



# Request for Proposals

## Public Relations for Tourism Department

The Town of Provincetown, an Equal Opportunity Employer, is hereby requesting proposals from qualified consulting firms for comprehensive public relations services for the Provincetown, Massachusetts Tourism Office through June 30, 2013, and may be additionally considered for renewal in subsequent fiscal years, beginning July 1, 2013 and beyond based upon satisfactory performance, as determined by the Director of Tourism, subject to recommendation by the Visitor Services Board, approval by the Board of Selectmen and funding approval at Annual Town Meeting.

Funding for this project is through the Provincetown Tourism Fund and is subject to all municipal regulations. The consultant must provide a comprehensive public relations plan to promote Provincetown as a year-round travel destination to domestic and international markets in support of the comprehensive marketing plan developed by the Tourism Office and Visitor Services Board. The Consultant will work under the direction of the Tourism Office with an annual marketing budget of approximately \$320,000. The budget for the Public Relations firm is up to \$40,000 per annum, including out of pocket expenses, and is to be negotiated. The proposal should include rates for different types of work.

**Sealed and labeled proposals are due NO LATER THAN 4:00 PM on Thursday, June 7, 2012**, at the Town Manager's Office, 260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA 02657, (508) 487-7000. Ten (10) copies of the proposal should be submitted and should include any additional information that will support the proposal. For more information, please contact Director of Tourism Bob Sanborn at (508) 487-3298.

The Town of Provincetown reserves the right to reject any or all proposals that are not in the best interest of the Town.

### **BACKGROUND:**

**Article 5 of the April 7, 1997 Special Town Meeting** established a Visitor Services Board, to be appointed by the Board of Selectmen, to develop, coordinate and implement a long-term comprehensive plan to enhance tourism year-round and for the purpose of overseeing expenditures of the Tourism Fund, under the direction of the Board of Selectman.

### Mission Statement:

The mission of the Visitor Services Board and the Provincetown Tourism Office is to market, beautify and enhance tourism in Provincetown. The goals we set to achieve this mission are:

- Develop a marketing and media plan and update a Five Year Plan to promote, market and beautify Provincetown.
- Continue to prioritize marketing Provincetown to international and key domestic markets. Also, prioritize marketing the town as a wedding and honeymoon destination, an LGBTQ destination, and an arts and pet-friendly destination, and expand upon eco-tourism marketing efforts. We also have recently begun to promote Provincetown as a bike-friendly destination.
- Continue to publicize and promote Provincetown via the internet by maximizing the Tourism Office's new website and expanding social networking efforts, and also by leveraging efforts of the Public Relations Firm and travel writers.
- Continue efforts to market and promote Provincetown by approving Tourism Grants, with primary focus on events outside of the peak season of July and August. Also, help to ensure the success of established events with continued grant funding.

## I. SERVICE SCOPE

**Objective:** The general scope of services to be obtained includes professional promotional services with the primary purpose of promoting Provincetown, Massachusetts as a visitor destination. Consultants are requested to submit proposals to perform the following services:

- Become familiar with the Provincetown tourism industry, including advertising, research, and resources. Attend annual meetings with the Provincetown Tourism Office and Visitor Services Board to discuss advertising and marketing campaign, budget, other opportunities and media issues.
- Update press kits.
- Identify target audiences, travel writers, and publications to attract qualified travel writers to Provincetown.
- Organize travel writer familiarization trips to promote Provincetown which will result in published articles.
- Provide at least two separate pitches per month to targeted media working closely with the Tourism Department. Media lists may be cooperatively crafted with the Tourism Department while the firm will hone the pitches and finalize the proposed media list.
- Collaborate with the Tourism Department on press releases and proactively solicit coverage with media to ensure maximum exposure.
- Advocate tourism on behalf of Provincetown to encourage positive articles in bona fide publications.
- Coordinate media inquiries and press events
- Creativity: There is no substitute for having the right people, chemistry, and working environment lined up. The fit and the creative expression of uniqueness must be held together by compatible business and marketing philosophies from both the firm and the Town in order for excellence in marketing programs to be developed to the fullest.

- The consultant should have previous experience working with a municipality or non-profit organization, having produced a promotional campaign for at least two years, and have a portfolio to support this work.

## **II. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Public relations/Marketing firms will be evaluated on the ability to meet or exceed the requirements set forth in the specifications. Proposals will be evaluated on various criteria, including but not limited to:

- A. **EXPERIENCE AND QUALITY OF LIKE WORK:** Proposals should demonstrate related experience in providing public relations and marketing services for municipal or non-profit entities. Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of Provincetown's primary mission, targeted markets, and available budget.
- B. **STAFF:** Consultant's proposed project organization and staffing shall exhibit experience and qualifications in providing desired services. Proposal should describe agency, when established, number of staff, and in-house capabilities.
- C. **PUBLIC SECTOR KNOWLEDGE:** Proposals shall indicate the firm's and staff's knowledge and experience with Massachusetts public laws and procedures.
- D. **SCHEDULE:** The consultant's proposed time-line should conform with need for services through June 2009. Past experience with adhering to proposed schedules shall be demonstrated.
- E. **APPROACH:** Proposals shall include a description of consultant's proposed approach for this project.
- F. **CAPACITY:** The proposal shall demonstrate the firm's ability to undertake this project in a timely manner with respect to other on-going projects.

The geographic headquarters of the firm, qualified references from the industry and pricing may be considered during the selection process. Firms submitting proposals are reminded that the Visitor Services Board [VSB] is funded with public funds and is a municipal entity and must meet the expectations of both the Town's leaders and its citizen taxpayers. As such the VSB must consider any and all expenses associated with the conduct of business.

## **III. CONTEXT OF PROPOSAL**

Ten copies of a proposal should be submitted and should include the following elements along with any additional relevant information:

- ❖ Firm's philosophy of doing business with the Town of Provincetown's Tourism Office and Visitor Services Board.

- ❖ Specific examples of story pitches and results that demonstrate experience in the industry, and examples of handling media inquiries.
- ❖ Knowledge and expertise in the gay/lesbian, art/culture, eco-tourism, spas, and general tourism industries.
- ❖ List of clients the agency has served in any of the following industries: travel, municipal, entertainment, and hospitality sectors including list of current projects which may be perceived as a conflict of interest to the Provincetown Visitor Services Board.
- ❖ Information regarding charges for which reimbursement will be requested along with rates such as: photocopies, delivery charges, telephone expenses, postage, etc.
- ❖ List of references including name, addresses, telephone numbers and contact person of at least five (5) clients for whom similar services have been performed.

Please indicate hourly pricing for services.

Proposals will be reviewed by members of the Town of Provincetown Visitor Services Board [VSB] and Town staff. Proponents will be required to make a presentation to the VSB at their own expense. The Town will attempt to negotiate a contract with the most highly qualified responder. If not successful, they will proceed to the second most desirable vendor.

Posted: [www.provincetown-ma.gov](http://www.provincetown-ma.gov) 5/15/12 9:40 am dj