

**GOVERNMENT OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES**

**Request for Proposal – Negotiation
Professional Services**

To:

Date: August 17, 2015

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RFP No. 024-2015(P)

Pursuant to 31 V.I.C. 239 (a) (4) and Rules and Regulations thereunder issued, the Government of the Virgin Islands, Department of Property and Procurement will receive proposals for the work described below. Proposals will be received until **Thursday, October 1, 2015 @ 4:00 o'clock p.m.**

DESCRIPTION OF WORK AND PROJECT:

The Government of the Virgin Islands, Department of Tourism is requesting proposals from Qualified firm or individual(s) to promote tourism to the United States Virgin Islands in Advertising Agency and/or Media Placement Agency for creative development/production and advertising placement.

SCOPE OF SERVICES: ATTACHED

NEGOTIATED PROCEDURES:

The Commissioner of the Department of Property and Procurement will appoint Selection Committee to assist in the evaluation and selection of the Contractor. Accordingly current data on qualifications and performance should be submitted with proposals. After reviewing the qualifications and proposals the Committee will select for discussions from the firm/s or person/s considered not less than three (3), in order of preference, **deemed to be most highly qualified to provide the services herein required. Discussions** will be conducted successively and severally with the firms or persons so selected the anticipated concepts and the relative utility alternative methods of approach for furnishing the services hereunder.

FACTORS FOR DISCUSSIONS

Selection criteria will include **(i)** Professional qualification, registration and general reputation of the principals of the firm or person; **(ii)** the extent to which the firm or person specializes in or has designed projects of a type and scope similar to the hereunder; **(iii)** familiarity with the area in which the project is to be located; **(iv)** capability of meeting design schedules; and **(v)** quality of performance on other projects.

NEGOTIATION:

The Selection Committee shall recommend to the Commissioner **the highest qualified firm or person with whom a contract shall be negotiated.** The Commissioner, with the assistance of the Selection Committee, shall attempt to negotiate a contract with such firm or person.

Should the Commissioner be unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the firm considered to be the most qualified, at a price he determines to be fair and reasonable to the Government, negotiations with that firm will be formally terminated. Negotiations will then be commenced with the second most qualified, the third most qualified or additional firms, in order to preference and their competence and qualification, and shall continue until an agreement is reached.

Randolph N. Bennett
Commissioner Designee of Property and Procurement

INSTRUCTION TO PROPOSALS

A. NOTICE

RFP-024-2015(P) Qualified firm or individual(s) to promote tourism to the United States Virgin Islands in Advertising Agency and/or Media Placement Agency for creative development/production and advertising placement.

Information provided in the scope of work is to be used only for purposes of preparing a proposal. It is further expected that each bidder will read the scope of work with care, for failure to meet certain specified conditions may invalidate the proposal.

The Government of the Virgin Islands, herein after referred to as GVI, reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any portion thereof and to accept the proposal deemed most advantageous to GVI. Price shall not be the sole criterion of awarding this project. Scope and quality of work proposed and the ability of the bidder to complete this type of project shall also be considered.

Applicants are requested to submit proposals on the basis of the scope of work. Alternative proposals recommending new features and technology other than that requested in the scope of work will receive consideration providing such new features and/or technology is clearly explained. Any exceptions to the requirements requested herein must be clearly noted in writing and be included as part of the proposal.

The information contained herein is believed to be accurate, but is not to be considered in any way as a warranty. Request for additional information clarifying the Scope of Work should be directed in writing to **Deputy Commissioner of Procurement, Ms. Latisha Blyden, at latisha.blyden@dpp.vi.gov**. All requests will be forwarded to **Hon. Beverly Nicholson-Doty, Commissioner of Tourism**.

B. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RFP-024-2015(P) Qualified firm or individual(s) to promote tourism to the United States Virgin Islands in Advertising Agency and/or Media Placement Agency for creative development/production and advertising placement.

C. PROPOSE SCOPE OF WORK

See Attached Scope of Work

D. TIMETABLE

1. Last day for requests or written clarifications will be **Monday, September 14, 2015 @ 4:00 p.m.**
2. Proposals will be accepted at the Department of Property & Procurement, no later than **Thursday, October 1, 2015 @ 4:00 p.m.**

E. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

All interested parties shall submit **seven (7)** sets of proposals, which are to be delivered to the Department of Property and Procurement during normal business hours, no later than **Thursday, October 1, 2015 @ 4:00 p.m.**

They shall be addressed to:

Randolph N. Bennett
Commissioner Designee
Department of Property & Procurement
Building #1 Subbase, 3rd Floor
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

The sealed envelope containing the proposal must have the following information written on the outside of the envelope:

SEALED PROPOSALS-DO NOT OPEN

RFP-024-2015(P)

(Name of Bidder)

(Mailing Address of Bidder)

(Telephone Number of Bidder)

(Fax Number of Bidder)

Where proposals are sent by mail, the bidder shall be responsible for their delivery to Property & Procurement before the date and time set for the closing of acceptance of proposals.

F. WITHDRAWALS OF PROPOSAL

A proposal may be withdrawn at any time prior to the time specified as the closing time for acceptance of proposals. However, no proposal shall be withdrawn or canceled for a period of thirty (30) days after said closing time for acceptance of proposals nor shall the successful provider withdraw or cancel or modify his proposal, except at the request of GVI after having been notified that said proposal has been accepted by GVI.

G. INTERPRETATION OF SPECIFICATIONS

If any person contemplating submitting a proposal requires clarification of any part of the scope of work, he/she may submit to the GVI a written request for an interpretation thereof to the **Commissioner Designee of Property and Procurement Randolph N. Bennett**. GVI will not respond to questions received after the above established date. The person submitting the request will be responsible for its prompt delivery. Any interpretation of the scope of work will be made in writing to all prospective providers. Oral explanations will not be binding.

H. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL

The Commissioner of Property and Procurement shall represent and act for GVI in all matters pertaining to the scope of work and contract in conjunction therewith. **This RFP does not commit GVI to the award of a contract, nor pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. GVI reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to disregard any informality and/or irregularity in the proposal when, in its opinion, the best interest of GVI will be served by such action.** Proposals failing to provide some of the items in the scope of work shall not be rejected per se but any deviations from the scope must be clearly noted.

I. ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS

GVI will notify in writing acceptance of one of the proposals. Failure to provide any supplementary documentation to comply with the vendor's proposal may be grounds for disqualification.

J. CONTENTS OF PROPOSAL

The following is a list of information to be included in the written proposal. Failure to comply with all the requirements as outlined, will disqualify the applicant.

1. Introductory letter about the applicant:
 - a. Name, address, fax and telephone numbers.
 - b. Type of service for which individual/firm is qualified.
2. Organization:
 - a. Names/addresses of Principals of Firm.
 - b. Names of key personnel with experience of each and length of time in organization.
 - c. Number of staff available for assignment. (Local & Off-Territory)
 - d. Copy of Articles of Incorporation
 - e. Copy of Certificate of Resolution
 - f. Copy of valid Business License
3. Outside consultants that will be retained for this project and percentage of work to be sub-contracted.
4. Project experience:
 - a. List of completed projects and estimated cost of each.
 - b. Current projects underway; scope; percentage completed to date and estimated cost of each.
5. Project References: (including a notarized written consent from the authorized representative which must include: name; telephone number; email address and facsimile number).
6. Project Approach:
 - a. Describe how you will approach this project and availability to perform the services requested.
7. Cost: The Cost Proposal must be submitted in a separate sealed envelope.

K. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A proposer filing a proposal hereby certifies that no officer, agent or employee of GVI has a pecuniary interest in this proposal or has participated in contract negotiations on behalf of GVI; that the proposal is made in good faith without fraud, collusion, or connection of any kind with any other Bidder for the same request for proposals; the Bidder is competing solely in its own behalf without connection with, or obligation to, any undisclosed person or firm.

L. LICENSE REQUIREMENT

An award will not be made to any firm or individual doing business in the Virgin Islands to perform work with the Government of the Virgin Islands until evidence is submitted that the said firm or individual has a valid V.I. Business License to do business in the Virgin Islands. Bidders must submit hard copy of a valid V.I. business license within ten (10) working days after award.

All Bidders bidding as Joint Ventures must be licensed as a Joint Venture in the Virgin Islands.

M. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

1. **PUBLIC LIABILITY:** The successful bidder will be required to obtain and have in place public liability insurance and other insurance necessary as requested in this proposal package. Insurance policy(ies) shall name the Government of the Virgin Islands as "**Additional Insured**". The public liability insurance shall have a minimum limit of not less than **one hundred thousand (\$100,000.00) dollars** for anyone occurrence for death or personal injury and **one hundred thousand (\$100,000.00) dollars** for anyone occurrence for property damage. **Bidder must provide public liability insurance within ten (10) working days after award.**
2. **WORKERS' COMPENSATION:** Within ten (10) working days after award of project the successful bidder must submit a copy of their certificate providing that his firm and his agents are covered by Workers' Compensation Employee's Liability.
3. **FAILURE TO PROVIDE THE CERTIFICATES WITHIN THE STATED TIME PERIOD MAY RESULT IN THE PROPOSAL DEEMED NON-RESPONSIVE AND MAY BE IMMEDIATELY DISQUALIFIED WITH NO FURTHER CONSIDERATION GIVEN FOR POTENTIAL AWARDING OF THE CONTRACT.**

N. REQUIREMENTS FOR CORPORATIONS:

1. ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
2. CERTIFICATE OF CORPORATE RESOLUTION
3. CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING

THESE WILL BE REQUIRED PRIOR TO AWARD OF CONTRACT.

INTRODUCTION TO PROPOSAL

A. NOTICE

This project is for an Advertising Agency and/ or a media placement agency for creative development/production and advertising placement to promote tourism to the United States Virgin Islands through the Department of Tourism. Separate agencies may be selected for creative and media placement.

Information provided in the scope of work is to be used only for the purposes of preparing a proposal. It is further expected that each bidder will read the scope of work with care, for failure to meet specified conditions or incomplete responses may invalidate the proposal.

The Government of the Virgin Islands herein after referred to as GVI, reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or any portion thereof and to accept the proposal deemed most advantageous to GVI. Price shall not be the sole criterion of awarding this project. Scope and quality of work proposed and the ability of the bidder to complete this type of project is of significant importance to the consideration process.

A company may choose to bid on both the creative development/production and the media placement. The Government of the Virgin Islands reserves the right to select one or more vendors for one or both services.

Applicants are required to submit proposals based on the scope of work to the Department of Property and Procurement. Alternative proposals recommending new features and technology other than that requested in the scope of work will receive consideration provided new features and/or technology are clearly explained and the scope of work outlined has been covered in the proposal. In order for your bid to be considered the bid specifications must be fully and correctly completed. Any exceptions to the requirements requested herein must be clearly noted in writing and be included as part of the proposal.

Where applicable and warranted the GVI reserves the right to approve an agencies bid for individual requirements separate and apart from any contract resulting from this bid if deemed to be in the best interest of the territory.

The information contained herein is believed to be accurate, but is not to be considered in any way as a warranty. Request for additional information clarifying the Scope of Work must be directed in writing to the Commissioner of Property and Procurement Randolph Bennett, randolph.bennett@dpp.vi.gov, all requests will be forwarded to Tourism Commissioner Beverly Nicholson Doty for review by September 14, 2015 and answers to all questions will be consolidated into one document and a written response will be provided to all entities who have secured a copy of the RFP by September 21, 2015. Neither the Department of Property and Procurement or the Department of Tourism will respond to questions verbally or individually.

B. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This project has been addressed to assist the Department in their efforts to promote the U.S. Virgin Islands as a tourism destination.

C. OVERVIEW

The USVI Department of Tourism is inviting proposals from advertising and/or media placement companies with travel, tourism, economic development or destination account experience to provide creative development (to include print, digital, broadcast and website) and media placement services for the development, implementation and management of the destination's advertising initiatives. The successful agency will work with the USVI Department of Tourism to develop and execute an annual creative and media placement strategy to drive awareness of, and travel to, the US Virgin Islands which can be measured.

The selected agency will:

- Position the USVI primarily in the US market and other markets as directed as the premier warm-weather tourism destination
- Provide separate campaigns concepts for the destination (the umbrella campaign including St. Croix, St John and St. Thomas) and for St. Croix solely. To include building on the current umbrella campaign "Virgin Islands Nice".
- Enhance the destination's brand equity; our specific objective is to increase overnight/cruise visitors by 5% to STT/STJ and to increase by 10% overnight visitors and 25% in cruise visitors in a period of one year.
- Integrate the creative and media placement strategy into the Department's annual Marketing Plan. Integrate creative concepts for the Department's Five-Year Rolling Tourism Development Plan;
- Provide a range of creative and media placement services listed in the Scope of Work below, ranging from media relations to crisis communication.
- Coordinate efforts with the Department's Social Media, Public Relations & Sales teams for a cohesive marketing strategy.

D. SCOPE OF WORK

Brand Positioning

- Briefings meetings between USVI and the Agency- to be held at a minimum bi-monthly
- Strategic planning for on-going integrated advertising campaign
- Implement of the annual marketing plans, positioning USVI and the unique role each island plays, with separate creative and brand strategy for St Croix.
- Monitor effectiveness of campaigns, and adjust as feedback warrants
- Ensures all tactics can be measured and develops the matrix with the DOT to ensure key

performance indicators are met.

- Detailed project plan with regular status calls not less than once per month.
- Quarterly in person meetings either at the clients office or in the territory

Partnership & Cooperative Programs

- Act as brand steward in the coordination and execution of Brand Image with other USVI marketing partners (i.e. PR agencies, etc.) to ensure “one Brand voice.”
- Investigate, develop and coordinate appropriate partnership/co-marketing strategies and programs (i.e.: airlines, credit card companies or other complimentary partners, etc.)
- Provide recommendations for annual Special Events that enhance the image of the USVI

Creative Development

- Creative briefs for marketing communications – consumers and trade (travel agents, cruise agents, meeting planners)
- Creative development and production of television spots, radio spots, magazine ads (tailoring each to specific publications), newspaper ads, trade ads, outdoor, Internet, banners, etc.
- Prepare between 12-15 presentations annually for the DOT and/or the Ports of the Virgin Islands or the Office of the Governor as it pertains to Tourism marketing & development.
- Prepare creative for budget hearing and annual reports.

Relationship Marketing

- Development of a CRM program
- Model development to test effectiveness
- Strategy & Planning for campaign execution
- Templates development and programming of emails
- Measurement

Brochures & Collateral

- Design, writing and revision of brochures/collateral materials, updating information and evolving campaign for dive, marine, cultural & heritage, romance, visitors guide and small hotels brochures
- Produce print-ready materials to include flyers, rack cards, posters, signage etc.
- Bid and oversee printing of materials
- Cost does not include printing or shipping costs

Advertising

- Creative briefs for marketing communications – consumers and trade (travel agents, cruise agents, meeting planners)
- Creative development and production of television spots, radio spots, magazine ads (tailoring each to specific publications), newspaper ads, trade ads, outdoor, Internet, banners, etc.

Website

- Website maintenance on visitUSVI.com in Spanish, English and Danish to be added French, Chinese and Brazilian Portuguese
- Mobile site maintenance for m.visitUSVI.com, currently only available in English
- SEO
- Website updates and or changes to include incorporating a new booking engine or site navigation changes.

E. TIMETABLE

1. Bid release and available to vendors Tuesday, September 1, 2015
2. Last day for written clarification requests will be Monday, September 14, 2015.
3. Proposals will be accepted at the Department of Property & Procurement no later than 4:00 pm on Thursday, October 1, 2015
4. An invitation for oral presentation will be scheduled as required by Wednesday October 28, 2015 to respondents who have met successfully the first stage of the review process.
5. Oral presentations will be schedule before November 30, 2015.
6. Notice of award will occur by Wednesday, December 30, 2015.

F. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

All interested parties shall submit seven (7) sets of proposals, which are to be delivered to the Department of Property and Procurement during normal business hours, no later than 4:00 pm, Thursday, October 1, 2015.

They shall be addressed to:

Honorable Randolph Bennett
Commissioner
Department of Property & Procurement
Subbase, Building #1, 3rd Floor
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

The sealed envelope containing the proposal must have the following information written on the outside of the envelope:

SEALED PROPOSALS-DO NOT OPEN

RFP #
(NAME OF BIDDER)

MAILING ADDRESS OF BIDDER)
(TELEPHONE NUMBER OF BIDDER)
EMAIL & FAX NUMBER OF BIDDER)

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G. WITHDRAWALS OF PROPOSALS

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H. INTERPRETATION OF SPECIFICATIONS

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I. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL

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J. ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS

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K. QUALIFICATION STATEMENT

The advertising/media placement agency is expected to have an established, incorporated business, qualified staff and a sound knowledge of the Caribbean and the travel and tourism industry.

The agency should have at least five years' experience specifically in the travel tourism industry and a thorough knowledge of traditional and new media.

The agency should not currently be representing a competitor of the US Virgin Islands.

L. RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

- Agency name and primary office address
- A history of your agency including specific travel and tourism and on-location film experience
- Overview of relevant or similar engagements, detailing key factors of those engagements that would be pertinent to this engagement and would exemplify particular skills and experience
- Proposed client service team to include the biographies of staff who provide full time service to the USVI account
- A list of references including former clients, specifically interested in clients who have been had a minimum of two year relationship with the business establishment.
- Number of years in business, including under other names
- Identify other tourism/travel accounts represented by your agency.
- Identify who among your key personnel has firsthand knowledge of the USVI and/or the Caribbean.
- Does your agency have any accounts that could be viewed as a conflict of interest with the USVI?
- Outline the percentage of overall agency time which would be committed to the USVI account.
- Identify the individuals that will be dedicated to the USVI account outlining their experience in the advertising and tourism space.
- Provide a list of media and professional organizations of which your agency is a member.
- Provide a full listing of services offered by your agency.
- Provide your top ten accounts listed in order of the range of billings from high to low.
- Describe your agency's approach (philosophy).
- Describe your company's approach to crisis communication. Is there a dedicated crisis communications expert on your team?
- Outline your agency's strengths in diversity marketing: African American, Hispanic American and Chinese American in particular and other emerging markets
- Please provide samples of your agency's expertise in web & digital marketing and social media.
- Please provide samples of your agency's expertise in customer relationship marketing.

- Please share examples of how your agency measures advertising along with return on investment.
- Provide two examples of your expertise in non-traditional marketing successful marketing programs executed by your agency.
- Does your agency have specific knowledge of the film industry as it relates to film tourism? Provide examples of advertising executions in this space
- Provide samples of your agencies work in the Tourism Space and the Caribbean region.

M. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

- It is the respondent's responsibility to provide a complete response to the RFP. If more information is required, questions should be directed to the Department of Property and Procurement, who will then submit the information to the Department of Tourism Marketing Team.
- Please provide a sample case history or advertising plan that would convince the review team that your agency has an understanding of the destination current brand positioning.
- Statement of agency's strengths and weaknesses
A cost quote must be submitted separately with the proposal and should include a detailed explanation of the firm's billing procedures to include billing and fee rates along with a detailed budget.

N. PRESENTATIONS

- During review of the proposals, successful agencies of the first review stage will be invited to the USVI Department of Property & Procurement headquarters in St. Thomas, USVI to present the agency's capabilities and communications approach to a selection committee as part of the selection process.

O. COMPANY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

- Provide a brief outline of your financial viability going forward
- Is your company profitable? If so, for how many years?
- If you are a public company, provide audited financial statements for the past three years. Include annual reports.
- Do you have sufficient cash reserves to fund operations for the next financial year?
- Are there any attempts to acquire your company?
- Are you participating in any joint ventures?

P. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A bidder filing a proposal hereby certifies that no officer, agent or employee of GVI has a pecuniary interest in this proposal or has participated in contract negotiations on behalf of GVI; that the proposal is made in good faith without fraud, collusion, or connection of any kind with any other Bidder for the same request for proposals; the Bidder is competing solely in its own behalf without connection with, or obligation to, any undisclosed person or firm.

Q. LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

An award will not be made to any firm or individual doing business in the Virgin Islands to perform work with the Government of the Virgin Islands until evidence is submitted that the said firm or individual has a valid V.I. Business License to do business in the Virgin Islands. Bidders must submit hard copy of valid V.I. Business license within ten (10) working days after award and will be subject to applicable taxes.

All Bidders bidding as Joint Ventures must be licensed as Joint Venture in the Virgin Islands.

R. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

1. **PUBLIC LIABILITY:** The successful bidder will be required to obtain and have in place public liability insurance and other insurance necessary as requested in this proposal package. Insurance Policy(ies) shall name the Government of the Virgin Islands as "Additional Insured" and place the GVI in the policy description. The policy must also be endorsed by the insurance provider. The public liability insurance shall have a minimum limit of not less than one hundred thousand (\$100,000.00) dollars for any one occurrence for death or personal injury and one hundred thousand (\$100,000/00) for any one occurrence for property damage. Bidder must provide public liability insurance within ten (10) working days after award.
2. **PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY:** The successful bidder will be required to obtain and have in place professional liability insurance in addition to any other insurance requested in this proposal package. Insurance Policy(ies) shall name the Government of the Virgin Islands as an "Additional Insured" and place the GVI in the policy description. The Professional liability insurance coverage shall be no less than two million dollars and no cents (\$2,000,00.00).
3. **WORKERS' COMPENSATION:** Within ten (10) working days after award of project the successful bidder must submit a copy of their certificate providing that his firm and his agents are covered by Workers' Compensation Employee's Liability.

S. PROPOSALS MUST DEMONSTRATE

- Expertise in and understanding of the United States Virgin Islands
- Ability to meet our goals and objectives
- Agency and account team qualifications and experience
- USVI business license or intent to attain