# REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Creation and distribution of AMP stories of Experience Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award entity</th>
<th>European Travel Commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issuance date</td>
<td>8 April 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for applications</td>
<td>23 April 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated starting date</td>
<td>May 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated duration</td>
<td>9 months [with option for extension]</td>
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</tbody>
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1. INTRODUCTION

This Request for Proposals (RfP) is launched in the framework of an ad-hoc grant of the European Commission (EC) to the European Travel Commission (ETC) with the aim to support the promotion of thematic trans-European tourism products in third countries.

This RfP contributes to the implementation of ETC’s marketing strategy Horizon 2022*, which aims to build a distinctive image of Europe as a travel destination in long-haul markets; maintain its market share; and better disperse traveller flows (in terms of geography and seasons), while taking into account residents’ aspirations for sustainable tourism growth.

The present document is intended as a guideline based on ETC’s goals and requirements. A clear understanding of these goals and requirements should be reflected in the proposal. Applicants are asked to interpret all aspects of this document carefully yet creatively, using their business intelligence, market experience and expertise to propose the best possible solution for the project. Additional ideas and suggestions that contribute to achieving the objectives of the project are welcome and should be clearly outlined in the proposal.

CONFIDENTIAL: The information in this document may not be used for any purpose other than to respond to this Request for Proposal. This document is and will remain at all times, the property of ETC.

About the European Travel Commission (ETC)

The European Travel Commission (ETC) is an international non-profit making association of official National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) in Europe. The organisation was established in 1948 and is headquartered in Brussels (Belgium).

ETC’s mission is to support the promotion of Europe as a tourist destination in major long-haul markets. For its member NTOs, ETC also provides a broad portfolio of market intelligence services and encourages the sharing of best practices. ETC is established as a private body (AISBL) under the law of Belgium.

Moreover, within the scope of its mission, ETC works regularly with the European Commission on a series of initiatives aimed at maintaining Europe’s position as the world’s leading travel destination.

Further information about ETC can be found on the website www.etc-corporate.org.

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1 See https://etc-corporate.org/our-campaigns/horizon-2022/
2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

ETC intends to commission the creation and distribution of visual travel stories for Accelerated Mobile Pages (hereinafter referred to as AMP stories) of the brand Experience Europe (also referred to as the project) to a third party (hereinafter referred to as the contractor).

This project is implemented by ETC in cooperation with its member National Tourism Organisations.

The activities subject to this RfP are co-funded by the European Union.

2.1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this project are:

- Enhance awareness of extraordinary travel experiences in lesser-known European destinations among ETC’s global niche target communities of travellers

- Help build a distinctive image of Europe by broadening perceptions of what the continent has to offer as a destination

- Generate demand for travel to and around Europe, encouraging regional dispersal, length of stay and expenditure

- Align European destinations and the industry with the Horizon 2022 strategy and the Experience Europe brand purpose and values

- Leverage promotional efforts of Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) in Europe

2.2. TARGET GROUPS

The project is targeted towards the niche global communities of travellers whose main motivation to travel to a certain place is to enjoy experiences related to the following specific passion points:

A. Nature and the Outdoors: Inspiring experiences and stories framed around human or nature-powered journeys that connect with the outdoors, the local culture, food and people in rural areas in line with the ethos of the Slow Adventure movement.

This interest connects with the community of Immersive Explorers; those who find togetherness in the wilderness and enjoy experiencing nature at their own pace. They want to learn about new cultures, experience new adventures and expand their perspectives from what they learn when travelling.

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2 Full list of member NTOs can be found on the website: https://etc-corporate.org/our-members/
3 Please see the Slow Adventure Guide for a detailed overview of the ethos of the Slow Adventure movement: https://etc-corporate.org/uploads/2020/03/The_Slow_Adventure_Guide_compressed.pdf
4 For further information on the profile the community of Immersive Explorers see https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-immersive-explorers/
B. Creative Cities: Inspiring experiences and stories framed around the local cultural scene and lifestyle (contemporary arts, architecture and design, fashion, music, street and performing arts) of small or medium-size urban areas.

This interest connects with the community of City Life Enthusiasts⁵; those who swap landmarks for local life, trade the well-worn path for a secret side street and crave a culture of creative contrast and artistic reinvention. They want to “live like a local” while developing their own creativity and put emphasis on the atmosphere of the places they visit.

C. History and Ancestry: Ancestry and heritage-related experiences and stories in connection with historical places and events (places of memory, contemplation and commemoration) which exerted an influence in world history.

This passion connects with the community of Explorers of Cultural Identity and Roots⁶; those who step beyond borders into the theatre of world history, learning from the stories of yesterday with a desire to discover their own roots.

Within each of the three interest-based communities described above, the AMP stories must specifically appeal to affluent (semi-)Free Independent Travellers⁷ (FITs) from urban “melting pots” travelling for leisure (see Figure 1) who are at the dreaming, consideration and/or sharing stage of their travel cycle and help drive them down the path to purchase. There is a particular interest in engaging repeat visitors to Europe as opposed to first-time visitors from long-haul markets.

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⁵ For further information on the profile the community of City Life Enthusiasts see https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-city-life-enthusiasts/
⁶ For further information on the profile the community of Explorers of Cultural Identity and Roots see https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-explorers-of-cultural-identity-and-roots/
⁷ A Free Independent Travellers (FITs) is an individual or a small group (1-10) of individuals who travel independently, not in a group. FITs plan and arrange their travel online by themselves. However, it should be noted that long-haul FITs are still likely to contact a tour operator or agent - which has previously arranged individual products and services for use by individual travellers - to book their trip given the particular knowledge, time and confidence required for planning a holiday to an overseas destination (semi-FITs).
2.3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The project is subdivided into two lots with the following scope respectively:

**LOT 1 - Creation of AMP stories of Experience Europe**

AMP stories are a mobile-focused format for delivering information in a visually rich, fast-loading, full-screen tap-through experience. The AMP story format is free and part of the open web. AMP stories can be shared and embedded across the web without being confined to a closed ecosystem or platform.

The scope of the assignment consists of the creation of a set of AMP stories showcasing extraordinary activities and places in Europe in relation to the passion points of nature & the outdoors, creative cities and history & ancestry. These AMP stories shall follow a standardised format that immerses the niche target audiences (see 2.2 Target Groups) in a visual, interactive and informative digital experience.

**LOT 2 - Distribution of AMP stories of Experience Europe**

The scope of the assignment consists of the development of a digital ecosystem for the automatic distribution of AMP stories to target audiences at scale across the web.

This digital ecosystem shall work as a platform that fosters cooperation between European Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) and the industry by leveraging reach and distribution of AMP stories created by ETC and its partners.

3. DELIVERABLES AND REQUIREMENTS

The contractor is expected to deliver the minimum and technical requirements described in the sections below. Proposals which are not compliant with these requirements will be excluded from further evaluation.

3.1. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

**LOT 1 - Creation of AMP stories of Experience Europe**

The contractor is expected to deliver a set of AMP stories showcasing extraordinary activities and places in Europe in relation to the passion points of nature & the outdoors, creative cities and history & ancestry (see 2.2 Target Groups).

ETC will provide guidance to the contractor about the narrative, key messages and tone of voice as well as about the specific destinations, experiences, activities or attractions to be showcased in AMP stories. Moreover, ETC will grant the contractor access to existing creative assets, including brand
and stock images and videos, which in combination with user generated content\(^8\) (UGC) may be repurposed for creating engaging AMP stories. Notwithstanding this, the contractor will be ultimately responsible for curating all necessary creative assets for producing all AMP stories.

These AMP stories shall follow a standardised mobile-first format to be defined by the contractor. The contractor must determine the technical specifications of all content elements of a standard AMP story so that they can be easily followed and replicated. The format must be compliant enough to be used and displayed on multiple digital channels, including web (desktop and mobile) and social media (Facebook and Instagram).

Each of these AMP stories shall ultimately provide an immersive, interactive and informative experience that inspires the niche target audiences to discover more unique European destinations. In order to achieve this, the contractor must apply best-in-class practices in digital storytelling.

The contractor shall explicitly provide ETC with a worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive, perpetual (for the duration of the applicable copyright) license to exercise the Intellectual Property Rights of the AMP stories created for or in the course of the project as stated below:

a) to reproduce the AMP stories or incorporate the AMP stories into other material, and to reproduce it as incorporated in such other material;

b) to create and reproduce derivative works from the AMP stories;

c) to distribute copies and display publicly the AMP stories, whether independently or as part of other material;

d) to distribute copies and display publicly derivative works from the AMP stories.

**LOT 2 - Distribution of AMP stories of Experience Europe**

The contractor is expected to conceive a method for the distribution of AMP stories to target audiences at scale across the web and on multiple devices. The contractor will be responsible for developing, managing and maintaining all technical aspects relating to the proposed solution to be used by ETC for the entire duration of the contract. This includes, but it is not limited to the following aspects:

- Providing the technology and know-how to implement and manage the distribution of AMP stories;
- Hosting and storing of content;
- Tracking capabilities and performance analytics;
- The proposed solution must allow integration on ETC’s consumer website www.visiteurope.com;

\(^8\)The contractor must clear copyrights for any user generated content that may want to use for the production of AMP stories.
• It must be optimised for excellent performance on both mobile and desktop devices, with the former of higher priority;
• It must allow indexation by search engines;
• Training to ETC staff on the use of the tool (if required).

In addition, the proposed solution for distribution of AMP stories must enable syndication of similar content developed by ETC’s partners, namely other Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) and providers of travel experiences (museums, national parks, etc) in Europe. The contractor is, therefore, required to develop a licencing scheme or similar that adequately covers the use of the solution proposed for ETC by third parties as well.

3.2. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the above minimum requirements [see 3.1 Minimum Requirements], the following technical requirements are common to both lots of the project.

3.2.1. Publicity guidelines

All deliverables of the project must clearly acknowledge ETC’s and the European Union’s financial contribution. In this respect, the contractor will be required to give prominence to the following logos on all materials produced in the framework of the project:

![Logo of Europe-visiteurope.com](image1)

![Name and emblem of the European Union](image2)

The guidelines for the use of the Europe-visiteurope.com logo and the EU emblem as well as the respective graphic files are available for download at the following link: [https://etc-corporate.org/publicity-guidelines/](https://etc-corporate.org/publicity-guidelines/)

In addition to the above, ETC reserves the right to request the use of partners’ logos in materials produced.

3.2.2. Project Management

All communication between ETC and the contractor must be in English. The contractor should designate at least one English-speaking staff member to manage the ETC account and all project-related communication by email and phone as required. The account manager should provide regular updates by telephone or video conference calls upon request by ETC.

ETC must be involved and consulted at each stage of the project, providing guidance and any other necessary inputs. ETC will have to approve all outcomes after the completion of each stage of the working schedule in order for the contractor to proceed to the next stage.
ETC will serve as a liaison between the contractor and ETC’s member NTOs, partners and consultants that may be involved in the project implementation. The contractor is expected to fully collaborate with both groups as delegated by ETC in order to ensure the successful implementation of the project.

3.3. DELIVERABLES

LOT 1 - Creation of AMP stories of Experience Europe

The contractor is expected to deliver a set of a minimum of 60 AMP stories broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passion point</th>
<th>Number of AMP stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature and the outdoors</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative cities</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and ancestry</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The contractor is also expected to deliver a full document in electronic format (.doc or .pdf file) with descriptions of the technical specifications of all content elements of a standard AMP story. All documents should be written in English. The contractor is responsible for ensuring that the final document is of sufficiently high quality (both the English language and editing) to enable its use without further editing.

LOT 2 - Distribution of AMP stories of Experience Europe

The contractor is expected to provide a software service or similar, designed according to ETC’s requirements for use by ETC.

The contractor is also expected to deliver a full document in electronic format (.doc or .pdf file) which describes the terms and conditions of the licencing scheme or similar for the use of the project deliverable by ETC’s partners (third parties). All documents should be written in English. The contractor is responsible for ensuring that the final document is of sufficiently high quality (both the English language and editing) to enable its use without further editing.

3.4. IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The implementation period of the project will start on the date of signature of a service agreement between ETC and the contractor (estimated May 2020).

For lot 1, the implementation period will last for a maximum of eight months and should, in any case, not extend beyond the end of January 2021, unless otherwise agreed. A first batch of AMP stories comprising at least half of the total deliverables [see 3.3 Deliverables] must be delivered within the first two months of project implementation. The second batch must be delivered within the next six-month period. The service agreement will expire upon approval of all final deliverables by ETC.
For lot 2, the implementation period will last for a maximum of nine months and should, in any case, not extend beyond the end of January 2021, unless otherwise agreed. The framework service agreement might be extended upon mutual agreement of the parties.

4. BUDGET AND TERMS OF PAYMENT

The maximum available contract value for the entire lifetime of the project per lot is:

LOT 1 - Creation of AMP stories of Experience Europe

Lot 1 has a maximum contract value of EUR 30,000 (thirty thousand euros), exclusive of VAT.

LOT 2 - Distribution of AMP stories of Experience Europe

Lot 2 has a maximum contract value of EUR 110,000 (one hundred and ten thousand euros), exclusive of VAT.

Any fees in relation to the licencing of the use of the proposed solution for ETC by third parties shall be charged separately by the contractor and are, therefore, not included in the above maximum contract value. Such fees are not guaranteed as they depend on the level of interest and demand from third parties and, therefore, will be subject to a particular agreement between ETC and the contractor. The contractor shall, however, indicate the fee amount or range as a separate item in their economic offer (see section 5. Submission of proposals).

Invoicing per lot will be done on a project-phase basis after submission of the corresponding deliverables. ETC will first approve that the deliverables are correct and ask the contractor to submit the corresponding invoice. ETC undertakes to pay the sums due for performance of each project-phase within 30 calendar days of acceptance of the invoice.

- **First payment:**
  - For lot 1, invoiced upon delivery and approval of a first batch of AMP stories. 50% of final contract value.
  - For lot 2, invoiced upon delivery of the technical setup of the software or similar solution. 50% of final contract value.

- **Second payment (for both lots):** Invoiced upon project completion. 50% of final contract value.

5. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must clearly specify the number and name of the lot that they have applied for. The same contractor may submit a proposal to one or more lots.
Proposals must be clear, concise (not exceeding 25 pages in total per lot) and written in English. The proposal should include:

1) Brief company profile;

2) Description of the team credentials, field of expertise and roles of each person involved in the project;

3) References to relevant experience in delivering comparable work as outlined in 3.1. Minimum Requirements (i.e. case studies or reference list - including project goals, processes, dates and verifiable deliverables);

4) An overview of the execution plan and explanation of the approach used for the project implementation;

5) Timeline for the completion of the project

6) Detailed breakdown of the economic offer

All prices should be quoted in Euro and exclude VAT and other taxes which may be recoverable by ETC (being a private VAT-registered entity based in Belgium). The economic offer should include all costs following the scope of work of the project (including third party costs, if any). Any item that is essential for the smooth running of the project, as indicated within this document, even though not specified, shall be read as included in the list of requirements.

In case the contractor applies for more than one lot, the economic offer per lot should be clearly indicated, and be final (e.g. discount pricing depending on number of lots assigned to the same contractor is not allowed).

If any work for the project is to be subcontracted to a third party, the contractor must clearly specify in its proposal all tasks and deliverables that are to be outsourced. Any costs related to outsourcing shall be borne by the contractor. The contractor will be the sole responsible party for the delivery of the outsourced work.

Proposals must be submitted in electronic format by email to the person listed below:

**Project Manager:**

Miguel Gallego, ETC Executive Unit: Miguel.gallego@visiteurope.com

**5.1. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION**

Proposals must be received by 23 April 2020 at 23:59 [CEST].

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*For contractors that apply to more than one lot, documentation which may be common to multiple lots can be submitted only once. The proposal must clearly identify what parts of the proposal refer to more than one lot and the lot numbers that they refer to.*
The proposals must be valid for at least three months after the submission deadline.

5.2. QUESTIONS

Questions about this RfP can be sent in written form via the contact form on the ETC website (https://etc-corporate.org/rfp-creation-and-distribution-of-amp-stories-qa/) until 17 April 2020 at 14:00 (CEST).

ETC will have provided the answers to all received questions by 17 April 2020 18:00 (CEST) at the latest.

6. AWARD CRITERIA

Proposals should elaborate on all award criteria in order to score as many points as possible. The mere repetition of mandatory requirements without going into details will only result in a low score.

Applications will be assessed against firstly the quality criteria and secondly against the financial criteria. The relative weights assigned to each of them are described below.

- **Quality criteria**: 60% of the total evaluation score
- **Financial criteria**: 40% of the total evaluation score

\[
\text{Final score} = \left( \frac{\text{lowest price}}{\text{proposal price}} \right) \times 100 \times 0.4 + \text{quality score} \times 0.6
\]

6.1. QUALITY CRITERIA

The quality of the proposal is defined as a minimum set of delivered services per lot as described in section 3.1 Minimum Requirements. Each of these criteria and the relative weights assigned to them are described below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality criteria</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance of the proposed solution. The extent to which the proposed approach and solution are appropriate to the scope of work and target audience, in particular:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The extent to which the proposed solution will contribute to achieve the project objectives;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The level of detail, feasibility and practicality of the proposed solution;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The level of creativity and originality of the proposed solution;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The level of innovation and novelty of the proposed solution.</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Project management and methodology.** The extent to which the proposed methodology is appropriate for the successful execution of the work, in particular:
- The profile of the contractor, its experience and expertise;
- The effectiveness of the processes for managing and monitoring the project implementation;
- The level of detail and coherence of the project timeline;
- The level of detail and coherence of the economic offer.

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**Added value.** The extent to which the proposal offers services and/or deliverables that add value to the project objectives, in particular:
- Number of deliverables that go beyond the minimum requirements (10)
- Other services and deliverables that would help measure the impact of the project on the target audience (5)

+15

Each quality criterion will be given a score in a range from 0 (zero) points to 10 (ten) points in accordance with the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 Not available/not provided</td>
<td>The application fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 Poor</td>
<td>The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4 Fair</td>
<td>The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6 Good</td>
<td>The application addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8 Very good</td>
<td>The application addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10 Excellent</td>
<td>The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposals scoring less than 50 points in the total weighted points for quality criteria will be excluded from the rest of the evaluation procedure.

**7. FINAL PROVISIONS**

This Request for Proposals is in no way binding on the European Travel Commission, nor any of the European Union institutions. Any contractual obligation commences only upon signature of the particular agreement between ETC and the contractor.

ETC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this Request for Proposals as well as to cancel this project, either partially or totally. In the event of cancellation of this Request for Proposals, this should not entail any financial obligation from ETC towards any applicant.
Submission of a proposal implies acceptance of the terms and conditions set out in this document.

Brussels, 8 April 2020

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