

**Visit Fairfax
Social Media Influencer Agency
Request for Proposal**

Visit Fairfax, the official Destination Marketing Organization for Fairfax County, Virginia is seeking a company (a.k.a. "Offeror," "Contractor," or "Agency") to organize and execute social media influencer campaigns to drive visitation and incremental tourism spending to Fairfax County as well as build awareness/followers on social media platforms. Visit Fairfax will receive proposals for the purpose of providing services for this project that are planned from now through June 2024.

Process

Responders may submit an RFP response to the email addresses below. All responses must be received no later than **2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 8, 2023.**

Two (2) digital copies shall be delivered to:

Barry Biggar at bbiggar@fxva.com and Patrick Lennon at plennon@fxva.com

Note: If you would like to verify that your proposal was received, please call 703-790-0643.

For additional information or questions, please contact:

Patrick Lennon, Director of Marketing
Phone: 703-790-0643
E-mail: plennon@fxva.com

Questions and comments must be received no later than **5:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 1, 2023.**

Final decisions will be communicated no later than **Wednesday, February 22, 2023.**

Request for Proposal for a Social Media Influencer Agency

Purpose

The purpose and intent of this request for proposal is to enter into a contract with a qualified full-service social media influencer agency specializing in the travel industry that will assist Visit Fairfax to build out project goals, identify influencers that fit Visit Fairfax's desired target demo and geo markets, and facilitate production of selected influencer 3rd party content highlighting a variety of Fairfax County's tourism assets, all of which will build awareness of Fairfax County as a tourism destination, support the economic recovery of Fairfax County's tourism community, and support the mission of Visit Fairfax.

Background

The COVID-19 worldwide pandemic greatly affected the hospitality and tourism community of Fairfax County. Fairfax County's tourism economy includes visitors from across the world who contributed over \$3 billion in direct visitor spending in 2019, one of the largest contributions of tourism expenditures within the Commonwealth of Virginia. These visitors directly supported over 30,000 local jobs, occupied over 4.5 million room nights throughout the year, and supported businesses including hotels, restaurants, arts, entertainment, recreation, and a multitude of other related businesses. Nearly three years later, our industry is still working its way back to attain those pre-pandemic levels.

As part of its plan to restore tourism revenues across the Commonwealth, Virginia Tourism Corporation offered American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to 133 Virginia counties and cities, and \$4,170,000 was offered to Fairfax County. As the official Destination Marketing Organization for Fairfax County, Visit Fairfax is charged

with supporting the hospitality and tourism industries within the County and is implementing a plan for economic recovery to meet and exceed those pre-pandemic levels.

Visitor Profile

Fairfax County hosts travelers from across the globe that include leisure, business, and sports travelers. On the leisure side, the largest percentage of travelers (30%) is described as mature families (age 35 – 54) with high income (\$75k+) who are traveling with one or more children under 18 years of age. The second largest group (20%) is comprised of high-income travelers of mature or senior families who are not traveling with children.

Requirements

The company that is selected must be a full-service social media influencer agency specializing in the travel and tourism sectors. The agency must schedule, and oversee delivery of, mutually agreed upon influencer visits utilizing at minimum 3 different influencers during the contracted period. Multiple visits by the 3 different influencers are required. Each visit must result in delivery of at least 7+ social posts including one or more short form videos, tagging Visit Fairfax in posts, and tagging any featured partners in posts when possible. A minimum of 3 images and 1 blog post/article per influencer, per visit must also be provided. The imagery and blog post/article provided can be repurposed by Visit Fairfax in any manner that supports our mission and can be used without restriction. The selected agency must also amplify contracted influencer messaging through their own social mediums.

For this Request for Proposals, Visit Fairfax reserves the right to negotiate and award a contract for the proposal deemed to be in the best interest of Visit Fairfax. Because this contract is being paid entirely or in part by federal dollars, the selected company must agree to the terms and conditions located at www.FXVA.com/TermsAgency. These contractual provisions must be included in the final contract with the company that is selected.

Scope of Service/Objectives

The agency will work with Visit Fairfax to organize successful social media influencer visits with the goal of attracting visitors to Fairfax County - with a special emphasis on increasing hotel and motel occupancy along with other areas of visitor spending such as dining, entertainment, etc. The company will be asked to report on results to review progress against stated objectives.

The agency and their contracted influencers are expected to work in close cooperation with the Visit Fairfax team. The agency and their contracted influencers, through Visit Fairfax, must also work closely with Virginia Tourism Corporation's marketing to complement the work of the state's tourism efforts when applicable.

The agency must ensure execution of the included scope of work described herein. The agency and their contracted influencers, with guidance provided by Visit Fairfax, will promote seasonal and special interest leisure activities for the sole purpose of promoting Fairfax County tourism.

Please see Exhibit B for more specific details with regard to the scope of work. Visit Fairfax will consider proposals based on the projects outlined in the scope of work.

Once contracted, the agency will be solely responsible to arrange adequate financing to pay contracted influencers, production, travel costs, and any other required/related expenses to complete each project. Travel to and from Fairfax County, and expenses incurred while in Fairfax County, are the responsibility of the agency.

Term

The term of a resulting contract will be for sixteen months (March 2023 – June 2024).

Response Format

Respondents shall submit **two (2) electronic copy** responses. Digital responses shall be delivered to:

Barry Biggar at bbiggar@fxva.com

Patrick Lennon at plennon@fxva.com

Proposals will be accepted until **2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 8, 2023**. Proposals received after this time and date will not be considered. The offeror has the sole responsibility to have the proposal received by Visit Fairfax at the above email addresses by the time and date stated above.

Note: If you would like to verify that your proposal was received, please call 703-790-0643.

Questions

Please address the following information/questions in your RFP response:

- A. **Company Information and Experience.** Please provide Company information based on the attached template.

Please provide the history of the company and its years in business. In addition, please attach any pertinent information on the influencers with whom you work as well as the dedicated team members assigned to the Visit Fairfax account. Information may be related to job skills, education, training and experience of assigned professional staff. What expertise does your company possess that makes you the best qualified company to handle the tourism account for Fairfax County?

You may provide a description of the company's marketing philosophy, current techniques and use of available technology. You may provide examples of applicable work and/or case studies within the past five years that illustrate the company's ability to position Fairfax County as a desirable tourist destination and its ability to provide the services requested in this RFP.

- B. **Campaign Planning.** Please provide past examples of past campaigns you've executed for destinations related to tourism initiatives, and any additional applicable marketing initiatives – preferably those related to destination marketing. Please describe how your Company's experience, overall strategy, and resources will leverage Visit Fairfax's brand *Connect with America* and Virginia's brand *Virginia is for Lovers*. Preference will be given to companies that include measurable results.
- C. **Proposed Plan of Work.** The Visit Fairfax Team developed a recovery game plan that includes influencer visits between now and the spring of 2024. Because of the urgency of the situation, preference will be given to companies that can begin to execute these campaigns quickly, beginning as early as the spring of 2023. An overall budget of \$60,000 has been established for the campaigns. Please provide a detailed proposed plan of work to include deliverables for each visit.
- D. **Disclosures.** Do you currently represent a Destination Marketing Organization, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Tourist Development Council, Chamber of Commerce or other tourism-related organization within the Commonwealth of Virginia? If yes, please name the entity (entities) and describe how you would handle that account along with Visit Fairfax.

Do you currently represent a company involved in the travel and tourism industry located within Fairfax County? (e.g. hotel, motel, resort, restaurant, or attraction) If yes, please name the company/companies.

- E. **Fees.** Based on the information herein and the outlined Scope of Work (Exhibit B), please detail costs including all company fees, creative development, travel expenses, and contracting and management of influencer visits for the term outlined.

General Information

Proposers must comply with the following instructions to be considered for selection.

1. Any questions or requests for clarification must be submitted in writing no later than **5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 1, 2023** to Patrick Lennon at Visit Fairfax via email at plennon@fxva.com.
2. It shall be the sole responsibility of the proposer to have their digital proposal delivered to the email addresses provided for receipt on or before the stated time and date. Any proposals received after the stated time and date will not be considered.
3. Proposals shall clearly indicate the legal name, address and telephone number of the proposer. Proposals shall be signed under the typed or printed name and title of the signer. The signer shall have the authority to bind the proposer to the submitted proposal.
4. All expenses for making proposals to Visit Fairfax are to be borne by the proposer.
5. Visit Fairfax reserves the right to accept or reject any and/or all proposals, to waive irregularities and technicalities, and to request resubmission. Any sole response received by the first submission date may or may not be rejected by Visit Fairfax, depending on available competition and timely needs of the organization. Visit Fairfax reserves the right to award the contract to a responsible proposer submitting a responsive proposal, with a resulting negotiated contract which is most advantageous and in the best interests of the organization. Also, Visit Fairfax reserves the right to make such investigation as it deems necessary to determine the ability of any proposer to perform the work or service requested. Information Visit Fairfax deems necessary to make this determination shall be provided by the proposer. Such information may include, but shall not be limited to, current financial statements prepared by an independent CPA; verification of availability of equipment and personnel; and past performance records.
6. The review of the proposals will focus on the perceived ability of the Proposer to perform the services listed in the Scope of Services based on qualifications and experience as well as subsequent investigation by Visit Fairfax. Responses will be evaluated using the following criteria: Experience in Travel & Tourism (20%), Strategic Planning and Execution (30%), Marketing and Creative (30%), Cost (10%), and Overall Assessment (10%). The award of the final contract shall be to the Proposer who, in the sole opinion of the adjudicating body for Visit Fairfax, is most qualified to perform the services required.
7. All responses are confidential. The company's contract terms and conditions will be part of the final selection process including the terms and conditions found at www.FXVA.com/TermsAgency as well as the provision that all artwork, photography, content and other source materials produced by the agency and its contracted influencers for Visit Fairfax are the sole property of Visit Fairfax.

Exhibit A
Company Information

Printed Name of Representative: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

Company Ownership: _____

Date Established: _____

Primary Business: _____

Total Number of Employees: _____

Number of Employees engaged in activities relevant to this RFP: _____

Company certifies that neither it nor any of its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for disbarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Exhibit B

Scope of Work

Visit Fairfax has developed a comprehensive integrated plan to assist with the economic recovery of the tourism industry in Fairfax County – part of which includes a budget of \$60,000 dedicated to implement an influencer-focused component dedicated to promoting Fairfax County's tourism products between now and the spring of 2024. Because of the urgency of the situation, preference will be given to agencies that can begin to execute these campaigns quickly, beginning as early as the spring of 2023. Please provide a detailed proposed plan of work to include deliverables for each of the influencer visits outlined in the plan of work.

The company will provide strategic account management and will work with Visit Fairfax to select influencers to visit Fairfax County and promote our tourism assets to their audiences with the goal of economic recovery following the worldwide pandemic. The following minimum requirements for visits and resulting work have been determined; however, preference will be given to companies that offer the best return-on-investment for Visit Fairfax and our stakeholders:

- Schedule, and oversee delivery of, mutually agreed upon influencer visits utilizing a minimum three plus (3+) different influencers during the contracted period.
- Multiple visits by the three plus (3+) different influencers are required. Please indicate how many visits each influencer will conduct.
- Each visit must result in delivery of at least seven plus (7+) social posts including short form videos, tagging Visit Fairfax in posts, and tagging any featured partners in posts when possible.
- A minimum of three plus (3+) images and one plus (1+) blog post/article per influencer, per visit must also be provided.
- Visit Fairfax may repurpose the imagery and blog post/articles provided in any manner that supports our mission and can be used without restriction.
- The selected company must also amplify contracted influencer messaging through their own social mediums.
- The selected company will provide a report following each visit detailing measurable activity and results. Additionally, company will provide a final report indicating results from all campaigns.

All aspects related to influencer visits will be included in the agency's contracted amount of \$60,000 including travel expenses (transportation, accommodations, meals, and miscellaneous expenses), content creation, strategic planning, and promotion. Agency will also provide strategic account and initial creative consultation as part of the contract.

The company that is selected must be a full-service social media influencer company specializing in elements of travel and tourism. Company account representative(s) will meet with Visit Fairfax either in person or via teleconference to provide strategic suggestions as well as to update status on identified projects.

Company will, in good faith, assist and support Visit Fairfax with reasonable requests for assistance with strategic consultation and other miscellaneous requests that will help further the message of Visit Fairfax and accomplish the mission of post-pandemic recovery.