



Request for Proposals
Reimagining Tucson's
Destination Brand

February 7, 2024

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. Land Acknowledgement

Visit Tucson recognizes and respects that Tucson, Pima County, and the areas that we promote reside on the ancestral homeland of Indigenous Peoples including the Hohokam, Tohono O'odham, Pascua Yaqui (Yoeme), and more who may call this place home. Visit Tucson respects the Indigenous communities who have stewarded this land throughout generations, and we recognize and value the people, culture, and traditions that make up the fabric of our community.

1.2. Organization & Destination Overview

Vision: Elevate Tucson as the dynamic outdoor and cultural hub of the Sonoran Desert.

Mission: Welcoming the world to Tucson to strengthen our vibrant community.

Visit Tucson is a 501(c)6 nonprofit organization that works to attract leisure visitors, group meetings, sports events, travel media, group tours; and films, commercials, and photo shoots to the metro Tucson region. We are the official destination marketing organization for the City of Tucson, Pima County, and Town of Oro Valley and partner with the Tohono O'odham Nation and the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, as well as more than 500 business members throughout the community.

As a destination, Tucson rates very highly on attributes like authenticity and natural environment. These are key differentiators for us as compared to destinations in our competitive set. We also offer warm, sunny weather and plenty of wide-open spaces for people to recreate and enjoy nature, a vibrant and internationally recognized food scene, as well as a unique cultural heritage and history.

Visit Tucson's outbound marketing initiatives primarily target audiences in the domestic U.S. and Mexico, with additional emphasis on Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France. Our efforts in these European markets are primarily geared towards Media/PR and Travel Trade initiatives.

Each of the following departments leverages our brand to entice clients and visitors. The branding process should consider these different departments and ensure that the resulting brand is reflective of each and easily implemented by all.

VISIT TUCSON DEPARTMENTS

- Marketing
- PR & Communications
- Sales
- Gem Show & Convention Services
- Visit Tucson Sports*
- Multicultural & Mexico Marketing – “Vamos a Tucson”*
- Tourism
- Film Tucson*
- Partnership & Visitor Services

**Visit Tucson departments that currently have separate brand logos and colors. Please refer to our brand standards, linked below.*

Find out more about Visit Tucson’s current brand at [VisitTucson.org/Brand](https://www.visitucson.org/Brand)

Find out more about Visit Tucson’s departments in our most recent [Annual Report & Marketing Plan](#)

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

2.1. Project Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) process is to seek and retain a qualified agency to work with Visit Tucson to develop and deploy a new brand identity that will align with our organization’s goals and objectives as laid out in [Visit Tucson’s Annual Report & Marketing Plan](#) and [10-Year Tourism Master Plan](#).

2.2. Project Objectives

Visit Tucson has been at the forefront of promoting Tucson and southern Arizona as a prime destination for visitors, businesses, and residents alike. As we evolve and respond to an ever-changing tourism landscape, it is crucial to also evolve our brand to better encapsulate the richness, diversity, and dynamism of our region. We seek a strategic and creative partner to guide us in this journey.

We are looking for a partner that demonstrates a strong knowledge of industry trends, research, and best practices; and is adept at travel and destination branding. However, while experience working within our industry is important, we are also in search of a partner that views each branding project as an opportunity to discover what makes a destination special and uses that experience to craft something entirely unique.

Research should be core to development of the brand. Our selected partner will be responsible for presenting and executing a brand research plan that will allow for guidance from key stakeholders, partners, residents, and Visit Tucson staff through meetings, interviews, and surveys. The research plan should also include competitive analysis and key metrics to determine the success of the overall branding effort.

The selected partner will assist in the development of effective, innovative brand that will:

1. Position Tucson and southern Arizona as a premier travel destination renowned for diverse culture, rich heritage, and unique natural surroundings.
2. Differentiate Tucson from other destinations in our competitive set.
3. Resonate with locals to activate their sense of pride for living in this region.
4. Reflect the diversity of our community, in particular the ongoing contributions of our Indigenous peoples and Hispanic community.
5. Align with key components of Visit Tucson's Tourism Master Plan

2.3. Scope of Work

The selected partner will be tasked with the following comprehensive scope of work:

a. Brand Discovery and Strategy Development:

- Conduct an in-depth analysis of the competitive landscape and market trends in the tourism and destination marketing industry.
- Engage with key stakeholders, including local businesses, community leaders, and residents, to gather insights and perspectives.
- Develop a holistic brand strategy that aligns with our organization's mission, vision, and long-term goals.

b. Visual Identity and Creative Elements

- Craft a fresh and distinctive visual identity that encapsulates the spirit of Tucson and southern Arizona and speaks to the variety of audiences served by Visit Tucson's departments.
- This visual identity will encompass a new logo, color palette, typography, and design elements, with a focus on strength and versatility.
- Create comprehensive brand guidelines that ensure consistent application of the brand across various media and platforms.
- Create a high-quality video piece that clearly communicates the essence of the brand for presentation and promotional purposes.

c. Messaging and Content Strategy:

- Develop a foundation for compelling and evocative messaging that resonates with our target audiences and conveys the unique appeal of our destination.

- Create a draft content strategy that aligns with our new brand, covering a wide range of communication channels, including digital, social media, video, and print.
- Explore storytelling opportunities that emphasize Tucson's history, culture, natural beauty, and thriving communities.

d. Implementation Plan:

- Provide a detailed implementation plan, specifying how the new brand will be integrated into digital platforms, collateral, and promotional materials.
- Offer support and training for our internal teams to ensure seamless adoption of the new brand.
- Collaborate with Visit Tucson on a rollout strategy, including a launch event and media outreach plan.

2.4. Budget

Proposals with an all-inclusive budget up to a maximum of \$250,000 will be considered.

2.5. Project Schedule

The table below illustrates the critical milestones and related deadline dates for the process through launch. Please note the indicated “Soft-launch” and “Hard-launch” dates and be sure to clearly indicate your agency’s ability to meet these key deadlines in your proposal.

The deadline for proposal submission is: **5:00 pm MST, Friday, March 8, 2024.**

Project Milestones	Deadline
RFP released	Wednesday, February 7, 2024
Submit questions and inform intent to participate by end of business day	Wednesday, February 21, 2024
Responses to all agency questions published by end of business day	Monday, February 26, 2024
Proposal due by end of business day	Friday, March 8, 2024
Evaluation of proposals	March 11 - March 22, 2024
Shortlist candidates notified	Week of March 25, 2024
Shortlist meetings	Week of April 15, 2024
Vendor selection by	Wednesday, April 24, 2024
Contract start	Wednesday, May 1, 2024 (Tentative)
“Soft-Launch” presentation of work to key partners and stakeholders	Week of October 7, 2024 (Tentative)
“Hard-Launch” roll-out to consumers and broader community via websites, social, paid media, etc.	Week of January 6, 2025 (Tentative)

3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCEDURE & GUIDELINES

3.1. Vendor RFP Reception

By responding to this RFP, the agency agrees to be responsible for fully understanding the requirements and other details of the RFP and will ask any questions to ensure such understanding is gained. Visit Tucson retains the right to disqualify agencies who do not fully meet the requirements stated in the RFP.

3.2. Good Faith Statement

All information provided by Visit Tucson is offered in good faith. Specific items are subject to change at any time based on business circumstances. Visit Tucson does not guarantee that any item within this document is without error. Visit Tucson will not be held responsible or liable for use of this information or for any claims asserted therefrom.

3.3. Proposal Submission Guidelines

Proposal submissions should include the following sections and related details:

a. Cover Letter

- An introductory letter expressing why your agency is an ideal fit for this project. Please include primary contact info and a summary of qualifications.

b. Company Profile

- Mission statement, vision, and values.
- Overview of experience, and competencies in branding, destination marketing, and relevant industry expertise.
- Relevant credentials, licenses, certifications.
- List any subcontractors that may be engaged in delivering services and their qualifications.
- Please note any company policies and practices related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Please note any company policies and practices related to sustainability.

c. Examples of Prior Work

- Examples of 3-4 recently completed branding projects.
- Each example should highlight creativity and innovation, as well as process, methodology, and results.

d. Budget

- Proposals should include a full breakdown of estimated fees necessary to complete the project as outlined within the scope of work. Please include the following cost breakdown:
 - Project fees
 - Stakeholder engagement costs
 - Travel expenses, if required
 - Total project cost
- Additional costs related to any required services not outlined within the scope of work.
- Payment schedule

e. References

- Contact information for at least three client references who can vouch for your agency's capabilities and outcomes.
- Include company name, contact name, email address, and phone number.

f. Project Delivery

- Clear articulation of the proposed project, work plan to achieve the scope of work, and ability to meet key deadlines as outlined in the RFP project schedule (section 2.5).
- Methodology for developing the strategy, including recommendations on stakeholder engagement.
- Schedule of project milestones.

3.4. Communication Guidelines

Communications shall not be effective, unless a designated Visit Tucson representative who is responsible for managing the RFP process formally confirms these communications in writing. In no case shall verbal communication govern over written communications. If a responding agency has any questions about the RFP process, scope of work, or anything else relevant to crafting their proposal please send via email by the stated deadline.

- **Please submit all questions by Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 5:00 pm MST**
- **Please submit proposals by Friday, March 8, 2024, 5:00 pm MST**
- **Please send questions and proposals via email to:**
 - Lee McLaughlin, VP of Marketing | lmclaughlin@visittucson.org
 - Rosanna Gaxiola, Director of Marketing | rgaxiola@visittucson.org

3.5. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated systematically based on the following key criteria. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify agencies with the interest and capabilities to provide the needed services as defined in the Scope of Work.

Proposals and presentations will be evaluated by designated Visit Tucson staff as well as selected members of our community, including representatives from key funding entities and stakeholder groups.

Following is a sample of the evaluation scorecard that will be used to rate the written proposals and presentations:

	Maximum Points
Quality of Proposal <i>Submission of a complete and detailed proposal.</i>	5
Process, Methodology, and Approach <i>Strategies, creativity, research capabilities, etc. Ability to meet project goals and timeline.</i>	40
Team Qualifications <i>Services, personnel, knowledge, and experience related to destination branding and stakeholder engagement.</i>	30
Budget <i>Reasonable and appropriate fees for services outlined within scope of work.</i>	20
References <i>Strength of references from clients who have engaged in similar projects</i>	5
TOTAL	100

3.6. Short-list Selection

Agencies who have demonstrated their capacity to meet our needs will be contacted via email to be notified of their selection to move forward in the RFP process. Upon notification agencies should promptly respond to confirm their willingness to continue with the process.

Visit Tucson will plan to conduct in-person meetings with each agency that has been added to the short-list. These meetings will be completed no later than **Friday, April 19, 2024**. If agency representatives are unable to travel to Tucson for an in-person meeting within the required timeframe, virtual meeting options can be discussed.

3.7. Conflict of Interest

Responding agencies are asked to certify that they have no conflicts of interest in serving Visit Tucson. If a responding agency has worked with any of Visit Tucson's principal competitors in any capacity, we ask that you notify us during the question period (no later than **Wednesday, February 21, 2024**).

Principal competitors are Phoenix, AZ; Scottsdale, AZ; Palm Springs, CA; San Antonio, TX; and Santa Fe, NM. Additional companies may also be considered competitors and we ask that you notify us of any potential conflict or email any questions on competitors during the question period.

Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to reviewing your proposal.