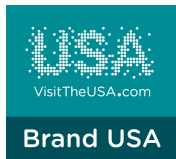
Proposals may be e-mailed to rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com and three (3) printed copies must be delivered by U.S. Mail, Federal Express, UPS, etc. to:

Brand USA Headquarters C/O RFP Administrator 1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800 Washington, D.C. 20006

ATTN: RFP – Content Creation

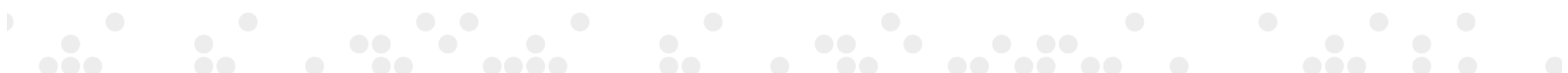
Phone: 202.536.2060

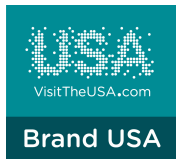
Email: rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com



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: January 24, 2018

SEND TO:

Brand USA Headquarters

C/O RFP Administrator

1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800

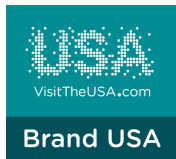
Washington, DC 20006

ATTN: RFP –Content Creation

Phone: 202.536.2060

Email: rftadmin@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

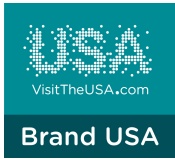
Phone Number

Official Contact Title

Facsimile Number

Email Address

Street, City, State, Zip



ATTACHMENT 3

FOR BRAND USA USE ONLY

Bid/Proposal: _____

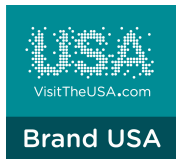
Evaluated By: _____

Date: _____

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

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

	MAX. POINTS	SCORE
Ability to meet stated requirements	60	
Case studies and content examples	20	
Demonstrated management experience	10	
Cost Effectiveness	10	
TOTAL POINTS	100	



ATTACHMENT 4

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. Provider demonstrations will be judged on the same criteria as listed in Attachment 3 “Proposal Evaluation Criteria”.	50	