

INDIA RFP 2023 QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

- Q.** What is the average length of stay for Indians in California? Could you provide information on the 371,000 visitor trips from India? Are these overnight hotel guests? Do we have KPI for spend in California by Indians?
- A.** Visit California's International Market Research can be found here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard>
- Q.** Courier companies require a phone number when sending documents overseas. What number should be used?
- A.** Yes, please use the main switchboard telephone number, which is (916) 444-4429.
- Q.** How many full-time staff are currently engaged in the Visit California team in India, and how many full-time staff are expected to deliver this work?
- A.** We are interested in knowing how many FTEs you would recommend fulfilling the SOW requirements.
- Q.** Please advise on the applicable contract period. It mentions July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, on Page 2 and January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024 on Page 8.
- A.** The Scope of Work will commence on January 1, 2024, and will be renewed on or before July 1, 2024, for the next fiscal year. Visit California's fiscal year commences on July 1 – June 30 each year. The contract can be renewed every year for up to 5 years. You will need to submit the proposed in-market activations for a full calendar year at both of the appropriate funding levels.

- Q.** For the RFP purpose, kindly clarify that we need to submit the proposed in-market activations for the full calendar year (January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024) as mentioned in Page 14 (point 8.3) and Page 16 (funding levels)?
- A.** Yes, that is correct.
- Q.** Please advise if we would have backend access to refresh and localize the website content for the India-specific website (www.visitcalifornia.com/in), in addition to analytics for the tracking performance?
- A.** The in-market agency manages the social content, under the guidance of Visit California and our editorial team. You will work directly with the program manager to direct any changes.
- Q.** Please advise the exact cut-off Pacific Standard Time (PDT) to receive the proposal on September 22, 2023.
- A.** By the end of the business day, 5:00 pm PDT.
- Q.** Please confirm that we need to submit both electronic and hard copies of the required documents (income statement & balance sheet).
- A.** Yes, please submit both electronic and hard copies.
- Q.** We might selectively engage subcontractors for specific projects closer to the project implementation and, based on their competency to bring value to a project. Please advise if we need to list them and provide advance information of prospective subcontractors or only mention subcontractor categories at this stage.
- A.** Only if they will be recommended as part of the SOW that you will be presenting and budgeting. If you anticipate working with a subcontractor in the future but have yet to align them with a particular project, you will not need to list this subcontractor as such.
- Q.** Please advise if there is any preferred format for submitting the proposal e.g. PDF output of PowerPoint slides or a Word document.
- A.** Your preference.

- Q.** Please advise if we need to only focus on India-based Online Travel Agencies (OTAs); or if we are allowed to also collaborate with other popular International OTAs with significant consumer presence in the Indian outbound market.
- A.** You can focus on those agencies, local or international, that you will recommend as part of the SOW you will be presenting.
- Q.** Kindly confirm if the five-minute team video needs to be submitted in a pen-drive with the physical copy of written proposal or we could share a download link to access the video file.
- A.** You may share a download link and do not need to share the video file on pen drive.
- Q.** Please advise if we could use our in-market budgets to acquire third-party consumer databases, in addition to the data collected by us via media collaborations and internal sources.
- A.** Yes, you can recommend using the budget to acquire third-party databases, but final approval will be needed by Visit California's in-market manager.
- Q.** Please confirm if there would be any limit on the file sizes for the electronic submissions of the five-minute team video and the written proposal, or if we could also use the file sharing options (Google Drive, WeTransfer) to upload and transfer these files?
- A.** Your final proposal can be embedded in a downloadable link such as WeTransfer, Google Drive or Dropbox. There is no file max that needs to be considered; however, be mindful of keeping the written proposal as concise as possible.
- Q.** The contract period mentions a fiscal period of one year starting January 2024. However, it states that - The proposal will be based on a full fiscal year of activities, but the contract will be valid from January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024". Can you please help us clarify this from a budget perspective and the validity of the agreement?
- A.** See Question #1 above.

- Q.** Since all costs related to the marketing activities need to be included, we just want to confirm participation at trade events/shows that we suggest – should count with all costs - participation and booth fabrication costs etc., correct?
- A.** Yes.
- Q.** For the out-of-pocket expenses, especially local travel expenses (to other cities in India where staff is not allocated) should we include those costs in the budget shared in the RFP, or would be something that would be additional/separate to be claimed?
- A.** This should be included in the budget.
- Q.** Can you help us confirm if the costing/budget form we share should be inclusive of taxes or without?
- A.** You should consider ALL costs associated with doing business on our behalf.
- Q.** What are the key messaging points you plan to emphasize in your PR activities targeted at the Indian audience?
- A.** Visit California’s International Market Research can be found here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard>
- Q.** Could you elaborate on the key challenges you’ve encountered or anticipate when promoting California to the Indian market?
- A.** We are depending on your market expertise and understanding of the Indian marketplace to elaborate on these challenges as part of the written exercise.

- Q.** What specific activities and initiatives are you planning to undertake in different regions of India to promote tourism to California?
- A.** We are depending on your market expertise to suggest what types of activities and initiatives should be highlighted in each region.
- Q.** Can you share some examples of previous marketing initiatives you've carried out in India and the responses you received from the audience?
- A.** Visit California's International Market Research can be found here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard>
- Q.** What are the primary goals or outcomes you hope to achieve through your PR efforts in India?
- A.** We are hoping to achieve the goals set forth in the scope of work and to understand your recommendation on how to best make improvements.
- Q.** In terms of digital activities, what platforms and channels do you plan to focus on to reach the Indian audience effectively?
- A.** Visit California's marketing plans can be found here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>
- Q.** How do you plan to leverage cultural nuances and preferences to tailor your PR activities for the Indian market?
- A.** We would be interested in hearing your recommendation regarding this approach.
- Q.** Are there any partnerships or collaborations with Indian travel companies or influencers that you're considering to enhance your PR strategy?
- A.** Please recommend potential travel partners as part of your written proposal.

- Q.** Can you provide insights into the specific demographics within India that you're targeting with your PR efforts?
- A.** We are depending on your market expertise. Please include in your written assignment the specific demographics you would recommend to target.
- Q.** Can you tell me about some of the successful marketing partnerships you've previously engaged in?
- A.** You can find Visit California's past work here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>
- Q.** What criteria do you consider when selecting potential partners for marketing collaborations?
- A.** Criteria is specific to each partnership. Please recommend potential travel partners as part of your written proposal.
- Q.** How do you ensure a marketing partnership aligns with your brand's values and objectives?
- A.** We would depend on our agency to define this alignment.
- Q.** Could you provide examples of how marketing partnerships have helped you reach new or niche audiences?
- A.** Over the years, Visit California has worked with many endemic and non-endemic partners in India- major airlines and travel trade partners.
- Q.** What types of resources or assets do you typically contribute to a marketing partnership?
- A.** This varies greatly depending on the type of co-op, but normal assets could include detonation images and content.
- Q.** How do you measure the effectiveness and ROI of your marketing partnerships?
- A.** This varies greatly depending on the program. We establish ROI goals prior to the start of the activity to have an agreement before the program begins.

- Q.** What strategies do you employ to ensure a mutually beneficial and long-lasting relationship with your marketing partners?
- A.** We welcome your suggestions on this as it varies by market/country.
- Q.** In terms of cross-promotion, how do you integrate your brand's messaging with that of your marketing partners?
- A.** For India, we don't have a direct-to-consumer spend in the market at this time, so it is a B2B message, not B2C.
- Q.** Are there any upcoming marketing partnerships that you're excited about and can provide a sneak peek into?
- A.** Visit California marketing plans can be found here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>
- Q.** How do you intend to measure the success of your PR activities / Marketing Strategies in terms of increased tourist interest and engagement from India?
- A.** We have a global monthly PR tracker that measures ROI, which will be shared with selective agencies.
- Q.** How do you establish and maintain partnerships with airlines in the Indian market?
- A.** We are interested in understanding your approach to creating these relationships.
- Q.** What are the key benefits for travelers when visiting California through your airline partnerships?
- A.** We welcome your opinion and for you to share your suggestions and best practices.
- Q.** Could you share examples of exclusive offerings or packages that result from your airline relationships?
- A.** Visit California's past programs of work can be found here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/>

- Q.** How do you ensure that the airline partnerships align with your overall tourism promotion strategy?
- A.** We work with our in-market team to develop these in our annual marketing plans.
- Q.** Can you provide insights into the types of travelers or demographics that are most likely to benefit from these airline partnerships?
- A.** We welcome your in-market thoughts on this. These are programmatic pieces that are developed in the coop planning stage.
- Q.** What kind of marketing strategies do you employ to promote the convenience and advantages of traveling to California with your partner airlines?
- A.** We work with our in-market teams to establish co-ops and measurements for each co-op.
- Q.** Can you elaborate on any unique incentives or rewards that travelers might receive when choosing your partner airlines for California travel?
- A.** Each partnership co-op varies; not all partnerships offer incentives or rewards to travelers. You can find examples of these types of programs from other markets here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/>
- Q.** What role do these airline partnerships play in achieving your broader goals of promoting tourism to California?
- A.** Airline specific partnerships are key to achieving entire program goals.
- Q.** Are there any new developments or upcoming initiatives related to your airline relationships in the Indian market that you can share?
- A.** Visit California's Marketing plans and past activities can be found here: <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/>