

Crystal Coast Tourism Development Authority

Request For Proposal - Public Relations

REGISTRATION FOR SUBMISSION:

This announcement is a summary of the Request for Proposal for Public Relations services. Interested agencies MUST contact Rita LeClair, Rita@crystalcoastnc.org, no later than 3:00 pm on 3/10/2022 to register and receive the complete RFP. Proposals from firms not registered will not be accepted.

CLIENT BRIEF

- **Overview**
 - The Crystal Coast is a quaint coastal destination along the North Carolina Atlantic seashore. Tourism promotion is carried out through the efforts of the Crystal Coast Tourism Development Authority (hereinafter referred to as the CCTDA). The purpose of the CCTDA is to attract visitors to Carteret County, generating tourism-related revenues, and enhance the economy of the county.
 - The CCTDA is seeking proposals from Public Relations firms, with extensive experience in travel and tourism, to plan, coordinate, implement and administer a regional and national public relations campaign for our destination. The CCTDA is seeking a firm that will work with our organization and our Advertising Agency of Record as a partner; has experience building and managing highly recognized brands; has excellent creative skills; and can provide measurable, high-quality results in a cost-efficient manner.
 - This RFP is for Public Relations services only.

- **Brand History**
 - The Crystal Coast is an 85 mile stretch of beaches that is also known as the Southern Outer Banks. The collection of 11 towns and beaches offers a unique blend of history, family fun, water sports and natural areas. The Crystal Coast is a leisure destination brand in existence for almost 30 years. Among the eleven communities, the most recognizable towns are Atlantic Beach, Beaufort, Emerald Isle and Morehead City. The organization was originally called the Carteret County Tourism Development Authority but adopted the Crystal Coast name in its early years. For more information on the Crystal Coast, please refer to our website: <https://crystalcoastnc.org>.
 - We are in the process of completing a new Brand Assessment study, inclusive of readdressing our logo, brand message and style guide.

SCOPE OF WORK

PRIMARY GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The CCTDA requires a proposer to provide public relations initiatives including, but not limited to, strategic planning, partnership opportunities, media relations and activated media events

and programs, content creation and distribution. From time to time, support may be required for travel trade media FAM trips as well as support for domestic media projects and events. The firm will:

- Serve as the Public Relations Firm/Agency of Record to generate extensive exposure for the Crystal Coast.
- Successfully integrate public relations plans with the efforts of our advertising partners.
- Identify potential projects where the CCTDA would be able to work with appropriate media and brands: identify tradeshow and events worthy of consideration.
- Successfully promote the Crystal Coast as a premier overnight destination, with specific emphasis on our shoulder- and off-season periods.
- Actively participate in building quality, current content for our website blog.

CORE EXPECTATIONS OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM

- Provide an experienced senior manager as primary point of contact for the Crystal Coast account and staff communications.
- Presenting experience in both the value of combined vacation rental and beach destinations is a vital expectation of this proposal.
- Work closely with our in-house team, Advertising Agency of Record, Marketing Committee, Board of Directors and any additional CCTDA designated partners to develop a strategic and targeted PR Plan.
- Provide client support through meetings, conference and video calls, presenting at stakeholder sessions as needed.
- Provide Monthly efficacy of Public Relation campaigns by providing reports which both outline action plan activity and successful coverage.
- Develop and distribute story angles and press releases, highlighting the unique aspects of the Crystal Coast as a year-round destination.
- Coordinate and execute FAM trips for media and influencers.
- Serve as a primary point of contact, managing reactive media inquiries and evaluating the value of individual journalist and influencer requests for overnight accommodations and/or access to services and amenities on the Crystal Coast.
- Assist CCTDA staff with pre-screening and review of potential media appointment at public relations related events.
- Perform all necessary services related to the successful development and execution of said PR strategy and plan.
- Produce written estimates for any project authorized by the CCTDA in advance of any work on that project.
- Produce accurate and timely invoices, inclusive of detailed supporting documentation, for the execution of services.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The CCTDA will determine if a conflict of interest exists among entities with which the firm has current or future relationships. Such conflicts of interest are generally considered to be other coastal destinations from Virginia Beach, VA, south through Hilton Head Island, SC. The existence of any such relationship (either ongoing or project based) does not necessarily create a conflict of interest. However, the firm will be expected to disclose, immediately, any travel industry-related entities with which it has a relationship. The CCTDA will make the final determination as to whether a conflict of interest exists now or in the future.

Agencies are asked to seek permission of any other destination client before responding to this RFP.

Proposal Package:

While also showcasing your style, experiences and approach, please provide the following information in the order listed below:

- 1) Cover Page.
- 2) Business Profile – including location of main office and branch offices, and year established.
- 3) Brief summary of company background and history.
- 4) Professional tourism experience, with a minimum of three tourism client references.
- 5) Personnel, inclusive of lead and supporting roles and relevant experience.
- 6) Firm Experience and Qualifications:
 - a. Please provide two examples of similar projects with other similar size destination organizations.
 - b. A background with presenting vacation rental experiences will be extremely important component of the selection process.
 - c. Provide several samples of press releases/pitches demonstrating strong writing techniques and creativity.
 - d. What is the method you use to present both monthly activities and measurable results of your public relations campaigns? Please provide examples.
 - e. Briefly describe your knowledge and understanding of the Crystal Coast's existing assets as they relate to tourism campaign programs. Cite examples that have great equity or potential for PR travel opportunities.
- 7) How will your firm collaborate with our selected Advertising Agency of Record on all integrated efforts?
- 8) Total cost (including a breakdown of services available, but not included in the RFP).

Please note that your proposal will form an integral part of the contract.

Timeline:

March 1, 2022: RFP published

March 10, 2022: Deadline to register for receipt of full RFP package

March 18, 2022: Questions Due by 3:00 pm

March 25, 2022: Responses to questions published

April 15, 2022: Proposals Due by 3:00 pm

April 26 - 29, 2022: *Committee reviews proposals

May 10, 2022: *Recommendation on PR Firm to hire made to full board of directors

July 1, 2022: Contract Begins

*Review periods subject to change based on committee and board schedules

Selection Process:

Proposals will be evaluated by the Crystal Coast tourism Development Authority Executive Director and Marketing Committee, in consultation and with direction from the CCTDA Board of Directors. During the evaluation process, the CCTDA reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from those submitting the proposals.

Based on the number of proposals submitted, a short list may be selected for telephone or Zoom interviews. The CCTDA may interview none, one or all agencies who submitted proposals. CCTDA reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the proposals that it deems acceptable, reject any or all proposals, and to waive minor irregularities in the procedures.