



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT of RESOURCES and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION of TRAVEL and TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
172 Pembroke Road P.O. Box 1856 Concord, New Hampshire 03302-1856

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DOMESTIC PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Issue Date: **Friday, March 2, 2012**

Title: Domestic Public Relations Services

Issuing Agency: State of New Hampshire
Department of Resources and Economic Development
Division of Travel & Tourism Development
172 Pembroke Road
PO Box 1856
Concord, NH 03302-1856

Period of Contract: July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014 with one, two year option to renew (through June 30, 2016) upon written consent of both parties, and approval by the Governor and Executive Council.

Proposal Deadline: **Thursday, March 22, 2012 at 2pm**
**Proposals will not be accepted at DRED after 2pm.*

ALL PROPOSALS MUST BE LABELED: "PROPOSAL – DOMESTIC PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES"

Any questions or clarification on the RFP should be directed to Tai Freligh via email by 3pm on **Friday, March 9, 2012**. Responses will be shared with bidders and also posted on www.visitnh.gov/rfp on **Thursday, March 15, 2012**.

Tai Freligh, Communications Manager
Email: tai.freligh@dred.state.nh.us

If proposals are mailed, send directly to issuing agency shown above. If proposals are hand-delivered, deliver to receptionist at DRED office, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord.

1. PURPOSE

Pursuant to New Hampshire state law, the New Hampshire Division of Travel and Tourism Development (DTTD) is soliciting competitive proposals to contract services from qualified entities, with a specialty in media and public relations, to promote New Hampshire as a year-round travel destination (primarily for leisure and the travel trade, but with consideration for weddings, meetings and conference opportunities) for a contract period of July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014 with one, two year option to renew (through June 30, 2016) upon written consent of both parties, and approval by the Governor and Executive Council.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Travel and Tourism is the state's second largest industry, employing approximately 62,000 full and part time individuals and is a significant revenue producer for New Hampshire businesses and state government.

Direct spending in New Hampshire by travelers in FY11 reached \$4.22 billion. Visitors in FY11 paid \$139.2 million in meals and rooms taxes (estimated to be 60% of all M&R taxes collected).

Domestic PR efforts for FY11 brought in earned media circulation of 1.7B and earned media value of \$9.1M. Notable publications in which stories about New Hampshire have appeared in over the past year include *USA Today*, *Travel & Leisure*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal* and the *Associated Press*.

DTTD's marketing campaigns are year-round and therefore public relations efforts are continuous throughout the year. All marketing and public relations promote the 1-800-FUN-IN-NH number and the website www.visitnh.gov.

3. GENERAL TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 Terms

a. DTTD, a division of the Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED), has issued and is responsible for this RFP. DRED will enter into the resulting contract on behalf of the State, upon approval by the Governor and Executive Council ("G&C").

b. Successful bidder must indemnify the State of New Hampshire against any liability associated with use of any information gathered in the course of fulfilling any assignment. Successful bidder must agree to keep all projects confidential and to not use project assignment information provided

by the Division of Travel and Tourism Development to secure an unfair advantage in providing other services outside this contract.

c. The Contractor may “subcontract” services. Proposals that include subcontracting services must include information identifying the subcontractor(s) and demonstrate the subcontractor(s)’ qualifications to perform the services, and a letter from the proposed subcontractor(s) stating their intent to subcontract on this project. The prime contractor will be responsible for all services provided by, and obligations of its subcontractor(s). All communications, departmental direction, invoices and payments will be processed through the prime contractor. All data generated as a result of this contract is the exclusive property of DTTD. Contractor is to provide DTTD with 90 days written notice of any proposed changes to sub-contractor.

3.2 Definitions

a. "Offeror" refers to any individual, corporation, partnership, or agency that responds in writing, to the Request For Proposal (RFP).

b. "Contractor" refers to the Offeror under this RFP with which the Division of Travel and Tourism Development (DTTD) negotiates a contract. The terms of this RFP referring to "Contractor" represent contract terms that will be a part of the final contract.

c. The "Contract" is the resulting contract entered into between DRED and the successful Offeror.

d. A "subcontractor" refers to a person who is awarded a portion of an existing contract by the Contractor.

4. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The domestic public relations efforts will be combined with and support other elements of the marketing mix design to increase revenues from business and leisure travelers to New Hampshire. Overall success will be reflected in jobs retention and creation, profitability for tourism/related businesses and increased Meals & Rooms Tax revenue.

The contractor shall recommend, execute and follow up on press and public relations campaigns involving press releases, events and story ideas for the media. The contractor is also responsible for tracking coverage, pitching stories to travel media and responding to media inquiries. Specific details are as follows:

4.1 New York Market

As the largest media market in the country, DTTD's ad budget can establish a modest presence in New York, so we count on PR to create the impact we need. Overall, this Designated Marketing Area (DMA) is one of the most affluent in the country: 2,458,574 Adults 18+ are 15.2% of the population and have household incomes of \$100,000-\$149,999; 2,850,364 Adults 18+ are 17.6% of the population and have household incomes of \$150,000+.

We know that New Yorkers do come to New Hampshire on vacation, in increasing numbers, and they stay longer than people from greater Boston or Hartford or Providence, and while here they spend more per day than other visitors living in different parts of New England. Proposals should outline a PR approach to this market. Firms with a New York office or affiliations with New York media will be given extra consideration.

4.2 Strategic Public Relations Planning

After conducting a public relations audit of DTTD's current PR activities, Contractor, in collaboration with DTTD and its contracted partners (including the creative agency and website design company), will develop and execute a strategic public relations plan that will be an integral part of the overall tourism marketing plan, targeted at the leisure, group and business traveler markets.

At year end, conduct a review of DTTD key marketing messages and evaluate effectiveness of the strategic public relations plan in terms of the quality of media coverage of these key messages. Strategic plan adjusted accordingly to meet these needs.

4.3 Media Relations

Develop editorial calendar for media pitches based on DTTD's Advertising Agency marketing and media buy plan.

Conduct targeted pitching to national media for short and long-lead publication deadlines, including some TV (Travel Channel, GMA, Today Show, etc.) and radio.

Engage in targeted pitches to core markets of Boston and Philadelphia, with an expansion into the New York market.

Contractor will draft and distribute pitch letters after review by DTTD.

Contractor will review and distribute press releases drafted by DTTD.

Fact-check all pitches and releases to ensure accurate and up-to-date information is distributed to the media.

Provide follow up to media leads, including those on social media platforms.

4.4 Industry Relations

Participate in annual Governor's Conference on Tourism (typically held in April/May)

Engage the tourism industry as Public Relations Partners

- Identifying opportunities to leverage key messages
- Participate in workshops to enhance PR skills within the industry at the Governor's Conference.
- Provide PR tips in the monthly PR Insider to the industry.

4.5 Public Relations Support

Work with DTTD on developing opportunities to provide public relations and communications support around key initiatives (such as tourism branding, Governor's Conference on Tourism, etc.).

Work with DTTD's domestic and international partners.

Recommend strategy for on-going social media platforms, new platforms and social media campaigns – including, but not limited to, as appropriate, web-logs (blogs), travel sites and forums.

4.6 Strategic Counsel

Contractor will make themselves available to discuss strategic response to emergency/crisis situations directly pertaining to DTTD and sometimes other DRED agencies or partners.

4.7 Clipping Service

Provide a clipping service of NH articles from both consumer and trade publications report. Each article and broadcast will be analyzed to determine the US dollar value of editorial based on the cost if the article or broadcast was purchased as advertising print space, or radio or TV air time (i.e. no mark up). Circulation details should be included as well.

4.8 Reports

Contractor will provide DTTD with a monthly report detailing the account's activity by the 5th day of the following month.

Contractor will recommend methods to track coverage and measure results of PR efforts and submit to DTTD monthly identifying those stories that were generated by the contractor, including media circulation and media value to be used for the DTTD *PR Insider* e-newsletter.

Contractor shall also submit the above information to DRED for the monthly *Partner's Report*.

The contractor will provide an annual end-of-year report that evaluates and measures the previous year's marketing efforts.

5. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Copies and Distribution of Proposal

In order to be considered for selection, Offerors must submit a complete written response to this RFP by the deadline of 2:00 pm, on **Thursday, March 22, 2012**. One (1) original and five (5) copies of each written proposal, as well as an electronic copy on CD, must be submitted to DTTD. No other distribution of the written proposal shall be made by the Offeror.

5.2 Organization and Experience

Organizational structure, staff size by department, current client list, and names and resumes of principles and proposed account team.

5.3 Oral Presentation: Offerors may be required to make oral presentations, if requested.

5.4 Financial Standing: An Offeror, if requested, must be prepared to present evidence of financial standing necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth in the proposal.

6. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Proposal Submissions

a. All information requested must be submitted. Failure to submit this information at time of bid will render your proposal non-compliant and will result in a disqualification.

b. Offeror shall provide a thorough description of its plans and approach for accomplishing the requirements of *Section 4: Scope of Services*.

c. The proposal shall include all pricing information relative to performing the scope of services described in this RFP. No payment can be made on a cost-plus-a-percentage basis (net only). Monthly invoices are to be submitted by the 15th of the following month, itemized as defined by the State. State payment terms are net 30.

d. Proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that DTTD may properly evaluate Offeror capabilities to provide the required services. The State of New Hampshire will not be responsible for expenses incurred in preparing this proposal and such costs associated with it should not be included.

e. Each copy of the proposal must be in a single volume. Proposals must be prepared simply and economically, providing straightforward, concise description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

f. The original copy must remain at DTTD, available for public inspection and disclosure, subsequent to awarding of the contract. Information considered confidential or proprietary may be marked as such by the submitting party. However, such determinations are not conclusive on DTTD and DTTD shall be subject to the provisions and requirements of RSA chapter 91-A (the New Hampshire right-to-know law) when determining what documents are subject to public inspection/disclosure pursuant to a right-to-know request.

g. Proposals shall be signed by an authorized representative of the Offeror.

h. Proposals must include the Contractor Data Sheet (Exhibit A).

i. Proposals must also include the Financial Terms Worksheet (Exhibit B).

7. EVALUATION AND AWARD CRITERIA

7.1 General Information:

a. All proposals will be evaluated for responsiveness to the RFP by a Selection Committee made up of representatives of DRED and the tourism industry.

b. The State of New Hampshire reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and to use any ideas in a proposal regardless of whether or not a proposal is selected.

- 7.2 Criteria: See Scoring Sheet (Exhibit D). Proposals shall be evaluated using the following criteria:
- a. Overall Strategy (45 points)
 - b. Cost of Services (10 points)
 - c. Experience & Qualifications of Key Staff and Subcontractors (30 points)
 - d. References (15 points)

- 7.3 Award of Contracts: Offeror(s) deemed to be best suited among those submitting written proposals will be identified on the basis of evaluation factors stated in the Request For Proposal. Offeror(s) may be asked to make oral presentations.

The Selection Committee will make a recommendation for selection of a Contractor to the Commissioner of DRED. The selected Contractor will be notified in writing. DRED and the selected Contractor shall negotiate a contract containing the terms in the RFP. If DRED is unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the first selected Contractor, DRED may undertake negotiations with the next recommended Offeror.

The proposed Contract must be approved by the Governor and Executive Council. This process takes approximately four to six weeks after the execution of Contract. The contract approved by the Governor and Executive Council will be effective July 1, 2012.

- 7.4 Proposed Timetable:

Issue legal notice/RFP distribution	Friday, March 2, 2012
Clarifying questions time deadline	Friday, March 9, 2012, 3PM
Answers emailed/posted to website	Thursday, March 15, 2012
Written Proposals Deadline	Thursday, March 22, 2012, 2PM
Screening Committee Review	Thursday, March 29, 2012
Co's Selected for Oral Presentations	Tuesday, April 3, 2012
Oral Presentations	Tuesday, April 10, 2012
Companies notified by	Monday, April 16, 2012
Contract Negotiations	April/May, 2012
Contract to Governor and Council	May, 2012
Contract start date	July 1, 2012

Note: DTTD reserves the right to adjust this schedule as it deems necessary, at its sole discretion.

- 8.1 Ownership of Subsequent Products: Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP is to be the sole property of the State of New Hampshire unless stated otherwise in the contract.
- 8.2 Conformance With Statutes: Any contract awarded as a result of this RFP must be in full conformance with statutory requirements of the State of New Hampshire.
- 8.3 Amending or Canceling: The State reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP, prior to the due date if it is in the best interest of the State, or to correct inaccuracies resulting from clerical errors.
- 8.4 Rejection for Misrepresentation: The State reserves the right to reject the proposal of any vendor for misrepresentation.
- 8.5 Conflict of Interest: DTTD reserves the right to request additional information from any Offeror on potential conflicts of interest and to limit or prohibit the participation of any Offeror due to conflict of interest as may be determined by the sole discretion of DTTD.
- 8.6 Contract Format: The successful Contractor will be required to become an approved vendor through the online application (<https://admin.state.nh.us/purchasing/vendorregistration>) and sign or provide the following documentation:
- :
- a. Service Contract Form – Form P-37 (Exhibit C).
 - b. Certificate of Authority/Vote. This document is required to certify that the individual who signs the contract has been legally authorized to do so on behalf of their organization. DTTD can provide a template for your specific business type (corporation, partnership, sole proprietor or Limited Liability Corporation) upon request.
 - c. Certificate of Good Standing. This document is required for all contracts exceeding thirty (30) days. They are issued by the New Hampshire Secretary of State's office certifying that the corporation, partnership, or trade name has been registered to do business in New Hampshire. Certificates of Good Standing shall be current and are renewable annually by April 1st.
 - d. General liability insurance against all claims of bodily injury, death, or property damage in amounts not less than US\$250,000 per claim and US\$2,000,000 per incident, and fire and extended coverage insurance covering all DTTD property in amounts of not less than 80% of the whole replacement value of the property.