

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
South Dakota Department of Tourism
711 East Wells Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501-3385

**South Dakota Department of Tourism Request for Proposals for
Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations Services**

PROPOSALS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN February 28, 2022, 5:00 PM CST

RFP#: 2475

Buyer/Point of Contact: James D. Hagen, South Dakota Department of Tourism
Email: James.Hagen@TravelSouthDakota.com

READ CAREFULLY

FIRM NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____

ZIP CODE (9 DIGIT): _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____

TYPE OR PRINT NAME: _____

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION

CONTACT NAME: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

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RFP NUMBER: #2475

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1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 PURPOSE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The South Dakota Department of Tourism is seeking the professional services of a marketing agency, or marketing agencies, with or without experience in tourism marketing, to work as collaborative partners in the development, implementation, and evaluation of a comprehensive marketing program to promote South Dakota as a travel destination in regional, national, and international markets. This RFP is to identify the most qualified agency/agencies to carry out all aspects of the South Dakota Department of Tourism's advertising and marketing objectives.

1.2 ISSUING OFFICE AND RFP REFERENCE NUMBER

The South Dakota Department of Tourism is the issuing office on behalf of the State of South Dakota for this document and all subsequent addenda relating to it. The reference number for this RFP is **#2475**. The number must be referred to on all proposals, correspondence, and documentation relating to the RFP.

1.3 SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE STATE'S DISCRETION):

RFP publication	January 10, 2022
Deadline submission for written inquiries	January 31, 2022 (5:00 p.m. CT)
Responses to questions	February 07, 2022
Proposal submission deadline	February 28, 2022 (5:00 p.m. CT)
Review and scoring	March 07, 2022
Invitation to oral presentations notification	March 09, 2022
Oral presentations	April 04, 2022
Proposal revisions (if required)	April 11, 2022
Anticipated award notification	April 12, 2022
Contract negotiations (if required)	April 13, 2022

1.4 SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL

All proposals must be completed and received by the South Dakota Department of Tourism on or before **February 28, 2022, 5:00 p.m. CST.**

Proposals received after the deadline will be ineligible for consideration.

ONE (1) original and TEN (10) identical hard copies of the proposal must be submitted and received by the South Dakota Department of Tourism by 5:00 p.m. (CT) on Friday, February 28, 2022.

All proposals must be signed, in ink, by an officer of the responder who is legally authorized to bind the responder to the proposal and sealed in the form intended by the respondent. Proposals that are not properly signed may be rejected. The sealed envelope must be marked with the appropriate RFP Number and Title.

Proposals must be addressed and labeled as follows:

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: #2475
James D. Hagen, Secretary
SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
711 EAST WELLS AVENUE
PIERRE, SD 57501-3385**

No proposal shall be accepted from, or no contract or purchase shall be awarded to any person, firm or corporation that is in arrears upon any obligations to the State of South Dakota, or that otherwise may be deemed irresponsible or unreliable by the State of South Dakota.

1.5 CERTIFICATION REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION – LOWER TIER COVERED TRANSACTIONS

By signing and submitting this proposal, the offeror certifies that neither it nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation, by any Federal department or agency, from transactions involving the use of Federal funds. Where the offeror is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, the bidder shall attach an explanation to their offer.

1.6 NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The State of South Dakota requires all contractors, vendors, and suppliers doing business with any state agency, department, or institution, provide a statement of non-discrimination. By signing and submitting their proposal, the offeror certifies they do not discriminate in their employment practices regarding race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, ancestry, national origin, or disability.

1.7 RESTRICTION OF BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL

For contractors, vendors, suppliers, or subcontractors with five (5) or more employees who enter into a contract with the State of South Dakota that involves the expenditure of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) or more, by submitting a response to this solicitation or agreeing to contract with the State, the bidder or offeror certifies and agrees that the following information is correct:

The bidder or offeror, in preparing its response or offer or in considering proposals submitted from qualified, potential vendors, suppliers, and subcontractors, or in the solicitation, selection, or commercial treatment of any vendor, supplier, or subcontractor, has not refused to transact business activities, has not terminated business activities, and has not taken other similar actions intended to limit its commercial relations, related to the subject matter of the bid or offer, with a person or entity on the basis of Israeli national origin, or residence or incorporation in Israel or its territories, with the specific intent to accomplish a boycott or divestment of Israel in a discriminatory manner. It is understood and agreed that, if this certification is false, such false certification will constitute grounds for the State to reject the bid or response submitted by the bidder or offeror on this project and terminate any contract awarded based on the bid or response. The successful bidder or offeror further agrees to provide immediate written notice to the contracting executive branch agency if during the term of the contract it no longer complies with this certification and agrees such noncompliance may be grounds for contract termination.

1.8 MODIFICATION OR WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS

Proposals may be modified or withdrawn by the offeror prior to the established due date and time.

No oral, telephonic, or electronic responses or modifications to informal bids, formal bids or Request for Proposals will be considered.

1.9 OFFEROR INQUIRIES

Offerors may submit questions/inquiries concerning this RFP to obtain clarification of requirements. No inquiries will be accepted after date and time indicated in the Schedule of Activities (**Monday, January 31, 2022, 5:00 p.m. CST**). Questions must be emailed to South Dakota Secretary of Tourism James D. Hagen at James.Hagen@TravelSouthDakota.com with the subject line "**Questions about RFP #2475**".

The South Dakota Department of Tourism will respond to offeror's questions/inquiries (if required) via email. In addition, all questions/inquiries and the State's responses will be posted on the state's procurement system. Offerors may not rely upon any other statements, either of a written or oral nature, that

alter specifications, terms, or conditions of this RFP. Offerors will be notified in the same manner as indicated above regarding any modifications to this RFP.

1.10 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

The proposal of the successful offeror becomes public information. Proprietary information can be protected under limited circumstances such as client lists and non-public financial statements. Pricing and service elements are not considered proprietary. An entire proposal may not be marked as proprietary. Offerors must clearly identify in the Executive Summary, and mark in the body of their proposal, any specific proprietary information they are requesting be protected. The Executive Summary must contain specific justification explaining why the information is to be protected. Proposals may be reviewed and evaluated by any person at the discretion of the State. All material submitted becomes the property of the State of South Dakota and may be returned only at the State's discretion.

1.11 LENGTH OF CONTRACT

The anticipated length of the contract is **THREE (3) years**. The contract will commence on **July 01, 2022, and end on June 30, 2025**, with customary provisions for early termination based upon performance. At the South Dakota Department of Tourism's discretion, the contract may be extended beyond the original contract period on a year-to-year basis for up to **TWO (2)** additional years for a total period not to exceed **FIVE (5)** years. Contract extensions will be mutually agreed upon and are based on need or agency performance.

1.12 GOVERNING LAW

Venue for any and all legal action regarding or arising out of the transaction covered herein shall be solely in the State of South Dakota. The laws of South Dakota shall govern this transaction.

1.13 ORAL PRESENTATION/NEGOTIATION/ DISCUSSION WITH OFFEROR

After completing a thorough review of all proposals, an oral presentation by an offeror to clarify a proposal may be required at the sole discretion of the State. However, the State may award a contract based upon the initial proposals received without discussion with the offeror. If oral presentations are required, they will be scheduled after the submission and review of proposals. Any costs associated with oral presentations will solely be incurred by the offeror.

This process is a Request for Proposal/ Competitive Negotiation process. Each proposal shall be evaluated, and each respondent shall be available for negotiation meetings at the State's request. The State reserves the right to negotiate on any and/or all components of every proposal submitted. From the

time the proposals are submitted, until the formal award of a contract, each proposal is considered a working document and, as such, will be kept confidential until such time as the award is completed.

2.0 STANDARD CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Any contract or agreement resulting from this RFP will include the State's standard terms and conditions as listed below, along with any additional terms and conditions as negotiated by the parties:

2.1 The Contractor will perform those services described in the **Scope of Work**, attached hereto as **SECTION SIX (6)** of the RFP and by this reference incorporated herein.

2.2 Under this agreement, the Contractor's services shall commence on **July 01, 2022**, and end on **June 30, 2025**, unless sooner terminated pursuant to the terms hereof. The anticipated length of the contract is **THREE (3)** years.

2.3 The Contractor will not use State equipment, supplies, or facilities. The Contractor will provide the State with its Employer Identification Number, Federal Tax Identification Number or Social Security Number upon execution of this Agreement.

2.4 The State will make payment for services upon satisfactory completion of the services. The State will not pay Contractor's expenses as a separate item. Payment will be made pursuant to itemized invoices submitted with a signed state voucher. Payment will be made consistent with SDCL Ch. 5-26.

2.5 The Contractor agrees to indemnify and hold the State of South Dakota, its officers, agents, and employees, harmless from and against any and all actions, suits, damages, liability, or other proceedings that may arise as the result of performing services hereunder. This section does not require the Contractor to be responsible for or defend against claims or damages arising solely from errors or omissions of the State, its officers, agents, or employees.

2.6 The Contractor, at all times during the terms of this Agreement, shall obtain and maintain in force insurance coverage of the types, and with the limits, as follows:

A. Commercial General Liability Insurance:

The Contractor shall maintain occurrence-based commercial general liability insurance, or equivalent form, with a limit of not less than \$1,000,000.00 for each occurrence. If such insurance contains a general

aggregate limit, it shall apply separately to this Agreement or be no less than two times the occurrence limit.

B. Professional Liability Insurance or Miscellaneous Professional Liability Insurance:

The Contractor agrees to procure and maintain professional liability insurance or miscellaneous professional liability insurance with a limit not less than \$1,000,000.00

C. Business Automobile Liability Insurance:

The Contractor shall maintain business automobile liability insurance, or equivalent form, with a limit not less than \$1,000,000.00 for each accident. Such insurance shall include coverage for owned, hired, and non-owned vehicles.

D. Worker's Compensation Insurance:

The Contractor shall procure and maintain worker's compensation and employers' liability insurance as required by South Dakota law.

Before beginning work under this Agreement, Contractor shall furnish the State with properly executed Certificates of Insurance which shall clearly evidence all insurance required in this Agreement. In the event a substantial change in insurance, issuance of a new policy, cancellation or nonrenewal of the policy, the Contractor agrees to provide immediate notice to the State and prove a new certificate of insurance showing continuous coverage in the amounts required. Contractor shall furnish copies of insurance policies if requested by the State.

2.7 While performing services hereunder, the Contractor is an independent contractor and not an officer, agent, or employee of the State of South Dakota.

2.8 Contractor agrees to report to the State any event encountered in the course of performance of this Agreement which results in injury to the person or property of third parties, or which may otherwise subject Contractor or the State to liability. Contractor shall report any such event to the State immediately upon discovery.

Contractor's obligation under this section shall only be to report the occurrence of any event to the State and to make any other report provided for by their duties or applicable law. Contractor's obligation to report shall not require disclosure of any information subject to privilege or confidentiality under law (e.g., attorney-client communications). Under this section, reporting to the State shall not excuse or satisfy any obligation of Contractor to report any event to law enforcement or other entities under the requirements of any applicable law.

2.9 This Agreement may be terminated by either party hereto upon **THIRTY (30)** days written notice. In the event the Contractor breaches any of the terms or conditions hereof, this Agreement may be terminated by the State at any time with or without notice. If termination for such a default is affected by the State, any payments due to Contractor at the time of termination may be adjusted to cover any additional costs to the State because of Contractor's default. Upon termination, the State may take over the work and may award another party and agreement to complete the work under this Agreement. If, after the State terminates for a default by Contractor it is determined that Contractor was not at fault, then the Contractor shall be paid for eligible services rendered and expenses incurred up to the date of termination.

2.10 This Agreement depends upon the continued availability of appropriated funds and expenditure authority from the South Dakota Legislature for this purpose. If for any reason the Legislature fails to appropriate funds or grant expenditure authority, or funds become unavailable by operation of law or federal funds reductions, this Agreement will be terminated by the State. Termination for any of these reasons is not a default by the State nor does it give rise to a claim against the State.

2.11 This Agreement may not be reassigned without the express prior written consent of the State. This Agreement may not be amended except in writing, which writing shall be expressly identified as a part hereof and be signed by an authorized representative of each of the parties hereto.

2.12 This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of South Dakota. Any lawsuit to or affecting this Agreement shall be venue in Circuit Court, Sixth Judicial Circuit, Hughes County, South Dakota.

2.13 The Contractor will comply with all federal, state & local laws, regulations, ordinances, guidelines, permits and requirements applicable to providing services pursuant to this Agreement, and will be solely responsible for obtaining current information on such requirements.

2.14 The Contractor may not use subcontractors to perform the services described herein without the express prior written consent of the State. The Contractor will include provisions in its subcontracts requiring its subcontractors to comply with the applicable provisions of this Agreement, to indemnify the State, and to provide insurance coverage for the benefit of the State in a manner consistent with this Agreement. The Contractor will cause its subcontractors, agents, and employees to comply with applicable federal, state & local laws, regulations, ordinances, guidelines, permits and requirements and will adopt such review and inspection procedures as are necessary to assure each compliance.

2.15 The Contractor hereby acknowledges and agrees that all reports, marketing plans, media schedules, creative concepts, marketing strategies, specifications, technical data, miscellaneous drawings, software system programs and documentation, procedures, files, operating instructions and procedures, source code(s) and documentation, including those necessary to upgrade and maintain the software program, and all information contained therein provided to the State by the Contractor in connection with its performance of services under this Agreement shall belong to, and is the property of, the State and will not be used in any way by the Contractor without the written consent of the State. Papers, reports, forms, software programs, source code(s) and other material which are a part of the work under this Agreement will not be copyrighted without written approval of the State.

2.16 The Contractor certifies that neither Contractor nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment or suspension, or declared ineligible from participating in transactions with the federal government or any state or local government department or agency. Contractor further agrees that it will immediately notify the State if, during the term of this Agreement, the Contractor or its principals become subject to debarment, suspension, or ineligibility from participating in transactions by the federal government, or by any state or local government department or agency.

2.17 Any notice or other communication required under this Agreement shall be in writing and sent to the address set forth above. Notices shall be given by and to **James D. Hagen**, on behalf of the State, and by the **President/CEO**, on behalf of the Contractor, or such authorized designees as either party may from time to time designate in writing. Notices or communications to or between the parties shall be deemed to have been delivered when mailed by first class mail, provided that notice of default or termination shall be sent by registered or certified mail, provided that notice of default or termination shall be sent by registered or certified mail, or, if personally delivered, when received by such party.

2.18 In the event that any court or competent jurisdiction shall hold any provisions of this Agreement unenforceable or invalid, such holding shall not invalidate or render unenforceable any other provision thereof.

2.19 All other prior discussions, communications and representations concerning the subject matter of this Agreement are superseded by the terms of this Agreement, and except as specifically provided herein, this Agreement constitutes the entire agreement with respect to the subject matter thereof.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 ABOUT THE SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

The South Dakota Department of Tourism ('Department of Tourism' or 'Tourism') is in the capital city of Pierre. It is the sole state department responsible for branding and marketing the state as a vacation destination to a variety of audiences, including potential visitors (both domestic and international), the travel trade industry, and members of the travel media. Marketing South Dakota and our brand, as well as our world-famous attractions, national and state parks, great outdoors, culture and heritage, unique history, and the Arts, are key components of our work. The tourism industry in South Dakota depends upon the Department of Tourism to create comprehensive marketing campaigns that promote our state as one of the nation's most-desired vacation destinations.

3.2 OUR DEPARTMENT'S MISSION

We enhance the quality of life for all South Dakotans by strengthening our communities and their tourism economies, encouraging responsible stewardship of our destination, and creating meaningful experiences for all to enjoy.

3.3 OUR DEPARTMENT'S VISION

With a spirit of freedom and optimism, South Dakota's Great Faces and Great Places inspire and unite all visitors and residents through the transformational power of travel.

3.4 OUR DEPARTMENT'S CULTURE

We are proud South Dakotans who share a passion for our state, its people, and our beautiful places. Our team strives for excellence in creative marketing, innovative thinking, and attentive service to our industry. We take pride in our can-do attitude and aspire to be a leader among state tourism departments nationwide.

3.5 A FEW OF OUR DEPARTMENT'S GOALS

- Expand and enhance the South Dakota brand
- Advance the development of our destination
- Advocate for responsible destination management
- Prioritize organizational excellence
- Establish highly effective and industry-leading advertising, marketing, and public relations campaigns that produce tangible results and maximize our ROI
- Utilize industry-leading research to maximize our marketing investments by targeting key consumer audiences, behaviors, and markets

- Leverage innovative regional, national, and international marketing partnerships to promote and elevate the South Dakota brand and message.

3.6 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM ON SOUTH DAKOTA

The South Dakota Department of Tourism has experienced steady and record-setting growth over the past decade. Even in the pandemic year of 2020, South Dakota suffered some of the smallest declines in the nation in visitor spending and overall visitation. We were the very first state in the country to return to pre-pandemic visitor spending levels. The tourism industry is one of the largest industries in South Dakota and has a significant impact upon state and local tax revenues as well as employment. The tourism industry in South Dakota generates nearly \$300 million in state and local tax revenue and sustains nearly 55,000 jobs. In 2019, South Dakota welcomed 14.5 million visitors who spent more than \$4.1 billion dollars (both all-time records). You can read the 2019 and 2020 economic impact studies [here](#).

3.7 CURRENT MARKETING

The South Dakota Department of Tourism emphasizes year-round marketing campaigns with a focus on leisure travel. We do have distinct summer, fall, and winter campaigns, but we also employ an evergreen approach promoting travel to the state. During our fall shoulder season, pheasant hunting is a major focus. Two years ago, the Department of Tourism developed a partnership with the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks Department to promote pheasant hunting in a much more aggressive and tactical manner. Given South Dakota's popular national and state parks, world-famous attractions, and great outdoors, we are always striving to find new and innovative ways to grow visitation year-round.

3.8 DEPARTMENT'S MARKETING BUDGET

The total advertising, marketing, and public relations budget for the Department of Tourism is around **\$11 million**, inclusive of production and media costs. The actual budget in any given fiscal year is subject to actual tourism promotion tax and Deadwood gaming revenues collected within that fiscal year as well as legislative appropriation. The department does not receive any state general fund dollars.

3.9 ANNUAL REPORTS

We highly encourage all respondents to take the time to learn more about the South Dakota Department of Tourism and our work by reading our 2020 Annual Report (as well as 10 years of Annual Reports) [here](#).

4.0 CAPABILITIES SOUGHT IN A MARKETING AGENCY

The South Dakota Department of Tourism is seeking an “Agency of Record” or “Agencies of Record” for all branding, advertising, marketing, and public relations services. The department is seeking offerors with extensive professional advertising and marketing experience in the development and placement of various forms of marketing to target audiences regionally, nationally, and internationally in strategically selected markets. It is the expectation of the department that the successful offeror develop innovative marketing campaigns, strategies and programs that will assist in increasing the state’s share of domestic and international tourism markets, which will in turn aid in growing South Dakota’s tourism businesses and the state’s economy as a whole

4.1 The offeror will be expected to possess and display knowledge of the travel and tourism industry. Although not a mandatory requirement, experience in working with tourism advertising and marketing is a plus.

4.2 The successful offeror will be required to provide a high level of quality services which are normally associated with the handling of a large national account of this scope and size.

4.3 In addition to providing strategic advertising, marketing, and public relations services, the offeror’s capabilities must include some or all the following creative production and media purchasing activities and experience (if these services do not currently exist in-house, please indicate in your proposal how the capability will be added and the services provided):

- **Television** – National, programmatic broadcast, addressable cable, alternative
- **Print** – All methods (or channels) of print, including national general interest, family-oriented, women, and travel-focused magazines, direct mail, and newspapers
- **Out-of-Home (OOH)**
- **Audio** – Network, satellite, internet, and podcasts
- **Direct mail** – Local, regional, and national strategies
- **Online** – All methods of online, including display & rich media placements, content placements, retargeting placements, and paid search
- **Public Relations**
- **Event and in-market activations**
- **Social media** – Content development, strategy, management, and advertising buys
- **Email** – Content development, strategy, and distribution
- **Websites** – Development and maintenance of consumer and industry websites
- **Consumer research and insights**

4.4 We are also seeking agencies that have the following capabilities:

- **Brand management:** Offeror shall possess an understanding and knowledge of the South Dakota brand as well as extensive experience with brand management and brand strategy. Offeror shall be adept at providing recommendations on integrating the brand into every aspect of the Department of Tourism's marketing activities, from advertising, to public relations, websites, e-mail marketing, social media, etc.
- **Creative services:** Offeror shall possess the ability to develop advertising concepts, themes, and slogans; design advertising and publication layouts; create and produce television commercials; produce videos; develop stories that align with and support a larger creative campaign, from concept to storyboard to final production; produce rich media and conversion-centric digital elements; and copywriting for print, email, audio, television, etc.
- **Media research, evaluation, purchase, placement services:** Offeror shall possess the ability to provide the highest quality experience and skills in media strategy, including research and evaluation of all mediums and advertising channels (video, print, digital, social, audio, out-of-home, etc.) as well as superb skills in negotiating, placement, and purchase of media buys (and finding added value and partnership opportunities within the media buys).
- **Research and reporting:** Offeror shall possess the ability to provide market analysis data and information; market segmentation and psychographic analysis; pre-test advertising concepts and taglines in key markets; organize and conduct focus group studies; conduct research to determine motivation for travel among consumers and understand consumer's propensity to travel. Offeror shall possess the ability to provide tracking and reporting of all campaign elements as well as other aspects required to manage and measure results of a comprehensive and integrated marketing campaign. Offeror shall also possess or have access to data intelligence and technology tools (data-management platforms and demand-side platforms) that will provide the Department of Tourism with the ability to distribute personalized content to appropriate audiences across multiple channels. These platforms must integrate with many of the digital ad networks.
- **Knowledge of domestic and international travel:** Offeror shall possess the ability to provide information and research regarding travel trends, future projections, and demonstrate and understanding of the market/economic fluctuations and how these

affect travel as it relates to consumer attitudes and behaviors toward/about travel. Offeror shall demonstrate the ability to develop marketing messages that speak to the right audience, with the right message, at the right time, on the right platform.

- **Account management/fiscal management:** Offeror shall demonstrate the ability to provide account management regarding fiscal responsibility including, but not limited to, budgeting/accounting, invoicing, and timing, and implementation of best practices for a fee-based compensation and pricing structure.
- **Experience in building strategic partnerships:** Offeror shall possess the ability to build key partnerships with other organizations, businesses/companies, communities, and DMOs. This would include identifying potential corporate and non-traditional tourism partners as well as assisting the Department of Tourism in preparing and presenting potential marketing partnerships to these entities. The successful offeror will also assist in brainstorming ways to potentially expand cooperative marketing opportunities for the South Dakota tourism industry, thus allowing the industry to buy into strategic marketing opportunities offered by the department.
- **Communication:** The successful offeror shall understand the importance of communication with the Department of Tourism, the South Dakota tourism industry, and key stakeholders. Offeror will be expected to be in frequent (often daily) contact with the department, including weekly status conference calls. While most of the contact will be via Zoom, MS Teams, email, and phone calls, it is expected that the successful offeror's key account team members conduct in-person meetings at the department's behest. The successful offeror will also be required, at their own expense, to send account members to the annual South Dakota Governor's Conference on Tourism (typically the third week in January in Pierre, SD), other key meetings and events as determined by the department, and ESTO, the annual national tourism conference hosted by the U.S. Travel Association each August.
- **No conflicts of interest:** If successfully awarded a contract, and during the term of the said contract, the offeror shall not hold or acquire an account that is considered by the South Dakota Department of Tourism to be a competitor (city, county, state, region, CVB, Chamber of Commerce, BID Board, etc.) without first seeking verbal and written approval from the Department of Tourism. The department retains the right to determine whether it

considers a DMO (Destination Marketing Organization) a competitor.

5.0 TELL US ABOUT YOUR AGENCY

This is a very important section of the RFP which will assist the Department of Tourism in choosing the very best agency/agencies for our marketing work.

Please provide the information requested in sequential order:

5.1 AGENCY HISTORY AND FACTS: Please provide a brief history of your agency (one page or less).

Please also provide the following:

- Ownership structure and the names, titles, and length of service of the agency principals along with a brief resume for each
- The size of the agency in number of employees
- The total annual billings for your agency for the past five years
- The list of your premier agency accounts
- All current and/or former travel and tourism industry accounts/clients signed with your agency as well as reference contact information for each.
- All accounts (tourism and non-tourism) gained and lost/resigned during the past five years and the reasons why these accounts were lost/resigned or gained (please provide reference contact information for each as well)

5.2 EXPERTISE: Please address what you consider to be your agency's strongest area/areas of marketing expertise.

5.3 ACHIEVEMENTS: Please describe **THREE (3)** of your agency's most significant achievements of the past five years.

5.4 YOUR PROCESS: Depending upon the components to which you are responding, briefly describe your agency's process for developing effective advertising/marketing campaigns, digital marketing campaigns, cooperative marketing campaigns, social media campaigns, public relations and/or event activation campaigns, constructing and maintaining consumer and tourism-industry oriented websites, and email marketing campaigns.

5.5 CREATIVE WORK: From a creative standpoint only, briefly describe **THREE (3)** campaigns your agency has created and worked on that you are most proud of. If possible, please provide hard copy samples of some of the creative – and any other relevant elements - that were a part of those campaigns.

5.6 TOURISM SPECIFIC ADVERTISING AND MARKETING: Briefly describe what your agency's philosophy is when it comes to tourism-specific advertising and marketing.

5.7 UNDERSTANDING OF TOURISM: In two pages or less, please share with us your understanding of South Dakota's tourism offerings, the state of the travel & tourism industry, both within South Dakota as well as nationally, national travel & tourism trends and forecasts, and, finally, what you see as the South Dakota Department of Tourism's biggest opportunities and challenges in the next five years. Please include supporting rationale for your insights.

5.8 ROLE OF THE CLIENT: Briefly describe your agency's philosophy/approach on the role you think the client should play in the development of effective advertising and marketing.

5.9 PERSONNEL AND QUALIFICATIONS: Please describe your agency's key personnel who have experience with tourism-related projects and/or other experience with qualifies them to successfully work on the Department of Tourism's account.

- Provide a list of all key personnel who will have direct and significant responsibilities for providing the work/services outlined in the specific components to which you will be responding to in the RFP.
- For each person specified, please state their experience and qualifications as well as tourism marketing experience relevant to their ability to manage/work on the Department of Tourism's account.
- Please provide an organizational chart of the team members who will be assigned to the account, the estimated percentage of their time each member will spend on the account, and a listing of other accounts to which they are currently assigned.

5.10 WHY YOU: In one page or less, please describe why your agency is the best fit for the South Dakota Department of Tourism, why your firm is the best qualified to do the work laid out in this RFP, why you are passionate about working for the Department of Tourism and promoting South Dakota, and, finally, what sets you apart from other marketing agencies seeking our work.

6.0 SCOPE OF WORK: COMPONENTS OF THE RFP

This RFP has divided the scope of advertising, marketing, and public relations services sought by the South Dakota Department of Tourism into **EIGHT (8)** different components. The reason for dividing the work into eight components is to provide the department with the flexibility to choose the most creative, innovative, and dynamic agency possible. The eight components allow prospective offerors the opportunity to submit proposals in response to one or more (or all) components.

While the RFP is divided into eight components, it should be understood by all offerors responding to the RFP that there will be overlap among tasks/work between components. Furthermore, it is important that all offerors recognize that an award of a contract under a particular component does not guarantee exclusivity to perform all the tasks described under the component. The Department of Tourism reserves the right to assign work to any offeror as they see fit. Some tasks listed in the following components may also be kept as operational activities within the department.

6.1 COMPONENT ONE: TRADITIONAL MARKETING

The offeror selected for **COMPONENT ONE** shall work collaboratively with the Department of Tourism and, potentially, other selected agencies of record, and may be required to perform the following duties:

- Campaign strategy - Conduct research that evaluates the profile, demographics and media usage of the South Dakota visitor and audience.
- Content and creative production for television (broadcast, cable satellite, connected, alternative), print, audio, direct mail, and out-of-home (OOH).
- Planning and development of comprehensive media schedules for television, print, audio, direct mail, and OOH, aligning with and complementing digital media campaigns.
- Traditional media buying, including television, print, audio, and OOH.
- Campaign reporting - Conduct evaluations and reporting into overall performance and effectiveness of marketing tactics and campaigns.
- Assist in planning and producing presentations for various marketing presentations throughout the year.
- Every month, the agency will be expected to submit an update on the status of the budget.
- Media commission, creative production, and management rates to remain unchanged through final contract end date.
- For **COMPONENT ONE**, the agency must have the financial capacity to contract and purchase media without advance payment by the Department of Tourism.
- For **COMPONENT ONE**, the agency shall agree and understand that the South Dakota Department of Tourism shall have the right to approve or disapprove of any of the agency's personnel assigned to the account.

Furthermore, the agency must obtain the verbal and/or written approval of the department prior to replacement of any previously approved account team member. The agency shall agree and understand that the Department of Tourism shall have the right to request replacement of any person assigned to the account team for any reason. Unless the situation regarding the agency's assigned personnel requires immediate replacement, the agency shall be allowed at least fourteen calendar days after notification to replace the account team member.

6.2 COMPONENT TWO: DIGITAL MARKETING

The offeror selected for **COMPONENT TWO** shall work collaboratively with the Department of Tourism and, potentially, other selected agencies of record, and may be required to perform the following duties:

- Campaign strategy - Conduct research that evaluates the profile, demographics and media usage of the South Dakota visitor and audience, along with identifying emerging technology and trends in digital marketing.
- Develop and produce content and creative for digital (display, native, rich media, paid social, paid search, etc.), video, audio, and out-of-home (OOH).
- Planning and development of comprehensive media schedules for digital, video, audio, and OOH, aligning with and complementing traditional media campaigns.
- Media buying, implementation, and management of digital, video, audio, and OOH placement.
- Campaign reporting - Conduct evaluations and reporting into overall performance and effectiveness of marketing tactics and campaigns.
- Assist in planning and producing presentations for various marketing presentations throughout the year.
- Every month, the agency will be expected to submit an update on the status of the budget.
- Media commission, creative production, and management rates to remain unchanged through final contract end date.
- For **COMPONENT TWO**, the agency must have the financial capacity to contract and purchase media without advance payment by the Department of Tourism.
- For **COMPONENT TWO**, the agency shall agree and understand that the South Dakota Department of Tourism shall have the right to approve or disapprove of any of the agency's personnel assigned to the account. Furthermore, the agency must obtain the verbal and/or written approval of the department prior to replacement of any previously approved account team member. The agency shall agree and understand that the Department of Tourism shall have the right to request replacement of any person assigned to the account team for any reason. Unless the situation regarding the agency's assigned personnel requires immediate

replacement, the agency shall be allowed at least fourteen calendar days after notification to replace the account team member.

6.3 COMPONENT THREE: COOPERATIVE MARKETING & MANAGEMENT

The offeror selected for **COMPONENT THREE** shall work collaboratively with the Department of Tourism and, potentially, other agencies of record, and may be required to perform the following duties:

- Develop comprehensive marketing strategies and multi-channel campaigns for CVBs, BID Boards, Chambers of Commerce or other entities partnering with the Department of Tourism.
- Develop and produce content and creative for multi-channel efforts that complement and align with the overall Department of Tourism campaign creative.
- Campaign reporting - Conduct evaluations and reporting into overall performance and effectiveness of marketing tactics and campaigns.
- Assist in planning and producing presentations for various marketing presentations throughout the year.
- Every month, the agency will be expected to give an update on the status of the budget.
- Media commission, creative production, and management rates to remain unchanged through final contract end date.
- For **COMPONENT THREE**, the agency must have the financial capacity to contract and purchase media without advance payment by the Department of Tourism.
- For **COMPONENT THREE**, the agency shall agree and understand that the South Dakota Department of Tourism shall have the right to approve or disapprove of any of the agency's personnel assigned to the account. Furthermore, the agency must obtain the verbal and/or written approval of the department prior to replacement of any previously approved account team member. The agency shall agree and understand that the Department of Tourism shall have the right to request replacement of any person assigned to the account team for any reason. Unless the situation regarding the agency's assigned personnel requires immediate replacement, the agency shall be allowed at least fourteen calendar days after notification to replace the account team member.

6.4 COMPONENT FOUR – SOCIAL MEDIA

The offeror selected for **COMPONENT FOUR** shall work collaboratively with the Department of Tourism and, potentially, other agencies of record, and may be required to perform the following duties:

- Identify emerging technology and trends in social media to enhance and expand social media platforms by executing robust, innovative, creative,

strategic, and engaging strategies and campaigns that are aligned with the department's brand.

- Ongoing social media activities shall include, but are not limited to, real-time community management, production and management of social media assets including photography and video, monthly and campaign-specific reporting, paid promotions, monthly content planning, and additional program support as needed.
- Reporting should reflect leading industry standard measurements for all social media activity.
- Provide leadership in areas of crisis communications, tourism stakeholder engagement, etc.
- Media commission, creative production, and management rates to remain unchanged through final contract end date.
- For **COMPONENT FOUR**, the agency must have the financial capacity to contract and purchase media without advance payment by the Department of Tourism.
- For **COMPONENT FOUR**, the agency shall agree and understand that the South Dakota Department of Tourism shall have the right to approve or disapprove of any of the agency's personnel assigned to the account. Furthermore, the agency must obtain the verbal and/or written approval of the department prior to replacement of any previously approved account team member. The agency shall agree and understand that the Department of Tourism shall have the right to request replacement of any person assigned to the account team for any reason. Unless the situation regarding the agency's assigned personnel requires immediate replacement, the agency shall be allowed at least fourteen calendar days after notification to replace the account team member.

6.5 COMPONENT FIVE – EMAIL MARKETING PROGRAM

The offeror selected for **COMPONENT FIVE** shall work collaboratively with the Department of Tourism and, potentially, other agencies of record, and may be required to perform the following duties:

- Create an effective and creative email marketing program for both consumer and industry contact lists.
- Provide strategy for content messaging, increased engagement, list development, segmentation, and A/B testing.
- Offeror shall provide an editorial calendar for efforts to align with ongoing marketing campaigns.
- Develop email templates and be responsible for content writing, email design, coding, testing, and deployment.
- Conduct evaluations and monthly reports into overall performance and optimizations.
- Every month, the agency will be expected to give an update on the status of the budget.

- Media commission, creative production, and management rates to remain unchanged through final contract end date.
- For **COMPONENT FIVE**, the agency must have the financial capacity to contract and purchase media without advance payment by the Department of Tourism.
- For **COMPONENT FIVE**, the agency shall agree and understand that the South Dakota Department of Tourism shall have the right to approve or disapprove of any of the agency's personnel assigned to the account. Furthermore, the agency must obtain the verbal and/or written approval of the department prior to replacement of any previously approved account team member. The agency shall agree and understand that the Department of Tourism shall have the right to request replacement of any person assigned to the account team for any reason. Unless the situation regarding the agency's assigned personnel requires immediate replacement, the agency shall be allowed at least fourteen calendar days after notification to replace the account team member.

6.6 COMPONENT SIX – CONSUMER WEBSITE & INDUSTRY WEBSITE

The offeror selected for **COMPONENT SIX** shall work collaboratively with the Department of Tourism and, potentially, other agencies of record, and may be required to perform the following duties:

- Evaluate current design, navigation, usability, and function of current consumer website (TravelSouthDakota.com) and industry website (SDVisit.com). Propose and execute plan to ensure both incorporate the latest technology and best practices while providing a first-rate user experience.
- Provide website management and maintenance, including necessary ongoing website optimizations.
- Provide quarterly website and SEO reports.
- Every month, the agency will be expected to submit an update on the status of the budget.
- Media commission, creative production, and management rates to remain unchanged through final contract end date.
- For **COMPONENT SIX**, the agency must have the financial capacity to contract and purchase media without advance payment by the Department of Tourism.
- For **COMPONENT SIX**, the agency shall agree and understand that the South Dakota Department of Tourism shall have the right to approve or disapprove of any of the agency's personnel assigned to the account. Furthermore, the agency must obtain the verbal and/or written approval of the department prior to replacement of any previously approved account team member. The agency shall agree and understand that the Department of Tourism shall have the right to request replacement of any person assigned to the account team for any reason. Unless the situation

regarding the agency's assigned personnel requires immediate replacement, the agency shall be allowed at least fourteen calendar days after notification to replace the account team member.

6.7 COMPONENT SEVEN – PUBLIC RELATIONS

The offeror selected for **COMPONENT SEVEN** shall work collaboratively with the Department of Tourism and, potentially, other agencies of record, and may be required to perform the following duties:

- Develop and execute a comprehensive regional, national, and international public relations strategy that includes ongoing pitches to television, print, digital and online media outlets that aligns with brand strategy and goals.
- Provide crisis communication leadership and guidance with the ability to remain flexible and nimble through changing events.
- Develop a strategic public relations and media relations plan that includes day-to-day, monthly, or quarterly outreach to key travel writers, journalists, and influencers, etc., and ongoing relationship building with said travel writers, journalists, and influencers.
- Provide media relations work that includes assistance with media research, story pitches, press releases, media alerts.
- Provide media relations work including coordination of familiarization tours and assistance on familiarization tours, support event activation and outreach, virtual media offerings, and media blitz and media event coordination.
- Provide media monitoring services and joint management of the software and tools. Provide the department with monthly media reporting.
- Media commission, creative production, and management rates to remain unchanged through final contract end date.
- For **COMPONENT SEVEN**, the agency must have the financial capacity to contract with vendors and events without advance payment by the Department of Tourism.
- For **COMPONENT SEVEN**, the agency shall agree and understand that the South Dakota Department of Tourism shall have the right to approve or disapprove of any of the agency's personnel assigned to the account. Furthermore, the agency must obtain the verbal and/or written approval of the department prior to replacement of any previously approved account team member. The agency shall agree and understand that the Department of Tourism shall have the right to request replacement of any person assigned to the account team for any reason. Unless the situation regarding the agency's assigned personnel requires immediate replacement, the agency shall be allowed at least fourteen calendar days after notification to replace the account team member.

6.8 COMPONENT EIGHT – EVENTS AND ACTIVATIONS

The offeror selected for **COMPONENT EIGHT** shall work with the Department of Tourism and, potentially, other agencies of record, and may be required to perform the following duties:

- Concept, develop and execute robust and engaging brand activation events.
- Create marketing elements and materials related to the specific event and promotion of activation.
- Coordinate and support event activation outreach in key or emerging markets.
- Every month, the agency will be expected to give an update on the status of the budget.
- Media commission, creative production, and management rates to remain unchanged through final contract end date.
- For **COMPONENT EIGHT**, the agency must have the financial capacity to contract and purchase media without advance payment by the Department of Tourism.
- For **COMPONENT EIGHT**, the agency shall agree and understand that the South Dakota Department of Tourism shall have the right to approve or disapprove of any of the agency's personnel assigned to the account. Furthermore, the agency must obtain the verbal and/or written approval of the department prior to replacement of any previously approved account team member. The agency shall agree and understand that the Department of Tourism shall have the right to request replacement of any person assigned to the account team for any reason. Unless the situation regarding the agency's assigned personnel requires immediate replacement, the agency shall be allowed at least fourteen calendar days after notification to replace the account team member.

7.0 RESPONDING TO THE RFP COMPONENTS - WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

7.1 RESPONDING TO COMPONENT ONE: For **COMPONENT ONE**, please address the following:

- Describe your agency's video (broadcast, cable satellite, alternative), print, audio, direct mail, and out-of-home (OOH) experience and capabilities.
- Describe your agency's experience in brand positioning, brand management and tourism-related marketing.
- Describe your agency's approach and capabilities when it comes to video placement (broadcast, cable satellite, alternative), print, audio, direct mail,

and out-of-home. Please use specific examples when describing your strategies and capabilities. Explain how you measure and define the success of campaigns.

- Briefly describe your agency's experiences and approach when tracking, monitoring, and reporting marketing campaigns. Please provide at least **ONE (1)** reporting example.
- Provide at least **ONE (1)** example of a relevant multi-media campaign spearheaded by your agency and executed in the past three years, along with a brief description of the success of this effort. In the example, please briefly include:
 - ❖ The objectives of the campaign.
 - ❖ The research and methodology that went into the development of the campaign.
 - ❖ The resulting creative and media strategy, along with campaign results. Please provide how success was measured and what insights were gained to apply to future efforts.
 - ❖ Please provide any materials related to the campaign.
- Develop **ONE (1)** year-round traditional media strategy using a budget of \$5 million (not including an agency fee) to promote travel in South Dakota. This plan should include market selection, media placement, and a detailed budget with media spend and production costs.

7.2 RESPONDING TO COMPONENT TWO: For COMPONENT TWO, please address the following:

- Please describe your agency's digital marketing experience and capabilities (SEO, SEM, etc.).
- Describe your agency's experience in brand positioning, brand management and tourism-related marketing.
- Describe your agency's approach and capabilities when it comes to digital, including display, native, rich media, paid social, paid search, video, audio, and out-of-home (OOH) placements. Please use specific examples when describing your strategies and capabilities. Explain how you measure and define the success of campaigns.
- Briefly describe your agency's experiences and approach when tracking, monitoring, and reporting marketing campaigns. Please provide at least **ONE (1)** reporting example.

- Provide at least **ONE (1)** example of a relevant digital media campaign spearheaded by your agency and executed in the past three years, along with a brief description of the success of this effort. In the example, please briefly include:
 - ❖ The objectives of the campaign.
 - ❖ The research and methodology that went into the development of the campaign.
 - ❖ The resulting creative and media strategy, along with campaign results. Please provide how success was measured and what insights were gained to apply to future efforts.
 - ❖ Please provide any materials related to the campaign.

- Develop **ONE (1)** year-round digital media strategy using a budget of \$4.5 million (not including an agency fee or production costs) to promote travel in South Dakota. This plan should include market selection, media placement, and a detailed budget with media spend and production costs.

7.3 RESPONDING TO COMPONENT THREE: For COMPONENT THREE, please address the following:

- If not already provided in a previous component, please describe your agency's traditional (TV, print, audio, and direct mail) and digital (SEO, SEM, etc.) marketing experience and capabilities.

- Describe your agency's experience in brand positioning, brand management and tourism-related marketing specific to an overarching brand and aligning partners.

- Describe your agency's approach and capabilities when it comes to marketing strategies and media placement for co-op advertising with an overall broader marketing campaign. Please use specific examples when describing strategy and capabilities. Explain how you measure and define the success of the campaigns.

- If not already provided in a previous component, briefly describe your agency's experience and approach when tracking, monitoring, and reporting campaigns. Please provide at least **ONE (1)** reporting example.

- Develop **THREE (3)** media strategies using a tiered-budget approach of \$250,000, \$125,000, and \$80,000 (not including an agency fee) to promote summer travel in South Dakota that reflect a co-op advertising model. The plans should include market selections, media placement, and a detailed budget (media spend and production costs) for each tier.

7.4 RESPONDING TO COMPONENT FOUR: For COMPONENT FOUR, please address the following:

- Describe your agency's social media experience and capabilities as well as paid social strategy.
- When it comes to tourism marketing, what specific experience does your agency have with social media?
- Please provide **THREE (3)** examples of successful social media campaigns your agency has been responsible for creating and executing, and the metrics used to gauge success. Preferably, **ONE (1)** should be tourism related.
- Briefly describe your agency's experiences and approach when tracking, monitoring, and reporting social media campaigns. Please provide at least **ONE (1)** reporting example.
- Provide ideas and insights for how your agency believes the extent of social media marketing efforts should or should not reflect what the brand is executing on other channels (digital media, traditional media, etc.).
- Please review the department's current social media channels and provide a critique. What are we doing right? What are areas of improvement?

7.5 RESPONDING TO COMPONENT FIVE: For COMPONENT FIVE, please address the following:

- Describe your agency's experience, capabilities, and approach in developing creative, effective, and robust email marketing campaigns that integrate into an overall marketing strategy.
- Briefly describe your agency's experiences and approach when tracking, monitoring, and reporting the effectiveness of email marketing campaigns. Please provide at least **ONE (1)** reporting example.
- Please provide **THREE (3)** examples of engaging and effective email marketing campaigns that your agency has overseen for its clients over the past three years.

7.6 RESPONDING TO COMPONENT SIX: For COMPONENT SIX, please address the following:

- Describe your agency's website management and hosting experience and capabilities.

- Describe your agency's experience in brand positioning, brand management and with tourism-related websites.
- Describe your agency's approach and capabilities when it comes to managing, optimizing, and hosting successful websites. Please use specific examples when describing your strategies and capabilities.
- What strategy do you have for migrating an existing site and/or database to a new site and/or database?
- What platform is used for business listings? And what association, if any, does it have with Google My Business? What CMS, hosting vendors, or other platforms and partners do you prefer to work with?
- Briefly describe your agency's experiences and approach when tracking, monitoring, and reporting the effectiveness of a website. Please provide at least **ONE (1)** reporting example.
- Please review TravelSouthDakota.com and provide a critique. Feedback is welcomed on the overall design, navigation, usability, and effectiveness of the website. In your professional opinion, does the website provide potential visitors to the state with inspiring and engaging content. Please explain what you think are the strengths of the website, the weaknesses of the website, and what you would propose to improve.
- Please provide examples of **THREE (3)** websites (tourism or non-tourism) that you have developed over the past three years. With each example, please briefly include:
 - ❖ What made the website so effective?
 - ❖ What are you most proud of about the website?
 - ❖ Provide examples of the success the website is garnering for its client.

7.7 RESPONDING TO COMPONENT SEVEN: For COMPONENT SEVEN, please address the following:

- Please describe your agency's public relations capabilities and overall experience as it pertains to tourism clients.
- Please describe your agency's experience with developing national and regional public relations strategies that include ongoing pitches to television, print, digital and online media outlets (both domestic and international).
- Please describe your agency's experience with public relations relationships that include day-to-day, monthly, or quarterly outreach to key travel writers,

journalists, and influencers (and ongoing relationship building with these groups).

- Describe your agency's experience in brand management.
- Briefly describe your agency's experiences and approach when tracking, monitoring, and reporting public relations campaigns. Please provide at least **ONE (1)** reporting example.
- Describe your agency's experience in crisis communications strategy and provide **ONE (1)** example of a crisis that your agency has successfully assisted a client in navigating.
- Please describe **TWO (2)** key public relations campaigns executed for clients in the last three years. For each campaign, please include the objectives of the campaign, research methodology that went into the development of the campaign, budget, campaign creative, strategy, and execution, results of the campaign, and how the success of the campaign was measured.

7.8 RESPONDING TO COMPONENT EIGHT: For COMPONENT EIGHT, please address the following:

- Describe your agency's experience, capabilities, and approach to developing, coordinating, and executing event activations that integrate into an overall marketing strategy.
- Describe your agency's approach and capabilities when it comes to marketing strategies and media placement to promote events and activations. Please use specific examples when describing strategies and capabilities.
- Explain how you measure and define the success of events and activations. Briefly describe your agency's experience and approach when tracking, monitoring, and reporting on event activations. Please provide at least **ONE (1)** reporting example.
- Provide **THREE (3)** key event activation campaigns your agency has executed in the past three years along with a brief description of the success of these efforts. In the example, please briefly include:
 - ❖ The objectives of the activation/campaign.
 - ❖ The research and strategy that went into the development of the activation.
 - ❖ Activation creative and media strategy, along with campaign results. Please provide how success was measured and what insights were gained to apply to future efforts.

- ❖ Please provide any collateral or creative materials related to the campaign.

8.0 PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

8.1 ONE (1) original and **TEN (10)** copies shall be submitted.

8.2 In addition, the offeror should provide **ONE (1)** copy of their entire proposal, including all attachments, in Microsoft Word or PDF electronic format (flash drive, USB drive, etc.) Offerors may not send the electronically formatted copy of their proposal via email.

8.3 The proposal should be page numbered and should have an index and/or a table of contents referencing the appropriate page number.

8.4 All proposals must be organized and tabbed with labels for the following headings:

- **RFP Form.** The State's Request for Proposal form completed and signed.
- **Executive Summary.** The one or two-page executive summary is to briefly describe the offeror's proposal. This summary should highlight the major features of the proposal. It must indicate any requirements that cannot be met by the offeror. The reader should be able to determine the essence of the proposal by reading the executive summary. Proprietary information requests should be identified in this section.
- **Detailed Response.** This section should constitute the major portion of the proposal and must contain at least the following information:
 - ❖ A complete narrative of the offeror's assessment of the work to be performed, the offeror's ability and approach, and the resources necessary to fulfill the requirements. This should demonstrate the offeror's understanding of the desired overall performance expectations.
 - ❖ A specific point-by-point response, in the order listed, to each requirement in the RFP. The response should identify each requirement being addressed as enumerated in the RFP.
 - ❖ A clear description of any options or alternatives proposed.

- **Cost Proposal.** Cost will be evaluated independently from the technical proposal. Offerors may submit multiple cost proposals. All costs related to the provision of the required services must be included in each cost proposal offered.

9.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND AWARD PROCESS

9.1 The offeror is cautioned that it is the offeror's sole responsibility to submit information related to the evaluation of categories and that the State of South Dakota is under no obligation to solicit such information if it is not included in the proposal. The offeror's failure to submit such information may cause and adverse impact on the evaluation of the proposal.

9.2 After determining that a proposal satisfies the mandatory requirements stated in the Request for Proposal, the evaluator(s) shall use subjective judgment in conducting a comparative assessment of the proposal by considering each of the following criteria:

- Specialized expertise, capabilities, and technical competence as demonstrated by the proposed approach and methodology to meet the project requirements;
- Resources available to perform the work, including any specialized services, within the specified time limits for the project;
- Record of past performance, including price and cost data from previous projects, quality of work, ability to meet schedules, cost control, and contract administration;
- Availability to the project locale;
- Familiarity with the project locale;
- Proposed project management techniques; and
- Ability and proven history in handling special project constraints.

9.3 Experience and reliability of the offeror's organization are considered subjectively in the evaluation process. Therefore, the offeror is advised to submit any information which documents successful and reliable experience in past performances, especially those performances related to the requirements of this RFP.

9.4 The qualifications of the personnel proposed by the offeror to perform the requirements of this RFP, whether from the offeror's organization or from a proposed subcontractor, will be subjectively evaluated. Therefore, the offeror should submit detailed information related to the experience and qualifications, including education and training, of proposed personnel.

9.5 The State reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive technicalities, and make award(s) as deemed to be in the best interest of the State of South Dakota.

9.6 Award: The requesting agency and the highest ranked offeror shall mutually discuss and refine the scope of services for the project and shall negotiate terms, including compensation and performance schedule.

- If the agency and the highest ranked offeror are unable for any reason to negotiate a contract at a compensation level that is reasonable and fair to the agency, the agency shall, either orally or in writing, terminate negotiations with the contractor. The agency may then negotiate with the next highest ranked contractor.
- The negotiation process may continue through successive offerors, according to agency ranking, until an agreement is reached, or the agency terminates the contracting process.

10.0 COST PROPOSAL

Below is a basic **COST PROPOSAL** to provide guidance as you prepare costs for the various components of the RFP. Please know that you can modify your cost proposal however you wish to fit your overall responses.

10.1 Please state direct, hourly rates in the simple format provided below for all proposed agency team members and services provided within your proposal. Titles listed below are EXAMPLES/REFERENCE only. In your submission, please provide the actual titles and hourly rates for all agency personnel who will work on the account:

Title & Hourly Rate in Dollars Per Hour:

Account Management (Director/Account Executive, Account Coordinator, etc.)

Brand Planning (Research Director, Research Specialist, etc.)

Creative (Creative Director, Copywriter, Videographer, etc.)

Media (Paid Media Strategist, Media Planner, Media Buyer, etc.)

Digital (Digital Strategist, SEO Specialist, Developer, etc.)

Marketing Analytics (Analytics Director, Analytics Strategist, etc.)

Social (Social Media Director, Social Specialist, Content Creator, etc.)

Public Relations (Account Director, Event Actions Representative, etc.)

10.2 Media commission rate percentage that incorporates all costs for media research, planning, negotiation, tracking, pre- and post-buy analysis, and placement.

Media commission rate: %

10.3 In addition to ongoing marketing work costs, many agencies charge a flat monthly retainer fee for specific areas of work. If your agency charges a retainer fee, please list the fee for each area of work you will be responding to in the RFP. For example:

Monthly strategic & account leadership retainer fee: \$

Monthly creative retainer fee: \$

Monthly public relations retainer fee: \$

Monthly social media retainer fee: \$

Monthly eCRM retainer fee: \$

11.0 SCORING CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF WRITTEN PROPOSALS

11.1 The following are examples of some of the criteria we will be looking at when scoring. This is not an all-inclusive listing but will give the offeror an idea of general scoring guidelines.

1. Creativity and effectiveness:

- How well did the offeror meet the objectives of the component?
- Did agency demonstrate branding and marketing capability and experience?
- Tourism-related marketing and advertising experience.
- Does the agency show depth of knowledge and experience in tourism marketing?
- Did the agency demonstrate unique advertising concepts?

2. Personnel experience:

- Did agency demonstrate depth of team members with marketing experience or tourism marketing experience?
- Years of marketing experience of team members.
- Years of tourism experience of marketing team members.
- Agency experience and current/past clients.
- Special attention will be given to the skills of management assigned to the South Dakota Department of Tourism account, the Account Supervisor/Director, creative team, media buyers, etc.

3. Regional and national campaigns:

- Is there evidence that the offeror has successful experience in conducting regional and national marketing, advertising, brand management, media buys, public relations & event activation, social media, digital marketing, email marketing and website development for an account of this scope and size?
 - Score based upon the evaluation of **ONE (1)** relevant example of finished offeror-produced regional or national advertising campaign, brand management, media buys, public relations effort, activation campaign, social media campaign, digital marketing campaign, email marketing campaign or website development that demonstrates success.

4. Understanding of South Dakota product:

- Is there evidence that the offeror has a solid understanding of South Dakota's tourism product, national travel trends and forecasts, and South Dakota's potential to capture/increase market share?

5. Cost of services:

- Are the fees and costs reasonable and within a normal range of what is a typical going rate for a particular service

6. Philosophy and methodology of marketing:

- Is the agency's approach to marketing appealing?
- Does the agency's methodology ensure a quality, consistent product?
- Does the agency can deliver world-class service, creative campaigns, and strategic tactics?
- Is the agency's innovation evident and inspiring?
- Does the agency have a proven record of working well with other vendors?

7. Financial stability:

- Is there strength of evidence that the offeror is financially suited to provide the marketing services?
- Does the record show consistent, positive financial standing and practices?

8. References

- Were enough references with complete contact information provided?
- Did past and/or present clients give the agency favorable reviews?