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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### Professional Marketing Services – Public Relations

**Proposals will be accepted and must be received before:**

Friday, November 4, 2022  
5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

Visit Jacksonville  
Attn: Katie Mitura  
100 N. Laura St. Suite 120  
Jacksonville, FL 32202

**Refer Written Inquiries To:**

Katie Mitura  
Visit Jacksonville  
[kmitura@visitjacksonville.com](mailto:kmitura@visitjacksonville.com)

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

- A. Overview
- B. Working With Us

### **SECTION II: NOTICE TO OFFEROR(S)**

- A. Notice
- B. Questions and Inquiries
- C. Schedule of Important Dates
- D. Finalist Presentation/ On-site Visit

### **SECTION III: STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **SECTION IV: SCOPE OF SERVICES**

### **SECTION V: SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

### **SECTION VI: EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

- A. Offeror(s) Qualifications
- B. Method of Selection
- C. Stage One Evaluation Criteria
- D. Stage Two Evaluation Criteria

### **SECTION VII: CERTIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

## **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

Visit Jacksonville is seeking one or multiple agencies that can deliver creative, original, and effective professional services to work as collaborative partners in the development, implementation, and optimization of world-class marketing programs, further accelerating Jacksonville’s growth as a travel destination to state, regional, national and international markets.

An agency may subcontract or respond to portions of the RFP, so long as all existing relationships are fully disclosed during the bidding process. The lead agency of record must manage subcontractors. Should an agency using partners be selected, Visit Jacksonville may choose to contract and interact with all parties, including subcontractors, directly.

### **A. VISIT JACKSONVILLE OVERVIEW**

Visit Jacksonville is a Destinations International accredited Destination Marketing Organization contracted since 1996 by the Duval County Tourist Development Council (TDC) to champion the growth of leisure and business tourism in Jacksonville. On October 1, 2022, Visit Jacksonville began a 10-year contract with the City of Jacksonville. Visit Jacksonville is 100% funded by bed tax dollars collected from stays in Duval County hotels. Visit Jacksonville and the agencies it contracts with agree to operate under Florida’s Public Records Law.

### **B. WORKING WITH US**

Visit Jacksonville has talented staff that is eager to develop a collaborative relationship. Visit Jacksonville seeks an innovative partner(s) that provides the strategic and creative nimbleness needed to generate effective and measurable results.

- Knowledge and understanding of Jacksonville as a leisure and meeting destination.
- Team approach mentality, with the understanding that Visit Jacksonville staff and agency will all work together as a team.
- Provide thoughtful leadership and best practices that further the achievement of marketing objectives.
- An understanding of emerging technology, trends, platforms, and messaging opportunities and how to best leverage them on behalf of Visit Jacksonville with a responsible budget.
- A reputation for taking calculated risks – backed by insights and research – to achieve success.
- Transparency, accountability, and clear lines of agency communication are paramount.
- Previous agency and or critical staff experience working with destination marketing organizations (DMO) (*a must*).

- Knowledge and best practices of analytical benchmarks within the DMO/tourism industry.

Ultimately, the success and ROI of our marketing efforts will be supported by industry research and analytics that will measure an increase in awareness, intent to visit, actual visitation, and overnight stays for Jacksonville.

## **II. NOTICE TO OFFEROR(S)**

All responsive proposals will be evaluated by a team of persons based on stated evaluation criteria, accepted industry standards, and a comparative analysis of all other qualified responses. Submitted proposals must be complete at the time of submission. Offerors selected as finalists should expect to provide presentations to the selection committee.

This RFP contains the instructions governing the proposals to be submitted and a description of the mandatory requirements. To be eligible for consideration, an offeror(s) must meet the intent of all mandatory requirements. Compliance with the intent of all requirements will be determined by Visit Jacksonville. Responses that do not meet the full intent of all requirements listed in this RFP may be subject to point reductions during the evaluation process or may be rejected from consideration.

### **A. NOTICE**

Proposals are due by **5:00 PM EST on Friday, November 4, 2022**, after which time all qualified proposals will be acknowledged at 100 N. Laura St. Suite 120, Jacksonville, FL 32202. Proposals received after this time will not be accepted for consideration. The submissions must be in the format and order as directed.

The original and all copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope or container. No electronic or facsimile submissions will be accepted.

One (1) unbound original and ten (10) copies of the complete proposal must be provided. **Proposals shall be delivered to:**

Hand-deliver or ship to (FedEx, UPS, DHL, etc.):  
Visit Jacksonville  
Attn: Katie Mitura  
100 N. Laura St. Suite 120  
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Visit Jacksonville reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received and the right to choose parts of the RFP to execute.

Regardless of cause, late proposals will not be accepted and will automatically be disqualified from

further consideration. It shall be the offeror's sole risk to re delivery at the designated office by the designated time. Late proposals will not be opened and may be returned to the offeror at the expense of the offeror or destroyed.

**B. INTENT TO BID, QUESTIONS AND INQUIRIES**

Interested parties should submit an email stating they intend to bid no later than **5:00 PM EST on Thursday, October 13, 2022**, to be included in responses to questions submitted. Not providing an intent to bid via email by this deadline will not preclude an interested party from still bidding on the proposal; however, it will exempt Visit Jacksonville from including the party in the responses provided on questions submitted. All questions submitted by the deadline below as well as answers provided will be posted on the Visit Jacksonville website.

Questions and inquiries about this RFP shall be submitted in writing via email to the following point of contact:

Katie Mitura

Chief Marketing Officer

Email: [kmitura@visitjacksonville.com](mailto:kmitura@visitjacksonville.com) and cc: [marketing@visitjacksonville.com](mailto:marketing@visitjacksonville.com)

The deadline for written questions is **3:00 PM EST on Friday, October 14, 2022**. This deadline has been established to provide adequate time for staff to prepare responses to questions from proposers to the best of their ability in advance of the proposal closing. Answers will be provided to all that have provided a written intent to bid no later than **5:00 PM EST on Wednesday, October 19, 2022**. Questions and answers will also be posted on the Visit Jacksonville website under the Request for Proposals page. <https://www.visitjacksonville.com/about/request-for-proposals/>

Offeror(s) shall not attempt to contact industry stakeholders, City Council members, committee and/or Visit Jacksonville board members, Visit Jacksonville staff or management regarding any portion of this Request for Proposal directly or indirectly during the post-proposal period and will abide by the terms and process regarding this procurement.

**Any unauthorized contact may disqualify the offeror from further consideration.**

Visit Jacksonville intends to respond to all appropriate questions or concerns; however, Visit Jacksonville reserves the right to decline to respond to any question or concern. Any interpretation, corrections or change to this RFP will be made by written addendum, which will be publicly posted on the Visit Jacksonville website. Interpretations, corrections or changes to this RFP made in any other manner will not be binding and offerors shall not rely upon such interpretations, corrections or changes. All addenda issued prior to the due date and time for responses are incorporated into the RFP and must be acknowledged in the proposal response. Only written information provided shall be

binding. Oral or other interpretations shall not be binding and are held without legal effect.

### **C. SCHEDULE OF IMPORTANT DATES**

Visit Jacksonville will generally comply with the following schedule for the selection process and are subject to change if necessary to ensure fairness and to accommodate unanticipated events:

RFP Released	Friday, October 7, 2022
Deadline for Intent to Bid	Thursday, October 13, 2022 at 5:00 PM EST
Deadline for Questions and Inquiries	Friday, October 14, 2022 at 3:00 PM EST
Responses for Questions Provided and Posted	Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 5:00 PM EST
Proposal Closing Date and Time	Friday, November 4 at 5:00 PM EST
Potential On-Site Presentations	November 7-11, 2022
Evaluation and Review of Proposals	November 7-18, 2022
Agencies Notified of Selection	Wednesday, November 23, 2022
Contract Commences	Monday, January 2, 2023

### **D. FINALIST PRESENTATION/ON-SITE VISIT**

After receipt of all proposals and before the determination of the award(s), respondents may be asked to submit additional information, complete strategic assignments and/or recommendations. Finalists may be asked to make an oral presentation/on-site visit in Jacksonville, to clarify their response or to further define their offer. Specifics about the presentation and additional destination documents will be shared with finalists as soon as possible with presentations to be expected the week of November 7-11, 2022.

Oral presentations/on-site visit, if requested, shall be at the offeror's expense. Offerors will be required to bring key personnel involved in the project to the oral presentations/interview. Final selection of the awarded offeror(s) shall be based on a combination of both the written and in-person proposals.

## **III. STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **A. AWARD OF CONTRACT AND NEGOTIATIONS**

This RFP does not commit Visit Jacksonville to award a contract, to pay any costs in preparation of a proposal, or to contract for the goods and/or services offered. Selection shall be made of one or more offerors deemed to be fully qualified, best suited and offering the best value that meets the needs of Visit Jacksonville, among those submitting proposals on the basis of evaluation factors included in the RFP.

The initial contract period will begin January 1, 2023, and end December 31, 2025. At Visit Jacksonville's option, the agreement may be extended for two (2) additional one-year periods.

Visit Jacksonville may pursue contract negotiations with finalist agencies of our choosing and reserves the right to negotiate concurrently or separately with competing proposers. All agency contracts will include requirements for specific service levels and measurable performance standards. Measurable standards will be based on Visit Jacksonville's fiscal year which runs from October 1 through September 30 each year.

**Only a fully executed agreement shall bind the parties.**

Visit Jacksonville will not furnish a statement of the reason why a particular proposal or presentation was not deemed to be the most advantageous. At any time during the negotiations, Visit Jacksonville may terminate all negotiations and re-advertise the requirement. The reason for such termination shall be made part of the file. The award document shall be a signed contract incorporated by reference all the requirements, terms and conditions of the RFP and the Contractor's proposal as negotiated.

**B. DISCLOSURES**

Visit Jacksonville specifically disclaims any warranty or accuracy of the information included herein. It is the respondent's sole responsibility to conduct their own appropriate due diligence as they see fit. The issuance of this document and receipt of information in response will not in any way cause Visit Jacksonville to incur liability or obligation to you or your organization, financial or otherwise.

At the due date and time there will be no disclosure of the contents of any proposal to competing proposers, and all proposals will be kept confidential during the negotiation process. Except for trade secrets and confidential information, which the firm identifies as proprietary, all proposals will be open for public inspection upon request after the contract award.

Contracting with Visit Jacksonville requires adherence to all necessary licenses, permits and authorizations required by all applicable governmental agencies and authorities as a condition to conduct business in the State of Florida and to work on the Services. Agency may have to provide proof of such if requested by the City of Jacksonville. Agency should be aware that all work provided for Visit Jacksonville is owned fully by the City of Jacksonville, not Visit Jacksonville as an entity.

**C. OFFEROR COMPETITION**

Visit Jacksonville encourages free and open competition among offerors. Whenever possible, specifications, proposal requests and conditions are designed to accomplish this objective, consistent with the necessity to satisfy the need to procure technically sound, cost-effective services.

- The offeror's signature on a proposal in response to this RFP guarantees that the prices quoted have been established without collusion and without effort to preclude Visit

Jacksonville from obtaining the best possible scope of services.

**D. PRIORITY OF DOCUMENTS**

In the event there are inconsistencies between the RFP terms and conditions, scope of work or contract agreement terms and conditions contained therein, the latter will take precedence.

**E. RECEIPT OF PROPOSALS**

Proposal(s) must be received by the Visit Jacksonville prior to the time and date specified. The mere fact that the proposal was dispatched will not be considered; the agency must ensure that the proposal is delivered.

**F. REIMBURSEMENTS**

There is no express or implied obligation for Visit Jacksonville to reimburse responding offeror(s) for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals or presenting materials on site in response to this request.

**G. REPRESENTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each offeror who submits a proposal represents that:

- The proposal is based upon an understanding of the specification and requirements described in this RFP.
- Costs for developing and delivering responses to this RFP and any subsequent presentations of the proposal as requested are entirely the responsibility of the offeror. Visit Jacksonville is not liable for any expense incurred by the offerors in the preparation and presentation of their proposals.
- All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of Visit Jacksonville and are to be appended to any formal documentation, which would further define or expand any contractual relationship between Visit Jacksonville and offeror resulting from this RFP process.
- Offeror(s) may submit a modified proposal to replace all or any portion of a previously submitted proposal until the Deadline for receipt of proposals. Visit Jacksonville will only consider the latest proposal submitted. Failure to submit a complete and responsive proposal shall result in automatic rejection of the proposal.

**H. RIGHTS RESERVED**

While Visit Jacksonville has every intention to award a single contract for each bid service as a result of this RFP, issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by Visit Jacksonville to award a contract. Upon a determination such actions would be in its best interests, Visit Jacksonville in its sole discretion reserves the right to:

- waive any formality.



- cancel or terminate this RFP.
- reject any or all proposals received in response to this document.
- waive any undesirable, inconsequential or inconsistent provisions of this document which would not have significant impact on any proposal.
- not award, or if awarded, terminate any contract if Visit Jacksonville determines adequate funds are not available.

#### **I. SUBCONTRACTING**

The successful offeror will be the prime contractor and shall be responsible, in total, for all work of any pre-approved subcontractors. All known subcontractors must be listed in the proposal. Visit Jacksonville requires that all subcontractors be approved before any work is started on our behalf.

The contractor shall be responsible to Visit Jacksonville for the acts and omissions of all subcontractors or agents and of persons directly or indirectly employed by such subcontractors, and for the acts and omissions of persons employed directly by the contractor. Further, nothing contained within this document, or any contract documents created as a result of any contract awards derived from this RFP, shall create any contractual relationships between any subcontractor and Visit Jacksonville.

#### **J. WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS**

A proposal may be withdrawn only by written notification. Letters of withdrawal received after the deadline for receipt of proposals will not be accepted unless the contract has been awarded to another vendor or no award has been made within ninety (90) days after the deadline for receipt of proposals. Unless withdrawn, as provided in this subsection, a proposal shall be irrevocable until the time that a contract is awarded. Proposals and/or modifications to proposals received after the deadline for receipt of proposals specified in the RFP timeline are late and shall not be considered.

### **IV. SCOPE OF SERVICES: PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Visit Jacksonville seeks an experienced agency to support strategic communication, media relations and public relations priorities. The selected agency will be responsible for supporting and amplifying Visit Jacksonville’s public relations, influencer and earned media efforts as it relates to engaging in an overarching communications strategy. The communications plan will be guided by the organization's key strategic objectives and should work in tandem with the yearly communications and public relations deliverables.

Selected Agency will be responsible for the following:

- Strengthening Jacksonville’s brand awareness among its target audiences and stakeholders through public relations efforts.
- Establishing target media lists – inclusive of leisure, meetings and trade outlets, narrowed down by specific topics such as food.

- Conducting quality media relations initiatives with key journalists.
- Engaging with digital influencers.
- Preparing strategic, proactive pitches and press materials.
- Initiating and creating buzz-worthy PR campaigns and partnerships.
- Coordinating familiarization trips, group and individual, as required.
- Delivering monthly reports of results of efforts and strategies.
- Collaborating with Visit Jacksonville’s other agencies (creative, advertising, etc.) as necessary.
- Assisting with crisis communications, if/when necessary.

## **V. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Visit Jacksonville will not accept oral proposals, or proposals received by telephone, FAX machine or email. To ensure timely and fair consideration of each response, proposals must be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the offeror's ability to meet all requirements and specifications of this RFP. Emphasis should be focused on completeness, clarity of content and responsiveness to all requirements and specifications of this RFP.

**The proposal must be submitted in hard copy. One (1) unbound original and ten (10) copies of the complete proposal must be provided.**

Visit Jacksonville requires comprehensive responses to every section within this RFP. To facilitate the review of the responses, respondents shall follow the described format. The intent of the proposal format is to expedite review and evaluation. It is not the intent to constrain offeror(s) with regard to content, but to assure that the specific requirements set forth in this RFP are addressed in a uniform manner amenable to review.

- Offeror(s) must organize proposals into sections following the format of this RFP. Points may be subtracted for noncompliance with these specified proposal format requests.
- Visit Jacksonville may also choose not to evaluate, may deem non-responsive, and/or may disqualify from further consideration any proposals that do not follow this RFP format, are difficult to understand, are difficult to read, or are missing any requested information.

## **REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROPOSAL:**

### **A. AGENCY INFORMATION OVERVIEW**

1. Agency name and contact details.
2. Authorization Letter and Signature. Under the signature of a company representative,

provide the names of individuals authorized to represent and negotiate the company's products and services.

3. Company Overview.
4. An overview of the dedicated account team including brief bios and tourism- specific experience if applicable.
5. Description of agency's tactical process (for day-to-day digital projects).
6. No more than four case studies featuring relevant assignments.
7. Campaign samples relevant to this assignment.
8. Key Strengths: Describe the accounts or categories in which you believe you have special strengths.
9. Special Experience: Is there anything special about your agency experience or expertise that a new business prospect should know about?
10. Approach to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion - both within your agency and in your approach to this work.
11. Which services or parts of the RFP will you hire subcontractors to provide?
12. How do you manage subcontractors so that the client is able to easily convey its strategy, goals and objectives and answer questions from the people working on its accounts?

#### **B. AGENCY INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO SCOPE OF WORK**

1. Provide at least two examples of successful destination PR work demonstrating earned media coverage for a tourism client.
2. Provide at least two examples of successful influencer campaigns you created and executed along with the goals/objectives and results, including how you measured the success of the campaign.
3. Please explain your process and methodology used for earned media strategy development.
4. Provide a description of your tactical process (for day-to-day earned media projects).
5. Describe your methodology for measurement/ROI of a client's Public Relations investment.
6. Provide at least two examples of successful crisis public relations work demonstrating preparedness and management expertise.

#### **C. COST PROPOSAL**

1. Compensation: What is your practice regarding agency compensation? Do you have any preferences regarding commissions vs. fees? How do you plan to structure compensation for this RFP? Are you open to a performance-based compensation

arrangement?

2. Fee Schedule: In what areas do you charge fees in addition to commissions on media and production and what is your fee schedule for these services?
3. Please include your standard rate structure, including hourly rates for staff roles required to service the scope described in the RFP document. RFP Submissions without agency rates and/or compensation information will be automatically disqualified.
4. Please include your method of billing for work to include frequency and payment terms.

#### **D. CURRENT CLIENT AND AGENCY REFERENCES**

Please provide contact information for at least five (5) current clients and two agencies you have collaborated with. Wherever possible, please include travel industry or destination marketing clients as references. For each reference, please indicate the following:

- Contact Name and Title
- Contact Company Name
- Contact Phone Number and Email
- Client Industry/Agency Type
- Brief Service/Relationship Description
- Length of Relationship

#### **E. SAMPLES OF WORK**

Based on the bid request(s) submitted, the offeror(s) should provide a minimum of two samples for each of the scope of services requested which are pertinent to this proposal. The components of the program must be detailed and specific.

### **VI. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS**

#### **A. METHOD OF SELECTION**

The evaluation committee will separate proposals into “responsive” and “non-responsive” proposals. Non-responsive proposals will be eliminated from further consideration.

- Any proposal that fails to achieve a passing score for any part/section for which a passing score is indicated will be disqualified from further consideration.
- The evaluation committee will evaluate the remaining proposals. The evaluation committee reserves the right to adjust these percentages as they deem appropriate.
- Awards will be based on the offeror’s proposal and other items outlined in this RFP. Responses must be complete and address all the criteria listed. Information or materials presented by offerors outside the formal response or subsequent

discussion/negotiation or “best and final offer,” if requested, will not be considered and will have no bearing on any award. Offerors who attempt to provide information or materials outside the formal response may be found non-responsive.

- A “best and final offer” may be requested on price/cost alone

**B. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Based on a maximum possible value of 100 points, the evaluation committee will review and evaluate the offers according to the following criteria:

<b>COMPANY QUALIFICATIONS</b>	<b>Possible 30 Points</b>
A. References	5
B. Experience similar to contract needs	10
C. Project Staff	5
D. Agency Overview/Strengths	10
<b>PROJECTS/CAMPAIGNS</b>	<b>Possible 30 Points</b>
A. Creativity	7
B. Overall Project/ Campaign	8
C. Effectiveness of Project/Campaign	8
D. Measurable Results	7
<b>METHOD OF PROVIDING SERVICES</b>	<b>Possible 20 Points</b>
A. Scope of Work Assessment	12
B. Samples of Work	8
<b>COST FOR SERVICES</b>	<b>Possible 20 Points</b>
Offeror(s) cost for billable services	20
<b>TOTAL Possible Points</b>	<b>100</b>



**SECTION VII: CERTIFICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

**RFP Submission Form | INSERT RFP Name**

Please fill out form completely, including an authorized signature. Visit Jacksonville reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or to accept proposals deemed most favorable.

Company Name:	
Address:	
City/State/Zip:	
Phone Number:	
Email:	
Federal Tax ID:	
Authorized Name:	
Authorized Signature:	
<b>PRIMARY CONTACT</b>	
Name:	
Phone Number:	
Email:	