

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

**Request for Proposal – Negotiation
Professional Services**

To:

Date: January 5, 2016

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RFP No. 007-2016 (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 **Friday, February 12, 2016 @ 4:00 o'clock p.m.**

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 of Property and Procurement

INSTRUCTION TO PROPOSALS

A. NOTICE

RFP-007-2016 (P) Qualified Public Relations Agency to Promote Tourism in the United States Virgin Islands

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 be to consider 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 request will be forwarded to **Honorable Beverly Nicholson-Doty, Commissioner, Department of Tourism**.

B. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RFP-007-2016 (P) Qualified Public Relations Agency to Promote Tourism in the United States Virgin Islands

C. PROPOSE SCOPE OF WORK

See Attached Scope of Work

D. TIMETABLE

1. Last day for requests for written clarification will be
Friday, January 29, 2016 @ 4:00 p.m.
2. Proposals will be accepted at Department of Property & Procurement, no later than **Friday, February 12, 2016 @ 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 **Friday, February 12, 2016 @ 4:00 p. m.**

They shall be addressed to:

Randolph N. Bennett
Commissioner
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:

<p>SEALED PROPOSALS-DO NOT OPEN</p> <p>RFP-007-2016 (P) (Name of Bidder) (Mailing Address of Bidder) (Telephone Number of Bidder) (Fax Number of Bidder)</p>

Where proposals are sent by mail, the bidder shall be responsible for their delivery to DOT 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 of Department 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 CERTIFICATED 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 AWARDED OF THE CONTRACT.**

N. REQUIREMENTS FOR CORPORATION

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 a Public Relations Agency to promote tourism to the United States Virgin Islands for the Department of Tourism.

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 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 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 the Commissioner of Property and Procurement Randolph Bennett, randolph.bennett@dpp.vi.gov.

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 public relations companies with travel, tourism, economic development and Caribbean destination account experience to provide PR services for the design, implementation and management of the destination's national PR initiatives. The successful agency will work with the USVI Department of Tourism to develop and execute an annual PR plan to drive awareness of, and travel to, the US Virgin Islands.

The selected public relations agency will:

- Position the USVI in the US market as the premier warm-weather tourism destination
- Enhance the destination's brand identity;
- Integrate the PR plan with the Department's annual Marketing Plan;
- Provide a range of public relations services listed in the Scope of Work below, ranging from media relations to crisis communication.
- Develop a proficient social media PR planning

D. SCOPE OF WORK

The Scope of Work would include but is not limited to the following:

- National Media Relations- to include print, online and broadcast placement
- Travel trade media relations to include travel agents, tour operators, OTA's airline and cruise lines
- Digital & Social Media PR Management
- Coordination of media desktide and event presentations
- Press release development and distribution
- Coordination of strategic partnerships, events and promotions
- Press hospitality (development, planning and hosting press trips)
- Travel industry partner relationship
- Film industry development, communications & marketing
- News Bureau press requests
- Quarterly e-newsletter development to include publishing and dissemination
- Coordination of Bi-Annual Industry Presentations to the local community
- On-island & national crisis management
- Crisis media monitoring of all media outlets including online, broadcast, social and print
- General media monitoring to include print, broadcast, internet and social media
- Coordination & execution of major tradeshow and in-market events
- Development and maintenance of the media press kit & website press room
- Photography and videography services for B-roll for public relations use
- Coordination of national & local media coverage to include interviews and appearances
- Media training for key spokespersons
- Identify public relations opportunities promoting the USVI
- Development of the annual PR Plan
- Recommending messaging as required
- General Communications - to include development of presentations, reports, advertorials and social media posts
- Provide market research and travel industry trend information
- Clipping service

- The Agency will establish and maintain relations with the Advertising Agency to coordinate a unified message as it relates to the promotion of the USVI.
- In territory PR coordinator
- Coordinate national sponsorship of organizations and events, that provide visibility and exposure to key markets for the territory
- Provide sales & marketing support for the Leisure, Corporate and Meeting & Incentive markets
- Coordinate the marketing strategy for the USVI Ambassador program to include special events and educational programs
- Development of a multicultural, emerging, and Caribbean specific public relations strategy

E. TIMETABLE

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F. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

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J. ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS

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K. QUALIFICATION STATEMENT

The public relations 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 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
- 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.
- 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 marketing and social media.
- Please provide samples of your agency's expertise in customer relationship marketing.
- Please share examples of how your agency measures public relations return on investment.
- Provide two examples of your expertise in non-traditional public relations programs.
- Does your agency have specific knowledge of the film industry as it relates to film tourism?
- Does your agency have pre-existing relationships with print, TV, online media outlets/journalists

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 public relations plan that would convince the review team that your agency has an understanding of the destination brand positioning "You, unscripted" to include recommended key messages, primary program elements and evaluation criteria.
- 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 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.
4. **CURRENT BUSINESS LICENSE AND CERTIFICATE OF GOOD STANDING:** Each agency must submit a Current Business License and Certificate of Good Standing in their written proposal.

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