REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Wild Soul of Europe

Slow Adventure Campaign in China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award entity</th>
<th>European Travel Commission</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issuance date</td>
<td>22/12/2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for applications</td>
<td>07/01/2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated starting date</td>
<td>01/2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated duration</td>
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</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 3
   1.1. ABOUT THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION (ETC) ........................................... 3
2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT ............................................................................. 4
   2.1. PROJECT OVERVIEW .................................................................................................. 4
   2.2. OBJECTIVES ............................................................................................................... 4
   2.3. TARGET GROUPS ........................................................................................................ 4
3. DELIVERABLES AND REQUIREMENTS ........................................................................... 5
   3.1. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS ....................................................................................... 5
   3.2. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS .................................................................................... 6
   - Publicity .......................................................................................................................... 6
   - Style .............................................................................................................................. 6
   - Assignment of rights ...................................................................................................... 7
   - Reporting ....................................................................................................................... 7
   3.3. DELIVERABLES ......................................................................................................... 7
   3.4. IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD ....................................................................................... 8
5. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS ......................................................................................... 9
   5.1. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION ................................................................................... 10
   5.2. QUESTIONS ............................................................................................................... 10
6. AWARD CRITERIA ............................................................................................................. 10
   6.1. QUALITY CRITERIA ..................................................................................................... 10
7. FINAL PROVISIONS .......................................................................................................... 12
8. ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION ............................................................................ 13
ANNEX 1: THE SLOW ADVENTURE PASSION THEME ...................................................... 13
ANNEX 2: THE SLOW ADVENTURE GUIDE ......................................................................... 14
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 of supporting the promotion of thematic trans-European tourism products in third countries.

This RfP contributes to the implementation of ETC’s Horizon 20221 marketing strategy, which aims to build a distinctive image of Europe as a travel destination in long-haul markets, maintain Europe’s market share and better disperse travellers 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.

1.1. 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 the strategic document on https://etc-corporate.org/our-campaigns/horizon-2022/
2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

2.1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

ETC intends to commission the development and execution of a marketing campaign (also referred to as the project) under the title “Wild Soul of Europe” to a marketing agency (hereinafter referred to as the contractor) to promote Slow Adventure experiences in Europe as a whole, and in particular Hungary, Montenegro and Serbia, to the Chinese market.

This project is implemented by ETC in partnership with the following organisations:

- **National Tourism Organisation of Montenegro** is in charge for strategic development and tourism informational and promotional activities of Montenegro, both in the country and abroad.

- **National Tourism Organisation of Serbia** was founded to promote and improve tourism in both the domestic and foreign tourism markets, with the aim of affirming the value and potential of the country’s tourist industry.

- **Hungarian Tourism Agency** is the official NTO of Hungarian Tourism. It is a half governmental organisation tasked with tourism development and destination marketing (both domestic and international).

The activities subject to this Request for Proposals are co-financed by the European Union.

2.2. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this campaign is to reinforce Chinese travellers’ confidence in travel and tourism to Europe, and in particular Hungary, Montenegro and Serbia. The campaign is expected to strengthen Europe’s destination image in the Chinese market and increase awareness of adventure, nature and outdoors experiences amongst Free Independent Travellers (FITs). For this purpose, the campaign shall showcase destinations that travellers can visit easily and will allow them to stay close to nature and the outdoors for a Slow Adventure experience – key drivers in attracting Chinese visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.3. TARGET GROUPS

The promotional campaign is targeted and must be well-suited for the niche community of travellers with a specific interest in **adventure, nature and outdoors experiences**. These travellers seek out personalised experiences, including private tours, outdoor activities, unique accommodations (e.g. castles, local homes) and engaging with the locals.
These interests connect with the community of Immersive Explorers; those who have a strong desire to connect more with nature, but their working patterns and urban lives often prohibits this. They therefore seek to fulfil their connection with nature through tourism and recreational experiences. They prefer slow, immersive journeys through remote and natural places, in search of health and well-being. They value original nature, clean environments, unbuilt landscapes and quietness. They are early adopters, willing to try new destinations, activities and travel products, as well as high-value customers, willing to pay a premium for exciting and authentic experiences. More information on the Slow Adventure Movement can be found in annexes 1 and 2.

Within the above interest-based community, the campaign must specifically appeal to affluent (semi-)Free Independent Travellers (FITs) from urban “melting pots” travelling for leisure 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.

3. DELIVERABLES AND REQUIREMENTS

Proposed campaigns which are not compliant with the requirements below will be excluded from further evaluation.

The contractor is expected to deliver the following minimum and technical requirements:

3.1. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

A. Content development, methodology and promotional campaign

1) Creative and Content Production

The contractor is expected to take care of all aspects for B2C content development and production as well as the creative assets for its distribution and advertisement design, development and production of inspiring and engaging editorial and video content.

The content must cover a range of experiences that highlights Europe in general, and the destinations in focus in particular, around nature and outdoors experiences. The content must be developed and edited in Mandarin Chinese, presenting a bespoke and tailored approach for the target interest-based community.

2) Consumer engagement campaign

The contractor is expected to develop, implement and manage the distribution and advertisement strategy of the produced content to B2C target audiences, including but not limited to banner promotions on relevant channels, social media promotions on relevant channels in China (Sina

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Weibo, WeChat and WeChat Channels), livestreams with local Mandarin Chinese speaking guides, KOL promotions, KOL livestreams, etc.

B. Project management

The contractor must take care of all aspects to develop, implement, manage and measure the impact of the project. The contractor must ensure account management and active liaison with ETC and the partners involved in the campaign in order to ensure the successful implementation of the project. Any contractual agreements with and invoicing of co-op partners will be facilitated by the contractor, but ultimately managed by ETC.

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.

3.2. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Publicity

- The campaign 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 communication materials (videos, posters, publications, etc) produced in the framework of the co-branded campaign:

  Logo of Europe-visiteurope.com.cn  Name and emblem of the European Union

  ![Europe-visited.png](https://etc-corporate.org/publicity-guidelines/)

  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 shall request the use of the partners’ logos in materials produced.

- Style

  All deliverables need to be in line with the style guidelines provided by ETC and its partners.
In addition, ETC may request the use of specific visuals, hashtags and/or handles on communication materials in order to maximise cross-promotion and leveraging opportunities with ETC’s umbrella promotional campaign “Europe Invites the Curious”.

- **Assignment of rights**

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

a) to reproduce the Campaign Material or incorporate the Campaign Material into other material, and to reproduce the Campaign Material as incorporated in such other material;

b) to create and reproduce derivative works from the Campaign Material;

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

d) to distribute copies and display publicly derivative works from the Campaign Material.

- **Reporting**

Regular written progress reports must be provided to ETC.

**3.3. DELIVERABLES**

In addition to the above requirements (see 3.1 and 3.2.) the contractor is expected to provide the following services:

1) **Creative and Content Production**

   - Content curation and development (editorial; images; videos; etc.), translations, design and production according to the guidelines provided by ETC and its partners.

   - Creative design and production of all necessary ad specs.

   - Production and distribution of a press release including media publicity about the "Wild Soul of Europe - Slow Adventure" campaign in China and clipping report.

2) **Consumer engagement campaign (B2C)**

   - Propose a solution for digital distribution and advertisement of the promotional content to B2C target audiences in China by using various online advertising techniques, such as programmatic display, social media advertisement, etc.
• Promotion of the content on a leading OTA platform targeting FIT audiences in China to increase reach and brand awareness as well as to promote related travel products with a call to action.

• Promotion of the campaign on major Chinese social media platforms. The contractor is also expected to create interaction with the official Weibo accounts of Visit Europe, the Hungarian, Serbian and Montenegrin NTOs to gain new followers.

• Regular reporting and analytics on campaign performance and optimisation to ensure maximum impact and effectiveness. The final report must be submitted by 31 July 2022.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

For the whole duration of the campaign, the following minimum KPIs are expected:

- Number of impressions: min. 7,000,000
- Number of clicks: min. 90,000
- Social media reads/views: min. 20,000,000
- Social media interaction: min. 100,000
- Follower increase (Weibo): min. 25,000
- Media clipping value: min. EUR 100,000

Campaign KPIs may be revised by the contractor through the submitted proposal.

3.4. IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The implementation period of the project is expected to start in 01/2022 and shall not extend beyond 30/06/2022.

4. BUDGET

The maximum available budget for this project is 100,000 EUR (one hundred thousand euros) excluding VAT and including other taxes, if applicable. This figure is indicative and is not in any way binding on ETC.

Invoicing will be done on a project-phase basis after submission of the corresponding report and deliverables. ETC will first approve that the deliverables are correct and then ask the contractor to submit the corresponding invoice.

1. **First payment**: Invoiced upon submission and approval of an overall campaign timeline and delivery plan. 10% of the total contract value.

2. **Second payment**: Invoiced upon delivery and approval of all creative content and assets. 20% of the total contract value.

3. **Third payment**: Invoiced upon delivery and approval of a quarterly campaign report on campaign performance. 20% of the total contract value.
4. **Fourth payment**: Invoiced upon project completion. Balance percentage (estimated 50%) of the total contract value.

5. **SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

Proposals must be **clear, concise** (not exceeding 20 pages in total) and **written in English**, so there can be no doubt as to meaning and figures.

**Proposals should include:**

1) Brief **company profile** describing the type of business or service that the company or companies involved in the project provide.

2) **Campaign approach.** Explanation of the proposed solution for each assignment of the project as described in section 3. **Deliverables and Requirements**, including a description of project outputs as well as a detailed estimation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

3) Description and estimated **size of the target audience** that the campaign will engage.

4) **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).

5) Description of the **methodology used** for the execution of the work, including a project timeline and explanation of how the work will be organised in order to guarantee high quality, efficiency and timely delivery of the provision of services.

6) Description of **team credentials**, fields of expertise and roles of the people involved in the project.

7) Detailed breakdown of the **economic offer**. All prices should be quoted in Euro and exclude VAT (ETC being a private VAT-registered entity based in Belgium) and include any other taxes, if applicable. 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.

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 via the following form on the ETC website: [https://etc-corporate.org/requests-for-proposals/submission-form/](https://etc-corporate.org/requests-for-proposals/submission-form/)
5.1. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Proposals must be received by **07/01/2022** at 23:59pm (CET).

The proposals must be valid for at least 3 months after the submission deadline.

5.2. QUESTIONS

Questions can be sent in writing via the contact form on ETC’s website ([https://etc-corporate.org/wild-soul-of-europe-slow-adventure-campaign-in-china-qa-2](https://etc-corporate.org/wild-soul-of-europe-slow-adventure-campaign-in-china-qa-2)) with the subject “Wild Soul of Europe Slow Adventure Campaign in China” until **02/01/2021** at 18:00pm (CET).

ETC will provide the answers to all received questions by **03/01/2021** 18:00pm (CET) at the latest.

6. AWARD CRITERIA

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

- **Quality criteria:** 70% of the total evaluation score
- **Financial criteria:** 30% of the total evaluation score

\[
\text{Final score} = \left( \frac{\text{lowest price} \times \text{proposal price}}{100} \times 0.3 \right) + (\text{quality score} \times 0.7)
\]

6.1. QUALITY CRITERIA

The quality of the proposal is defined as a minimum set of delivered services as described in section “3. Deliverables and 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 and effectiveness of the proposed solution</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extent to which the proposed approach and solution are appropriate for the scope of work and target audience, in particular:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The extent to which the proposal meets the set of minimum requirements of the campaign;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The extent to which the creative concept of the campaign is original and innovative;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Creativity and editorial positioning for content development, variety and quantity of content provided;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Variety and quantity of tactics for content distribution and advertising, its level of innovation and appeal;</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• The extent and precision to which the proposal contains verifiable and well-defined Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
• The overall level of detail, feasibility, and practicality of the proposed solution.

**Project management, methodology and qualifications of the project team**
This criterion is assessed on the basis of the following:
• The degree of specialisation and expertise of the proposed project team;
• The extent to which the quality and expertise of the proposed project team is relevant to the activities of ETC and its partners;
• The extent to which the proposed methodology for executing, managing and monitoring the work will successfully ensure high quality, timely delivery and achievement of campaign objectives and KPIs.

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</td>
<td>Not available/not provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>Very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
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</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.
8. ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION

ANNEX 1: THE SLOW ADVENTURE PASSION THEME

<table>
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<th>THEME</th>
<th>SLOW ADVENTURE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PASSION POINT</td>
<td>Nature and outdoor activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| PROFILE OF THE TARGET GROUP | Community of immersive explorers\(^3\) who believes in the importance of making time to spend in nature and is most often activity driven. Nature is an important element in their lives. They have a strong desire to connect more with nature, but their working pattern and urban lives often prohibits this. They seek to fulfil their connection with nature through tourism and recreational experiences. They favour slow, immersive journeys through wild places and natural spaces in search for health and well-being. In a globalised world where people feel they have seen everything, they value original nature, clean environments, unbuilt landscapes and quietness. They are early adopters which means they are generally more willing to try new destinations, activities, and travel products. A large proportion of this community are high-value customers who are willing to pay a premium for exciting and authentic experiences. |

| STRATEGIC RELEVANCE | The adventure travel market is one of the fastest growing niches of the tourism industry worth USD263 billion per year\(^4\). Research\(^5\) shows that adventure travel attracts high-value customers, supports local economies (it is estimated that 67% of the trip cost per guest remains in the local region) and encourages sustainable practices. Operators are also seeing growing interest in adventure travel as customers are seeking out alternatives to the traditional destinations. For companies and destinations, adventure travel attracts visitors outside peak seasons, highlights the natural and cultural values of a destination, thereby promoting its preservation, and creates resilient and committed travellers. The expansion of adventure tourism creates new opportunities, particularly in remote areas where it can be developed without extensive new infrastructure, and thus generating income and employment. |

| HORIZON 2022 GOALS | • Build brand recognition. Position Europe as the home of the emerging slow adventure movement  
• Increase dispersal of tourist flows (place and time) to lesser known destinations  
• Connect visitors with local communities of like-minded adventure seekers  
• Increase loyalty and repeat visitation |

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\(^3\) European Travel Commission (2019). Tourism Passion Communities  
\(^5\) ibid
EXPERIENCES  Authentic outdoor experiences framed around the destination’s culture and history (hiking, fishing, wild foods) that respect nature and wildlife in unspoilt rural and peripheral areas⁶.

KEY MESSAGE  Shift away from ‘what there is in Europe to do’ to ‘how it makes you feel’. Relax, live life at a slower pace and get closer to seldom seen natural areas in Europe. Get involved in unique educational and nature-focused experiences and explore local culture in special sites that are far enough to be uncrowded. Forge deeper connections with the people and the traditions of the places you visit and broaden your perspective on the world. Seven of the TOP 10 developed and developing countries for adventure travel in the world are in Europe⁷. According to the 2020 Environmental Performance Index⁸, the TOP 16 performing countries on environmental issues in the world are European.

ANNEX 2: THE SLOW ADVENTURE GUIDE

Please see the Slow Adventure Guide for a detailed overview of the ethos of the Slow Adventure movement. The guide can be accessed through the following link: https://etc-corporate.org/uploads/2020/03/The_Slow_Adventure_Guide_compressed.pdf

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⁸ https://epi.envirocenter.yale.edu/epi-indicator-report/EPI