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**Addendum 1**  
**Solicitation 21-AA21**  
**Request for Qualifications for Tourism Marketing Services**

Thank you for submitting questions related to the RFQ for tourism marketing services. The City's answers are listed below. If you do not see an answer to your specific question, it is because it was similar to ones answered below or it was too specific of a request to be answered at this point in the RFQ review process.

Questions asked are listed below with the responses provided in *italics*.

1. Can companies from outside the USA apply for this? *Yes, foreign companies are not prohibited from responding.*
2. Would we need to come over there for meeting? *Yes, the City anticipates that there will be onsite meetings that the company would need to attend at their own expense.*
3. Can we perform the tasks related to the RFP outside the USA? *Yes.*
4. Can we submit the proposals via email? *Responses to this Request for Qualification can be emailed. Finalists who later receive a Request for Proposal will need to review the Request for Proposal for submission requirements. Typically, a paper copy and a digital copy on thumb drive are required for proposal submissions.*
5. Would you consider a proposal for the video portion? If so, is there a percent of the budget allocated toward that? *Yes, proposals for the video portion will be considered. The budget for that portion is not specifically broken out and has not been determined at this time.*
6. Will Visit Duluth play any part in this engagement after the contract term ends? *This has not been determined. Visit Duluth has been invited to submit a response document to the RFQ.*
7. How many marketing agencies are you envisioning for this project? *This will depend upon the number of qualified firms who provide a response to the RFQ.*

8. Are you giving any weight to local Duluth marketing firms who respond? *The City is interested in working with qualified marketing services providers and local agencies with tourism marketing experience are encourage to respond.*
9. Is there a tentative annual budget for this engagement? *The annual budget for tourism marketing and promotion has been \$2 million over the past few years. This budget may change in future years.*
10. Are there tangible goals for this project not related to "heads in beds"? (More restaurant visitors? More Duluth tags on Instagram?) *Lodging tax is just one of the many metrics we will be evaluating. We will be looking to respondents to provide a list of recommended KPIs during the RFP phase of this process.*
11. It appears there are two rounds in this process. The first, it appears, is to create a short list of qualified applicants. The second, it appears, will include a request for proposals. What do you envision as different in these processes besides submitting costs in the second round? *During the RFP phase, we will be looking for a more specific outline of how applicants would approach this work, what KPIs they recommend we evaluate, and a proposed budget.*
12. Who is making the decision to move qualified firms from the first to second round? Is it strictly through the City's Purchasing Department, or is there a broader group of decision makers? *The City has enlisted a broad group of stakeholders for the evaluation process.*
13. Is the City inviting Duluth-based businesses only, or opening this opportunity to firms beyond Duluth? *The City is interested in working with qualified marketing services providers and local agencies with tourism marketing experience are encourage to respond.*
14. If awarded the contract, who will the firm be working with? Will it report directly to the City Administration, City Council, or a committee? Who will be the "client contact"? *City Administration.*
15. Under the Scope of Work, Number 9, Events and Convention Center, will the winning firm be asked to not only develop the comprehensive marketing strategy, but also implement? If so, do you expect the firm to implement the meeting and convention sales function currently being provided by both Visit Duluth and the DECC? *This has not been determined. Firms with meeting and convention sales experience are encouraged to share their experience in this domain.*
16. Is the City inviting existing Destination Marketing Organizations to apply? *Yes. The City is interested in working with qualified marketing services providers and local agencies with tourism marketing experience are encourage to respond.*

17. Is the winning firm expected to coordinate or implement events such as the 4th of July fireworks display traditionally handled by Visit Duluth? *The fourth of July fireworks display is contracted with City staff. Firms with event planning experience are encouraged to share their experience in this domain.*
18. Will the City still fund the ongoing operations of Visit Duluth for things like membership relations, convention sales, website management, etc.? If so, does this budget include the sales of ads and production and printing of the Guide to Duluth, too? *The City may award portions of this contract to different organizations, but there is no specific plan to continue funding specific current functions.*
19. With a new Visit Duluth website launching soon, will the website portion be a one-pager that redirects to the Visit Duluth site or will it live on its own and house all things Duluth? *This has not been determined.*
20. What's working and not working about your current approach to marketing? What do you like about your current efforts? Your current relationship? *At this point in the process we interested in reviewing qualifications from experienced tourism marketing service providers. We will be looking to respondents to provide recommended attraction strategies during the RFP phase of this process.*
21. Are there any mandatories in terms of messaging and/or executions? For example, is there a tagline that you know needs to be worked into our campaign? *There are no mandatory message requirements.*
22. Do you have any existing research or strategic work you can share? Existing media plans/reports? Even though we'll be proposing new strategies, we want to be informed by work to date. *At this point in the process we interested in reviewing qualifications from experienced marketing service providers. Once a partner or partners are chosen, the City will share applicable research.*
23. Are you OK with us using a single case study to demonstrate experience across your listed marketing disciplines? Yes.
24. What do you stand for? What does Duluth offer that other tourist destinations can't? *Once a partner or partners are chosen, the City will share applicable research, performance reports, and previous campaign information that will better answer this question.*
25. Who do you consider your competitors? *Once a partner or partners are chosen, the City will share applicable research, performance reports, and previous campaign information that will better answer this question.*

26. Why is the re-branding happening now? Is there anything special about 2022 that we should be aware of? *The City is interested in working with agencies experienced in tourism marketing to elevate the brand of Duluth, expand our reach, and attract an expanded range of target audiences.*
27. Is the incumbent agency participating in the RFQ? *Visit Duluth is the incumbent agency and has been invited to submit a response document.*
28. How many agencies received the RFQ? How many do you expect to be interviewed, and how many do expect will ultimately receive the RFP? *The RFQ was posted publicly on The City of Duluth website. The number agencies that will be invited to progress in this process is undecided at this time.*
29. Do you have a partnership with a media planning firm that you'd like to continue working with in the future? *All existing tourism promotion and marketing partnerships are being reevaluated.*
30. Of the \$2,000,000 identified for tourism promotion and marketing, how much of that, if any, is used to cover overhead costs such as staffing, etc., or, is it all earmarked for media investment, agency fees, production costs, etc.? *Participants included in the RFP phase of this process will be asked to provide a comprehensive budget breakdown covering the 10 scope areas outlined in the RFQ.*
31. Are there any available statistics about the types of visitors that Duluth typically receives? And if so, are any of these types considered to be more important than others? For example, overnight trips vs. day trips, or, car arrivals vs. airport arrivals, etc. *Once a partner or partners are chosen, the City will share applicable research, performance reports, and previous campaign information that will better answer this question.*
32. How closely does the Duluth brand trend with the overall brand of Minnesota? We know things have been challenging for Minneapolis with protests and negative PR over the past year. Are there any concerns that you have about combating negative sentiment? *The City is interested in elevating the brand of Duluth, growing our reach, and attracting an expanded range of target audiences.*
33. Can partial proposals be made? For example, can you submit a RFQ proposal for just one or two of the 10 items outlined in "scope of work", or do you have to include all of the services mentioned? *Partial proposals are welcomed. Respondents are encouraged to share their qualifications related to the 10 scope areas associated with their tourism marketing experience.*

34. Can you say more about the expectations for convention/meeting sales? Is the sales component of a DMO's work included in the "events and convention center" scope? *This area of scope will be better defined further along on the agency review process.*
35. If two organizations complement each other's experiences and expertise, can they submit together or would you prefer each organization submit individually? *Submitting qualifications together is acceptable.*
36. Is the Evaluation Criteria (p.6) weighted? If so, what is the scale? *There is not an evaluation scale at this stage of the process.*
37. In Scope of Work section (p.3) are disciplines presented by priority or equal? *The 10 scope areas were not listed in a specific order.*
38. With creative and professional liberty given to preparation of response, can video links be embedded in the document if it does not exceed the 20-page limit? *Yes, video links can be embedded in the response document.*
39. Are you open to working with more than one agency? *Yes. Respondents are encouraged to share their qualifications related to the 10 scope areas associated with their tourism marketing experience.*
40. What are the three biggest challenges of Duluth as a tourism destination? *Once a partner or partners are chosen, the City will share applicable research, performance reports, and previous campaign information that will better answer this question.*
41. If we link to a webpage example in our response, does that count against the page count? *No.*
42. We will engage a partner for web development for this scope of work. Would it be acceptable to name our partner once the RFP has been distributed? We'd like to ensure that the partner we choose is most suited to your specific needs. Alternatively, we can provide a list of three potential partners from our preferred vendor list in this RFQ. *This is acceptable.*
43. Has Visit Duluth handled all tourism-related media planning and spending for the City of Duluth in the past or has the City contracted with a media agency for these types of media purchases? *Visit Duluth has managed media planning and purchasing for the City previously. They may have partnered with third-party media buyers.*
44. Will the RFP scope also cover planning and placement of tourism tax dollars that the City invests into entities, attractions, programs, events and key investment areas? Or is this a separate budget line not managed within this scope? *This is not currently a part of the scope.*

45. Would the City of Duluth consider an agency currently working with Mystic Lake Casino & Hotel, Treasure Island Resort & Casino, Grand Casino Hinkley/Mille Lacs or any other regional gaming, entertainment and resort destinations as a conflict of interest? *Respondents are encouraged to list any potential conflicts of interest in their response documents for review.*
46. Can the City of Duluth provide five (5) year historical spending levels allocated specifically to the related to the ten (10) scope areas of the RFQ? *Once a partner or partners are chosen, the City will share applicable research, performance reports, and previous campaign information that will better answer this question.*
47. Regarding Scope of Work, Item 4 **Website Development**, is the City looking for a separate website from that of VisitDuluth.com and the Duluth Convention and Visitors Bureau? *Yes. VisitDuluth.com is owned by Visit Duluth and not the City of Duluth.*
48. What are the largest challenges or obstacles that the City of Duluth has identified in elevating the brand of Duluth and positioning the city as a welcoming and safe destination? *Once a partner or partners are chosen, the City will share applicable research, performance reports, and previous campaign information that will better answer this question.*
49. Is the City of Duluth looking for one partner to handle all scope areas or are they open to working with specialists relating to each scope area? *The City is open to working with one partner or multiple partners. Respondents are encouraged to share their qualifications related to the 10 scope areas associated with their tourism marketing experience.*
50. How is Visit Duluth and the City of Duluth currently measuring success and how do you envision those metrics of KPI's changing? *The City will be looking to respondents to provide a list of recommended KPIs during the RFP phase of this process.*
51. What is currently in place via Visit Duluth and the City of Duluth efforts to support local businesses to attract tourism? *Once a partner or partners are chosen, the City will share applicable research, performance reports, and previous campaign information that will better answer this question.*
52. What are the Top 5 attraction areas for the City of Duluth? Are there out-of-state DMA's that are of specific focus for Visit Duluth and/or the City of Duluth and do you allocate marketing spend against those markets? Will those out of market dollars be managed by your marketing partner? *The City will be looking to respondents to provide recommended marketing strategies during the RFP phase of this process. Yes, our chosen marketing partner or partners will be responsible for media buying.*

53. Has climate control been a consideration in current/future marketing? *Climate control is not the focus of current marketing campaigns.*
54. What are the top attributes you are looking for in an agency partner? *The City is looking for experienced tourism marketing agencies to help elevate the brand of Duluth and execute on the key areas of focus shared in the RFQ document.*
55. What does success look like for the partner chosen to lead this work? *The chosen partner or partners will have an opportunity to elevate the brand and generate demand for one of the top tourism destinations in the United States.*
56. What tourism work currently in the market do you most admire? *There is not a specific comparison that we are looking at.*
57. What is your current marketing technology stack? And specifically, what is your platform of choice for data aggregation/dashboard? *The City prefers an integrated data reporting solution and will look to RFP respondents to make recommendations in this regard.*
58. What does your review/approval typically look like? Do other entities (Duluth art, culture, historic entities) get involved and in what way? *The City is currently reimagining the campaign planning and approval process and will share more specifics in this regard during agency interviews.*
59. Please expand on your current target audience and what's known:
- Do you have a persona(s) defined? What data is currently available to work with? *Part of the scope of work will include developing target audience profiles.*
60. In relation to creative campaign development, please expand on what you mean by "modern" and "alluring" creative? *The City is looking for new campaign creative assets to be developed using modern graphic design standards and emerging technology platforms.*
61. How extensive is your appetite for looking at tourism campaigns differently? *The City is open to new ideas in this regard.*
62. How disruptive are you willing to be in comparing your vision to other tourism campaigns currently in market? *The City is open to new ideas in this regard.*
63. In relation to website development, what are your internal resources? What is the current site platform? *The City intends to rely on an experienced partner to manage the development of a tourism website.*

64. In relation to video and photography, what assets currently exist that you feel fit the brand voice/tone of the future? Or do you believe we're starting from scratch? *The City is open to a new approach in this regard.*
65. Confirming campaign budget: If reading the RFQ correctly, there is a \$2,000,000 budget allocated to deliver on the scope of work (1 - 10). This would include paid media dollars, out of pocket and production expenses, and agency fees for plan development and implementation, website design/development and supplemental support. Is that correct? *Yes. The annual budget for tourism promotion and marketing has been \$2 million over the past few years. This budget is to include all agency fees, creative asset development, media buys, website development, etc. This budget may change in future years.*
66. As we plan ahead, what is the anticipated ask for finalists as part of the RFP process, if selected?
- a. Original/spec creative and/or marketing plans? *Organizations invited to participate in the RFP process will be asked to provide more detailed information on how they would approach each of the 10 scope areas along with proposed budget allocations. Spec creative will not be requested.*
67. Beyond Visit Duluth, are you able to share the name of the agency(ies) that currently supports this work? *Visit Duluth is the incumbent tourism marketing services provider.*
68. In regards to the \$2M investment, are you able to share a breakdown for expected agency fees, paid media spend or any other details? *Organizations invited to participate in the RFP process will be asked to provide more detailed information on how they would approach each of the 10 scope areas along with proposed budget allocations.*
69. How many client references are you seeking and what information would you like for client references? *Respondents list references they assess to be relevant and provide 1 – 3 tourism-related case studies.*
70. Many destinations have received Federal stimulus support, state grants or other reserve funds to help weather pandemic and fuel the pending recovery. Have you received – or do you expect – this type of funding support in the near future? *The City has received stimulus money.*

Please acknowledge receipt of this Addendum. Failure to acknowledge receipt may result in a deduction of evaluation points or rejection of the submitted response.

Posted: **5/27/21**