

Solicitation for **Visit North Carolina Advertising Agency of Record July 2017-June 2022**

Legal Name

of Company/Organization or Individual: _____

THIS PAGE IS TO BE FILLED OUT AND RETURNED WITH YOUR BID.

FAILURE TO DO SO MAY SUBJECT YOUR BID TO REJECTION.

ATTENTION

Your Federal Employer Identification Number or alternate identification number (e.g., Social Security Number) may be used for internal processing, including bid tabulation.

Enter ID number here: _____

**Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina
on behalf of the STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP: Advertising Agency of Record

TITLE: **VisitNC – Advertising Agency of Record, A unit of the
Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina**

ISSUE DATE: January 25, 2017

Sealed Proposals will be received until the **deadline of 2 p.m., February 23, 2017** for furnishing services described herein.

SEND ALL PROPOSALS DIRECTLY TO THE ADDRESS AS SHOWN BELOW:

DELIVERED BY US POSTAL SERVICE	DELIVERED BY ANY OTHER MEANS
RFP: Advertising Agency of Record EDPNC/VisitNC Attn: Wit Tuttell 15000 Weston Parkway Cary, NC 27513	RFP: Advertising Agency of Record EDPNC/VisitNC Attn: Wit Tuttell 15000 Weston Parkway Cary, NC 27513

IMPORTANT NOTE: Indicate firm name and RFP Title on the front of each sealed proposal envelope or package, along with the date for receipt of proposals specified above.

Bids submitted via telegraph, facsimile (FAX) machine, telephone, and electronic means, including but not limited to e-mail, in response to this Request for Proposals **will not** be accepted.

Direct all inquiries concerning this RFP by email to:

Mark Shore at mark.shore@VisitNC.com

with exactly & only the following in the SUBJECT line: Advertising Agency of Record 2017

**NOTE: Questions concerning the specifications in this Request for Proposals
will be received until close of business February 3, 2017.**

No telephone/in-person conversations with Visit NC staff, related to this RFP, shall be allowed between January 25, 2017 and the awarding of this contract. All inquiries, questions or comments must be submitted by email.

A summary of all questions and answers will be posted at <https://partners.visitnc.com/request-for-proposals> as an addendum, located under the RFP being modified.

It is the bidder's responsibility to assure that all addenda have been reviewed and, if need be, signed and returned.

Section 1

INTRODUCTION

Visit North Carolina, a division of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, hereinafter referred to as "Visit NC," is seeking a highly qualified and competent full service marketing, communications and advertising agency, (including internal or outsourced website, digital and public relations), hereinafter referred to as "Bidder" or "Contractor".

As a part of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, Visit North Carolina is focused on the following:

Mission

To contribute to North Carolina's economic growth resulting from tourism-related activity primarily by unifying and leading the state in positioning North Carolina as a preferred destination for travelers and film production.

Objectives

1. Increase awareness of North Carolina as an inspiring, desirable visitor destination.
2. Drive and grow traveler interest in North Carolina destinations for more frequent, higher spending, longer trips.

Measures of Success

Visitor Spending

Partner Engagement

Traveler Inquiries

Strategies

1. Engage with travelers on an emotional, authentic level to connect with their motivations and aspirations.
2. Showcase North Carolina's unique and diverse stories, places and experiences through the deeper connections found within them.
3. Collaborate with industry partners to maximize the impact of marketing investments for attracting primarily out-of-state visitors while leveraging in-state media partnerships.
4. Utilize insights from research and analytics as the foundation for decision making and program optimizations.
5. Prioritize opportunities based on alignment with target audiences and measures of success.

A key component of Visit North Carolina's marketing strategy is its contract with a full-service marketing, communications and advertising agency engaged to work as a collaborative partner in the development, implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive marketing program to promote the State of North Carolina as a premier travel destination and film production location to regional, national and international markets as appropriate.

Additional background information, including economic impact data, partner co-op programs and market research, is available at:

<https://partners.visitnc.com/>

Section 2

SCOPE OF WORK

Part I.

The contractor shall be expected to complete the Scope of Work described below (contractor may bid on all and/or subcontract parts of the scope of work as long as contractor remains responsible for the delivery of the subcontractor work product):

Assist Visit North Carolina in developing and implementing an annual comprehensive strategic plan that shall include:

- Identification of target markets;
- Specific strategies that include measurable objectives for each target market; and,
- Tactics to achieve these objectives.
- The integration of all programmatic activities and development of a marketing plan;

STRATEGIC PLANNING

1. Develop marketing strategies for domestic marketing campaigns and use in international marketing campaigns through VisitNC's contracted representatives.
2. Provide comprehensive budgets and individual campaign estimates for approval in advance of execution by the agency.
3. Provide budget management, reporting, strategy and monitoring.
4. Develop a 3 to 5-year strategic plan for VisitNC.
5. Develop an annual Marketing Plan with objectives and tactics focused on determined KPI's.
6. Work closely with VisitNC staff and any other agencies and firms contracted by VisitNC, and align advertising & other communications strategies developed by the agency closely with their initiatives.

RESEARCH, ANALYTICS & REPORTING

7. At the direction of VisitNC, and in conjunction with the strategic and marketing plans, monitor the effectiveness of VisitNC's efforts and in particular that of the marketing, communications and advertising programs.
8. Conduct required research programs on behalf of VisitNC in coordination with VisitNC's research staff.
9. Conduct additional research as needed to set strategic direction, predict trends, seek out new and emerging markets and demographics & monitor the industry's performance and trends for all marketing and media programs.
10. Oversee existing analytical programs including but not limited to: Arrivalist, Google Analytics 360, nSight and similar partner companies.

CREATIVE

11. Develop creative copy concept, graphic design and layout from first drafts to completed product for all broadcast or printed materials, advertisements, promotions, Internet and public relations materials.
12. Produce or assist in development and producing print, broadcast, and electronic marketing materials.
13. Prepare all mechanical art or acquire all necessary artwork, photographs and other creative assets that are required for the production of advertisements, marketing and public relations materials.
14. Produce all other collateral materials in support of VisitNC's campaigns.
15. (The program of work does NOT include the development of the state's annual printed visitor guide.)

MEDIA PLANNING

16. Select media and media placement based on primary and secondary research, past tracking inquiries, fulfillment, follow-through on visitors' actions, return on investment studies and measure advertising and creative effectiveness in expanding awareness, interest and visitation.
17. At the direction of VisitNC, and in conjunction with the strategic & marketing plans, analyze and recommend specific marketing mediums (both paid and unpaid across print, digital, broadcast, out of home, sponsorships); placed upon the approval of VisitNC.
18. Monitor placement to insure accuracy and completion of all paid and unpaid media schedules.
19. Provide traffic management as needed for all media as part of any campaigns.

PUBLIC RELATIONS (PR)

20. Develop, execute and track public relations programs in coordination with VisitNC staff.
21. Establish plans and designate staffing for advisories and crisis communications.
22. Set and create a media PR relations strategy based on target audience / media, target markets, media missions, media materials, monitoring, press visits / FAM tours, asset management.

INDUSTRY RELATIONS

23. Provide support for Partner agency / initiative requests – Commerce, DNCR / State Parks, Travel Guide, etc.
24. Provide conference management support and video/presentation development for VisitNC 365
25. Provide support, attendance and presentation assistance for ongoing partner meetings
26. Develop and produce the VisitNC Annual Report and Strategic Plan documents

PARTNER & CO-OP PROGRAMS

27. Develop an annual value-added program in which potential marketing and advertising partners are identified and strategies specified for generating partnership funds (with a goal of more than \$1 million) for leveraging Visit NC funds to extend North Carolina's marketing reach and frequency. The contractor shall have primary responsibility for generating, collecting, implementing and reporting all advertising sales and partnership funds.

BRAND FAMILY MANAGEMENT

28. Manage Visit NC's Retire brand family
29. Manage Visit NC's Film brand family
30. Manage Visit NC's Sports Travel brand family
31. Manage Visit NC's Group travel brand family
32. Manage Visit NC's Beer month brand
33. Assist in managing Visit NC's International brand family

WEBSITES

34. Lead VisitNC in the development and enhancement of technology-based strategies and programs, including the www.visitnc.com and www.project543.com websites, family of sites and product databases. Manage and provide quality assurance and maximize the user experience.
35. Determine appropriate and cost effective methods for hosting the website and other online media, web promotion, keyword search optimization and site design to enhance search engine placement.
36. Recommend and execute strategies and tactics for effective use of integrated social media, mobile technologies and other leading-edge technology for reaching the target audiences.
37. Manage the e-mail database of potential visitors for monthly electronic newsletters.

NC WELCOME CENTERS AND CALL CENTER

38. Manage and provide quality assurance and software assistance for in-bound telemarketing services at the 1-800-VisitNC call center and any related training, scripting, reporting and data transfers.
39. Participate as appropriate with coordination of inquiry response materials, training of inquiry operators and assist with call center database management.

DIGITAL ASSETS & SOCIAL MEDIA

40. Manage and oversee Visit NC's Newsletters and email database
41. Manage and oversee Visit NC's Sweepstakes management
42. Manage and oversee Visit NC's Social media voice and strategy

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT & BRAND ASSETS

43. Handle all intellectual property issues arising out of the work to be performed under or in connection with the contract(s). This shall include securing permission to use copyrighted or trademarked material or other protected visuals, words, names, music or sounds that will be included in the promotional materials. This also includes researching and registering any necessary copyright or trademark for materials developed under the contract(s). All intellectual property rights shall be vested in the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.

OTHER

44. Demonstrate support and assistance above and beyond the scope of work for day-to-day issues, crises, and varied tourism and tourism office related requests.
45. For the purpose of responding to this RFP there will be times when agency assistance is needed beyond the scope of work and anticipated plans. Please elaborate on the agency's willingness and capacity to assist the VisitNC team on endeavors not currently identified and a brief statement on what you believe differentiates you from the field of expected respondents in helping VisitNC meet those unplanned future endeavors.

Section 3

PROPOSALS

A. This RFP is not an offer. This RFP is an expression of current intention and seeks responses from companies who wish to be considered for selection to receive an offer from VisitNC/EDPNC to provide the goods and services agreed between the parties. VisitNC/EDPNC seeks the very best company to provide the goods and services necessary to fulfill our goals, and the intentions expressed herein may change during the course of this RFP. Should your response be selected to receive an offer to contract it is expected that you will agree to a contract containing any terms and conditions referenced herein, your RFP responses and to other reasonable commercial terms for similar engagements. Bidders are urged to submit a proposal for establishing and performing the services described herein. All proposals must be submitted strictly in accordance with the requirements for the Request for Proposal. Failure to furnish any required information with your proposal is grounds for rejection, at the option of the EDPNC. The successful bidder will enter into a contractual agreement with VisitNC/EDPNC to provide the agreed services.

B. Each bidder shall demonstrate in its proposal that the firm and its management and employees are experienced and competent and that it has the background, training and experience to perform the services required by this contract.

C. Proposal packages containing FIVE (5) originals will be received from each bidder in sealed packaging with the RFP number and company name on each package. Each original shall be signed and dated by an official authorized to bind the firm. Unsigned proposals will not be considered.

D. All proposals must be received not later than the date and time specified on the cover of this RFP.

E. Upon completion of the technical and cost evaluations, the firms whose proposals have been deemed most acceptable will be invited to make an oral presentation. The evaluators reserve the right to request discussion with any or all bidders for the purpose of clarification or to amplify the materials presented in any part of the proposal. Upon completion of the oral presentations, final evaluations will be made and the evaluation team will make a recommendation for an award.

F. Proposals will be evaluated according to completeness, content, experience with similar projects, the ability of the bidder and its staff, and cost. Award of a contract to one bidder does not mean that the other proposals lacked merit, but that, all factors considered, the selected proposal was most advantageous to the EDPNC. Cost will not be the primary deciding factor for the award. The award will be made to the most qualified, the total written proposal package, plus the oral presentation, for the most advantageous use of EDPNC funding for VisitNC.

H. Bidders are cautioned that this is a request for offers, not a request to contract, and the EDPNC reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all offers when such rejection is deemed to be in the best interest of the EDPNC and VisitNC.

I. Visit NC will review all acceptable proposals and will invite the highest rated bidders for an oral presentation. Qualified bidders will be notified of the date and time but may wish to hold the dates of March 1-3, 2017 in case of a request to make an oral presentation.

J. NOTE: Each, bidder agrees not to represent another competing state tourism campaign for the duration of this contract. Further, the bidder agrees not to represent a similar account (including, but not limited to, convention and visitors bureau, destination marketing organization, hotel, attraction, or other tourism related entity) without prior written knowledge and consent of Visit NC for the duration of this contract. Visit NC will determine if a conflict of interest exists among any entities with which the bidder has a current relationship. Such conflicts of interest could include any of the above entities. The existence of such relationships (either ongoing or project-based) does not necessarily create a conflict of interest with Visit NC. However, the bidder will be expected to immediately disclose any travel industry-related entities with which it has a relationship, or is participating in a review for such business.

K. Bidders will not be compensated for any costs related to their responses, or any other costs incurred by participating in this process.

L. Any comments made verbally or in written form to Visit NC or the review panel outside the content of the submitted response or the oral presentation will not be considered as part of the response or as a demonstration of the bidder's status or qualifications.

M. The bidder must disclose and explain any pending or threatened litigation and, if such exists, whether it will hinder the firm's ability to perform to the client's expectations.

Section 4

PROPOSAL CONTENT

Proposals shall be submitted in a sealed package. The package shall be labeled "PROPOSAL" and must bear the name of the agency, the RFP name and closing date. **Technical and Cost shall be submitted together in one package. This is a one-step process.**

Please provide the response to the RFP in a user-friendly format, which should include any packaging used to deliver or present the response. There is a 50-page limit to the response to the RFP, exclusive of cover pages or table of contents. Relevant creative examples submitted via electronic formats such as DVD/flash drive will not count against this page limit.

The proposal shall contain the following information:

- Executive Summary
- Corporate Background and Experience
- List of current clients and length of service
- Financial Statements
- Project Staffing and Organization
- Technical Approach
- Cost (estimated budget is not-to-exceed \$9,750,000, or the amount allocated annually through the State budget process) and payment terms
- Execution Page
- Service Location Page

Executive Summary

The executive summary will consist of the proposal cover letter highlighting the contents of this proposal.

Corporate Background and Experience

This section will include background information on the organization and should give details of experience with similar projects. This should detail whether the work of a similar nature was performed by the firm as agency of record; as a project; and/or by agency personnel while employed with other firms. A list of references (including contact persons, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses) for whom similar work has been performed must be included.

This section should also indicate whether the agency is a SAG signatory agency.

List of Current Clients and Length of Service

The proposal should include a list of current clients for whom the agency is providing services; the nature of the relationship (project-based or agency of record); and the length of the relationship with each.

Financial Statement

The bidder shall provide the following financial information:

- Recent audited or reviewed financial statements prepared by an independent certified public accountant (CPA) that shall include, at a minimum, a balance sheet, income statement (i.e., profit/loss statement) and cash flow statement and, if the audited or reviewed financial statements were prepared more than six (6) months prior to the issuance of this RFP, the bidder shall submit its most recent internal financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement or budget with entries reflecting revenues and expenditures from the date of the audited or reviewed financial statements to the end of the most recent financial reporting period (i.e., the quarter or month preceding the issuance date of this RFP)); or
- Recent compiled financial statements prepared by an independent CPA that shall include, at a minimum, a balance sheet, income statement (i.e., profit/loss statement) and cash flow statement and, if the compiled financial statements were prepared more than three (3) months prior to the issuance of this RFP, the bidder shall submit its most recent internal financial statements (balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement or budget with entries reflecting revenues and expenditures to date), and other evidence of financial stability such as most recently filed income tax return, evidence of a line of credit/loans/other type of financing with statement of amount in use/outstanding balance (e.g., a complete copy commitment letter, loan agreement, billing statement reflecting the line of credit or statement from lender acknowledging the commitment to fund the bidder's stated financing), performance bond, personal guaranty with copies of personal income tax filing and statement of net worth or such other evidence that is accurate, reliable and trustworthy regarding the bidder's financial stability.

Recent shall be defined as financial statements that were prepared within the 12 months preceding the issuance date of this RFP.

Consolidated financial statements of the bidder's parent or related corporation/business entity shall not be considered, unless: (1) the bidder's actual financial performance for the designated period is separately identified in and/or attached to the consolidated statements; (2) the parent or related corporation/business entity provides the EDPNC with a document wherein the parent or related corporation/business entity will be financially responsible for the bidder's performance of the contract and the consolidated statement demonstrates the parent or related corporation's/business entity's financial ability to perform the contract, financial stability and/or such other financial considerations identified in the evaluation criteria; and/or (3) bidder provides its own internally prepared financial statements and such other evidence of its own financial stability identified above.

The bidder's failure to provide any of the above-referenced financial statements or failure to submit all the requested financial statements may result in the rejection of the bidder's proposal and rejection is more likely to occur if other bidders provide financial documentation in compliance with the foregoing provisions. Bidders are also encouraged to explain any negative financial information in its financial statements and are encouraged to provide documentation supporting those explanations.

All financial information, statements and/or documents provided in response to this proposal requirement should be clearly marked CONFIDENTIAL and shall be kept confidential by EDPNC and VisitNC.

Project Staffing and Organization

This section must include the proposed staffing, deployment and organization of personnel to be assigned to this account. The bidder shall provide information as to the qualifications and experience of all executive, managerial, legal and professional personnel to be assigned to this project, including resumes citing experience with similar projects and the responsibilities to be assigned to each person as follows:

- A. Contract or Account Manager. Identify one (1) individual who will manage the contract work and be the primary agency contact for the client. Document overall experience in tourism marketing, and demonstrate a minimum of five (5) years of service in this area. Attach a current resume/biography. Provide detail on the Account Manager's experience, education, affiliations, memberships, awards, recognitions received for similar services. Define this individual's work ethic and philosophy. Define the percent of the Account Manager's time devoted exclusively to managing Visit NC's account.
- B. Account Team. Identify by name, title and roles & responsibilities each proposed account team member on Visit NC's account. Include relevant experience, including that which may be outside of your agency and/or outside the advertising field. Identify individual experience in destination, travel, trade and/or international tourism marketing, sports, marketing and/or business development. Identify specifically, what percentage of the firm's total effort will be provided by various team members and the percentage of their time that will be devoted to the account.
- C. Identify who would work on Visit NC marketing strategies and plans and how much time would be spent on the Visit NC account.
- D. Identify who would take prime responsibility for, and have final authority over, Visit NC account. How much time would this individual devote to issues pertinent to Visit NC? List all other account assignments this person would carry.
- E. Submit an organizational chart, showing the hierarchy of key personnel to be working on this account and project(s). Show the relationship between contract manager, account team and key personnel of the bidder's organization and all other parties (subcontractors) to the proposal.

Identify any other firms, outside personnel not employed directly by the bidder, or partnerships that will be used to meet the obligations of the relationship. The lead agency should also state the reasons why the outside resource will be part of the account team; whether the lead agency has any prior experience working with that external resource; and how the resource will be integrated into the service of the account.

The Vendor must detail the manner in which it intends to utilize resources or workers located outside of the United States, and the EDPNC will evaluate the additional risks, costs and other factors associated with such utilization to make the award for this proposal as deemed by the awarding authority to be in the best interest of the EDPNC and VisitNC.

For any proposed or actual utilization or contract performance outside of the United States, the bidder's proposal must include:

- The location of work performed under a state contract by the vendor, any subcontractors, employees, or other persons performing the contract.
- The corporate structure and location of corporate employees and activities of the vendors, its affiliates or any subcontractors.

The EDPNC may initiate proceedings to debar a vendor from participation in the bid process and from contract award as authorized by North Carolina law, if it is determined that the vendor has refused to disclose or has falsified any information provided herein.

F. If you were to receive this account, what personnel changes would you have to make? How many new employees would you have to hire and for what positions?

G. Detail your agency's business and marketing philosophies. Describe your agency's work environment and internal culture.

H. Qualifications & Experience

I. A brief statement of how long the bidder has been performing the type of services required by this RFP.

J. Professional memberships

K. Location of offices.

Technical Approach

This section must include, in narrative, outline, and/or graph form, the bidder's approach to accomplishing the tasks outlined in the scope, technical information and requirements section of this RFP. A description of each task and deliverable and the schedule for accomplishing each must be included. Include a discussion of any primary marketing research you would propose upon being awarded this account, and how you would utilize such research to benefit the client. Also include a broad, strategic vision for growing North Carolina's market share and its subsequent impact on the state's economy.

Cost

The EDPNC and Visit NC is open to a variety of compensation arrangements. However, cost proposals must be clearly defined and articulated in detail. "Open-ended" cost proposals are strongly discouraged.

The cost proposal must be in keeping with the expected budget (not-to-exceed \$9,750,000, as adjusted annually in the State budget process) and anticipated plan of work for all services provided to Visit NC. Agency compensation will be a component of the annual budget previously described within this RFP.

At a minimum, cost proposals should detail all of the following components:

- Proposed media planning and placement fee structure, based upon net media costs to the agency.
- Expected costs for in-house creative development (exclusive of out-of-house creative production costs, which will be billed at cost to Visit NC)
- Monthly account service fee, inclusive of normal expected operational fees (such as copying, telephone, postage, packaging and express shipping) and travel required for normal account service. Operational and travel expenses outside of the normal anticipated plan of work will be approved in advance by Visit NC and receipts provided for verification.
- Any other significant professional services to be billed as monthly fees.
- An hourly rate sheet for in-house services and contracted services to be provided by subcontractors as part of this proposal.
- Total estimated annual compensation proposed by the bidder.
- Bidder's cost information must be packaged separately from the technical proposal and be submitted together.

Execution Page

The Execution Page must be signed and included in your response.

Service Location Page

The Service Location Page must be completed and included in your response.

Section 5

SUBMISSIONS

Items to be submitted for evaluation in technical and cost approach.

Past Campaigns

The work performed by your firm related to past campaigns will be considered in the evaluation. Therefore, the firm should present any of, but not limited to, the following information which demonstrates your firm's ability to develop and implement an integrated tourism promotion/marketing campaign. The client may be a destination or any other product or service. The components of the program must be detailed and specific. However, for each, the firm should identify the personnel responsible for the service being referenced and should cross-reference that service with how the person is proposed for the state agency campaign. The campaigns cited should demonstrate the following:

A. Budget maximization The firm should provide examples of how they maximized the budget they were working with and how it was accomplished.

B. Advertising Success The firm should document previous advertising successes for other clients and should describe in detail how such successes were measured.

C. Creative Ability The firm should demonstrate its creative capabilities by describing and detailing what it considers to be its three (3) best advertising campaigns.

D. Samples The firm is strongly encouraged to submit samples outlining any or all of the current/past advertising campaigns described above in order to demonstrate the style, creativity, and overall past performance of the personnel proposed by the firm who worked on those campaigns. In addition, any such samples submitted shall be at the bidder's expense by the bidder's organization. Any samples provided may remain confidential at the option of the bidder. Samples should be marked or otherwise indicated as such. Only members of the review panels will have access to this information.

Section 6

WRITTEN RESPONSE TO PROPOSAL

Component One Creative/Media/Brand Identity

The technical proposal shall include the following:

Illustration of the agency's past work on two campaigns.

Please provide a description of two marketing campaigns executed for a client or clients, in the last five years.

For each include:

- The goals and objectives of the campaign.
- The research and methodology utilized to develop the campaign
- The results and creative concept including advertising, marketing, branding and or other related effort
- Media strategy, including any online initiatives
- The results of the campaign and how it was measured.
- The budget for the campaign (if available)

For the above, please provide at least two and not more than four, samples of exceptionally effective advertisements and other marketing communication (print, brochures, television spots, radio creative, out-of-home media, web, digital, social media, etc.)

Component Two Public Relations

Please provide a description of two public relations strategies executed for a client or client in the last five years. For each include:

1. The goals and objectives of each strategy;
2. The research methodology that went into the development of each strategy;
3. The results of strategy and how impact was measured.
4. The budget for the campaign (if available)

Component Three Website Development and Social Media

Please provide a description of two websites and one social media campaign developed for a client or clients in the last five years. For each include:

1. The goals and objectives of the websites and the social media campaign.
2. Any research and the methodology that went into the development of the websites and social media campaign.
3. Any demonstrations of search engine optimization used in the website development; mobile executions of the websites; and the tracking mechanisms used to measure effectiveness and identify areas of ongoing improvement.
4. The results generated by the websites and the social media campaign.
5. The budget for the websites' development and the social media campaign (if available).

Cost – See minimum requirements listed above

Section 7

ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Oral Presentation

Oral presentations by selected bidders will be subjectively evaluated.

If the bidder is selected for an oral presentation, the bidder will be expected to develop and present based on Visit NC's marketing goals.

The oral presentation will take place with Visit NC, located at 15000 Weston Parkway, Cary, N.C., tentatively scheduled for March 1-3, 2017. You will be notified of your specific presentation date and time. You will have one and one-half hours (90 minutes) for the presentation and one half hour (30 minutes) for questions from the evaluation committee.

Key members of the proposed account team should make the oral presentation, or at the very least, are active participants in the presentation.

Nothing may be left behind other than those items specifically requested as part of this RFP.

The bidder will be responsible for providing any audio-visual equipment required during the oral presentation.

The bidder should address the following points during the presentation:

- A. Introduction of your personnel, their backgrounds, and their proposed roles on the Visit NC account. This should also include identification of any subcontractors or other resources to be used on the account.
- B. A demonstration of your beliefs--how would you define the ideal client-agency relationship. This section should include a look at the personality and culture of the agency, and what it's like to work with you. The agency is welcome to use any medium for communicating this to the audience.
- C. Provide an overview of your agency's expertise in the marketing, communication and interactive services you offer, and those of the subcontractors or other resources used to meet the needs of the client.
- D. The agency's specific strategic approach to helping Visit NC grow visitation to the state. The presentation should demonstrate how the agency will specifically approach both media and creative to develop annual plans to increase awareness of North Carolina as a travel destination; deliver more qualified, measurable inquiries; extend travel marketing dollars throughout the state through expanded partnerships; and measure the effectiveness of the program. **(Speculative creative and media plans are not to be included as part of the presentation, however.)** The focus of this approach must be on driving out-of-state visitation only, with a primary focus upon domestic markets.
- E. A presentation of specific previous agency experience that helped stimulate growth for clients of the agency, including a case study with results generated by the agency's work. The content should cover the agency's strategic, media and creative approaches used to generate the results.

Distribute **FIVE (5) Originals** (3-hole punched) of a written or printed summary of your oral presentation to members of the review panel at the conclusion of your oral presentation. The written summary of your oral presentation will become part of your proposal and ultimately part of any resulting contract. Multimedia used in the presentation may be delivered to the panel members via flash drives or other electronic media.

Section 8

CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Contract Terms

The expected term of this contract will be for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2022. Vendor performance will be reviewed annually by the Contract Administrator. Termination for non-performance will be permitted upon 15 days written by either party and VisitNC/EDPNC may terminate for any reason upon 60-days written notice and immediately in the event VisitNC/EDPNC's contract with the Department of Commerce is terminated. The contract is conditioned upon N.C. Gen. Stat. § 143C-6-8 and other terms deemed necessary or proper by VisitNC/EDPNC in their sole discretion.

Account Administrator

VisitNC/EDPNC shall designate one person as the Account Administrator for this contract. This person will be responsible for the following duties:

- A. The Account Administrator and liaison for the contract will be named after award. The Account Administrator will approve the work schedule. Any documents that may be generated as a result of this contract will be submitted to the Account Administrator for approval.
- B. Determination as to whether the Contractor is satisfactorily performing the services delineated in the contract shall be at the discretion of the Account Administrator. In the event performance is unsatisfactory, the Account Administrator shall be responsible for initiating notifications to the Contractor as outlined in the contract. Any desired change in the contract must be approved by the Department's Purchasing Officer.

Section 9

COMPENSATION PROPOSAL

- All compensation proposals shall be signed in ink as follows:
 - As an individual sign with full name and business address.
 - As a partnership Partners shall sign with full names and business address
 - As a corporation, an officer of the corporation shall sign with full name and title and shall include the name and address of the corporation.

Visit NC is open to a variety of compensation arrangements. However, compensation proposals must be clearly defined and articulated in detail. "Open-ended" compensation proposals are strongly discouraged.

The compensation proposal must be in keeping with the expected budget and anticipated plan of work for all services provided to Visit NC. Agency compensation must be a component of the annual budget previously described within this RFP.

At a minimum, compensation proposals should detail all of the following components:

- Proposed media planning and placement fee structure, based upon net media costs to the agency.
- Expected costs for in-house creative development (exclusive of out-of-house creative production costs, which will be billed at cost to Visit NC)
- Monthly account service fee, inclusive of normal expected operational fees (such as copying, telephone, postage, packaging and express shipping) and travel required for normal account service. Operational and travel expenses outside of the normal anticipated plan of work will be approved in advance by Visit NC and receipts provided for verification.
- Any other significant professional services to be billed as monthly fees.
- An hourly rate sheet for in-house services and contracted services to be provided by subcontractors as part of this proposal.
- Total estimated annual compensation proposed by the bidder.

Part II. Award Criteria

Proposals will be initially evaluated by an internal review panel on the basis of the following criteria:

- Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal (Total 70 Points)
 - Corporate Background and Experience, Financial Statement, Project Organization, Written Response (20 Points)
 - Past Campaigns (45 points total)
 - Creative/Media/Brand Identity (15 points)
 - Public Relations (15 points)
 - Website Development and Social Media (15 points)
 - Compensation Proposal (5 points)
 - ☞ Oral Presentation (30 points)
 - Bidders must score a minimum of 55-60 points to be considered for oral presentations. But a specific score will not guarantee consideration to be selected for oral presentations.

Evaluation of for Total Project equals 100 points total.

COST PROPOSAL/EXECUTION OF PROPOSAL

By submitting this proposal, the potential contractor certifies the following:

This proposal is signed by an authorized representative of the firm.

It can obtain insurance certificates as required within 10 calendar days after notice of award.

The cost and availability of all equipment, materials, and supplies associated with performing the services described herein have been determined and included in the proposed cost.

All labor costs, direct and indirect, have been determined and included in the proposed cost.

The bidder is aware of prevailing conditions associated with performing these services *(if applicable)*.

The bidder can and will provide the specified performance bond or alternate performance guarantee *(if applicable)*.

The potential contractor has read and understands the conditions set forth in this RFP and agrees to them with no exceptions.

BIDDER: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ FAX: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Principal Place of Business if different from above (See General Information on Submitting Proposals, Item 18.):

Will any of the work under this contract be performed outside the United States?
(If yes, describe in technical proposal.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

N.C.G.S. § 133-32 and Executive Order 24 prohibit the offer to, or acceptance by, any EDPNC Employee of any gift from anyone with a contract with the State, or from any person seeking to do business with the State. By execution of any response in this procurement, you attest, for your entire organization and its employees or agents, that you are not aware that any such gift has been offered, accepted, or promised by any employees of your organization.

BY: _____ TITLE: _____ DATE: _____
(Signature)

(Printed name)

ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL

(Using Agency Name)

BY: _____ TITLE: _____ DATE: _____

THIS PAGE MUST BE SIGNED AND INCLUDED IN YOUR PROPOSAL.

Unsigned proposals will not be considered.

Where Service Contracts Will Be Performed

In accordance with NC General Statute 143-59.4 (Session Law 2005-169),
this form is to be completed and submitted with the bidder's (technical) proposal/bid.

Section 10 **LIMITATIONS**

1. This request for proposal is not an offer.
2. As a recipient of this RFP, you (a.k.a. "Your"), as an independent consultant, firm, company, partnership, or network of individuals or firms have been invited to participate in VisitNC's search and You agree to be bound by any terms and conditions related to VisitNC's secrecy and proprietary rights, or if a separately executed Secrecy and Proprietary Rights and/or Non-Disclosure Agreement between You and VisitNC exists, by the terms of that document.
3. Following the due date for submission of this RFP, and prior to establishing a contract, the RFP response shall be considered binding on the bidder until such time as VisitNC selects and negotiates contract terms with the winning bidder, but in no event beyond 5PM EST on 6/30/17.
4. Hold Harmless – In submitting a proposal(s), You understand that VisitNC will determine in its sole discretion, which proposal(s), if any, is/are accepted. You waive any right to claim damages of any nature whatsoever based on the selection process, final selection, and any communications associated with this RFP process and agree to accept the decisions of the EDPNC and VisitNC as final.
5. Proprietary Document – You agree that all information communicated by VisitNC shall be received for the sole and exclusive purpose of enabling You to submit a response to this RFP. The information contained in this RFP and the RFP itself, is proprietary in nature and shall not, under any circumstances, be disclosed, in whole or in part, to any third parties without the prior written approval of VisitNC.
6. Proprietary Rights – By responding to this RFP, you acknowledge that VisitNC will have the right to use, for VisitNC's own business needs, any ideas or concepts You present in Your RFP response, without compensation to Your firm (VisitNC shall not construe this to be a license to reproduce copyrighted and/or trademarked materials).
7. The issuance of this document and the receipt of the information in response to this document shall not in any way cause VisitNC to incur any liability or obligation to You, financial or otherwise. VisitNC assumes no obligation to reimburse or in any way compensate You for expenses incurred in connection with Your response to this document.
8. All proposals received shall become the property of VisitNC and will not be returned to You.
9. VisitNC may seek to procure only part of the services proposed by You or other suppliers in this process. VisitNC may reject any or all proposals. VisitNC shall have no obligation to award a contract for work, goods, and/or services as a result of this solicitation. VisitNC may make an award to other than the lowest bidder. VisitNC may change the Scope of Services, Technical Specifications, Evaluation Criteria, Contract Terms and Conditions, and any other factor involved in this RFP at its sole discretion in an attempt to develop the best marketing and advertising for the visitor industry in North Carolina.
10. VisitNC reserves the right to change the schedule of events, as deemed necessary.
11. VisitNC is committed to diversity and inclusion of our workforce, customers, consumers and suppliers. To that end we encourage diverse suppliers, contractors, and sub-suppliers to bid on opportunities to provide our VisitNC with high quality goods and services at a reasonable price. Selection of a contractor shall be made without regard to race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, disability, military status or any other characteristic protected under applicable law.
12. Any other business partner, sub-contractor or vendor with whom you work to respond to this RFP must agree to these conditions.
13. If you do not agree to the above conditions, please do not respond to this RFP.

23619673.1

28379269.1