PROJECT BRIEF

Development of the narrative and key messages for the ETC’s global consumer communication campaign

**Award entity** | European Travel Commission
---|---
**Issuance date** | 22 December 2023
**Deadline for applications** | 12 January 2024
**Estimated starting date** | February 2024
**Estimated duration** | 3 months
# Table of Contents

1. **Introduction** ........................................................................................................................................... 3
   1.1. **About the European Travel Commission (ETC)** ............................................................................... 3
2. **Information About the Project** ............................................................................................................. 3
   2.1. **Project Overview** ............................................................................................................................ 3
   2.2. **Objectives** ....................................................................................................................................... 4
   2.3. **Target Groups** .................................................................................................................................. 4
3. **Requirements and Deliverables** ............................................................................................................. 6
   3.1. **Minimum Requirements** .................................................................................................................. 6
   3.2. **Technical Requirements** ................................................................................................................ 7
   3.3. **Deliverables and Key Performance Indicators** .............................................................................. 8
   3.4. **Implementation Period** ................................................................................................................... 8
4. **Budget** .................................................................................................................................................... 8
   4.1. **European Union Funding** .............................................................................................................. 9
5. **Submission of Proposals** ..................................................................................................................... 9
   5.1. **Deadline for Submission** ............................................................................................................... 10
   5.2. **Questions** ..................................................................................................................................... 10
6. **Award Criteria** ..................................................................................................................................... 10
7. **Final Provisions** .................................................................................................................................. 10

**Annex 1** .................................................................................................................................................... 12
1. INTRODUCTION

This Project Brief is launched in the framework of an ad-hoc grant of the European Commission (EC) to the European Travel Commission (ETC) with the aims to strengthen the image of Europe as a safe, sustainable and inclusive tourist destination.

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 Project Brief. 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 association of official National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) in Europe. The organization was established in 1948 and is headquartered in Brussels (Belgium).

ETC’s mission is to empower its members, stakeholders and the industry to shape the future of tourism in Europe, for the benefit of all. 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.

2. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

2.1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

ETC intends to contract a service provider, hereinafter referred to as the contractor, with expertise in communication of sustainability topics for international clients.
The purpose of this project is to update the existing “Experience Europe brand strategy”, used in ETC’s “Europe invites the curious” global communication campaign, by incorporating new narratives and key messages that resonate with the post-pandemic consumer sentiment, emphasizing sustainable and responsible travel behaviours, and aligning with the priorities highlighted in the EU’s Transition Pathway for Tourism.

In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, travellers are inclined to make more sustainable and responsible choices during their trips, yet often lack the necessary information about how to do so. This project shall contribute towards bridging that intention-behaviour gap.

The outputs of this project will establish the foundation for creating and producing audio-visual materials intended for distribution to targeted groups as an integral element of ETC’s global communication campaign in 2024 and beyond.

The development and production of content is not part of the scope of this project brief.

2.2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project are:

- Foster Europe’s international perception as a safe, sustainable and inclusive travel destination
- Raise awareness among travellers about the importance of responsible and sustainable travel practices
- Stimulate responsible and sustainable demand by encouraging regional dispersal, off-season travel, a longer length of stay, choosing eco-friendly transportation, and supporting local communities, and thus contribute towards bridging the intention-behaviour gap.

2.3. TARGET GROUPS

The project is targeted towards high-net-worth (semi-)Free Independent Traveler’s (FITs) or small and niche-interest groups travelling for leisure and whose main motivation to travel to a certain place is to enjoy extraordinary experiences framed around a specific

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1 https://etc-corporate.org/uploads/2020/05/Experience_Europe_Brand_Strategy.pdf
2 https://visiteurope.com/en/i-am-curious/
3 https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/4949
4 A Free Independent Travelers (FITs) is an individual or a small group (<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 travelers - to book their trip given the particular knowledge, time and confidence required for planning a holiday to an overseas destination (semi-FITs).
interest or passion point. There is a preference for engaging repeat visitors and visitors who may have already decided to visit Europe as opposed to first-time visitors only. Consumers often allocate more resources to their areas of interest, and while travel is a significant passion point in itself, the current opportunity is to delve deeper into niche experiences that consumers can enjoy in Europe while educating them about becoming more sustainable and responsible travellers.

Specifically, the project must place emphasis on showcasing niche extraordinary experiences in Europe based on the following passion points:

A. **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 Roots**; 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.

B. **Creative Cities:** Inspiring experiences and stories framed around the local cultural scene and lifestyle, with a focus on contemporary arts, architecture and design, handicrafts, fashion, music, festivals, gastronomy, street and performing arts (creative industries), as well as high-end products in small or medium-size urban areas. This passion point connects with the community of **City Life Enthusiasts**; 18–34-year-old couples with children, and solo travellers (female bias) 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. **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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7 For further information on the profile the community of Immersive Explorers see [https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-immersive-explorers/](https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-immersive-explorers/)
3. REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES

The contractor must fulfill the minimum requirements outlined in the following sections. Any essential items necessary for the project’s successful execution, even if not explicitly mentioned, should be considered included in the list of minimum requirements.

Proposals that do not meet these requirements will be excluded from further evaluation.

3.1. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

ETC will require the contractor to manage the process of developing the narratives and key messages for its upcoming global communication campaign, integrating into the current brand strategy. This shall at minimum include the following tasks:

1. Desk research. The contractor is expected to gather and analyse relevant available research about the target audience, market sentiment, trends and behaviours to inform the development of the brand narrative and key messages of the campaign.

   Note that ETC has already carried out a broad range of research that can feed this project. The selected contractor is not expected to conduct any additional research to satisfactorily complete the assignment. Any ETC publications, reports and strategic papers which may prove useful for this project will be made available to the selected contractor.

2. Define and develop the narrative, key messages (message house) and communication guidelines for the global communication campaign. Development of concise and compelling messages that encapsulate the brand essence and values. Create a captivating narrative and key messages that resonate with the target audience in cooperation with NTOs and relevant stakeholders. The challenge lies in finding the appropriate tone to convey sustainable and responsible travel behaviors to the target groups, avoiding any sense of patronization or greenwashing.

3. Methodology. The development of the project shall be conducted in close collaboration with ETC for decision-marking and addressing any queries. ETC wishes to involve its member NTOs and the broader European travel and tourism ecosystem (comprising associations, airlines, operators, service providers, local communities, etc) in the co-creation of the campaign narratives.

   The proposed methodology must include a half-day working session with ETC member NTOs (approximately 20 participants) in Athens on either 7th or 8th February 2024 (specific date to be agreed with the contractor). Travel costs will be borne by ETC.
In addition to the above-mentioned working session, the methodology must outline mechanisms for engaging at least 10 other relevant stakeholders representing the European travel and tourism ecosystem in the co-creation process. These mechanisms should enable these stakeholders to provide regular input and suggestions towards shaping the campaign narrative, ensuring their full endorsement and “co-ownership” of the final deliverable and their potential future in-kind contribution towards distributing the campaign’s communication materials. ETC together with the contract will select the stakeholders to be invited to participate in the process.

Finally, the contractor will be required to give a presentation of the final delivery to the staff of ETC.

**3.2. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

- **Publicity**

The project outputs 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 communication materials produced in the framework of the project:

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

- **Assignment of rights**

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 Material created for or in the course of the project, as stated below:

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

b) to create and reproduce derivative works from the Material;
c) to distribute copies and display publicly the Material, whether independently or as part of other material;

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

- **Project Management**

The contractor must have a professional project management team who is able to provide adequate staffing over the duration of the entire contract period. The contractor should designate at least one staff member to manage the account and all project-related communication by email and phone as required. The account manager should provide bi-weekly updates to ETC on the project implementation, either by email, on the phone or via an online call.

The contractor must have specialized and thorough experience and expertise in communication of sustainability topics for international clients. Specific experience in brand positioning for travel destinations and/or clients in the travel and tourism industry is an asset. The contractor demonstrates compliance with this requirement by providing at least three case studies of relevant past comparable work and contract value carried out within the past five years.

**3.3. DELIVERABLES AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The contractor is required to deliver a full final report in electronic format (.doc or .pdf file) and an executive summary (.ppt file) of the project outputs. All documents should be written in British English. The contractor is responsible for ensuring that the final document is of sufficiently high quality (both the English language and editing) to enable publication without further editing.

The contractor must include in the proposal any estimated project outputs and deliverables. The proposal should describe and define in detail the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to measure the project’s impact on the target groups, their corresponding target values (goals) and how they will be verified.

**3.4. IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD**

The implementation period of the project is expected to start in **February 2024** and shall not extend beyond **30th April 2024**.

**4. BUDGET**

The maximum available budget for this project is **20,000.00 EUR** (twenty thousand euros) excluding VAT and including other taxes if applicable.
The contractor must provide a detailed breakdown of the budget in Euros for each project activity.

Invoicing will be done after completion of the project and submission of the final deliverables. ETC will review and approve the deliverables to ensure their correctness before requesting the contractor to submit the corresponding invoice. All payments to the contractor will be made in Euros.

4.1. EUROPEAN UNION FUNDING

The activities outlined in this Project Brief are subject to co-funding from the European Union.

5. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be clear, concise (not exceeding 20 pages in total) and written in English. The proposal structure is open, but it must provide all information relevant to the assessment of the proposal by elaborating on each of the award criteria (see 6.Award criteria) and include, at least, the following:

1. Brief company profile describing the services that the contractor provides.

2. Detailed description of the methodology used to deliver all services mentioned in 3.Requirements and deliverables, including expected outputs, KPIs and their goals.

3. Detailed timeline for the completion of the project.

4. Description of team credentials, field of expertise and roles of the people involved in the project.

5. Three references to relevant experience in delivering comparable work. For each reference, the contractor must use the model reference form (Annex 1) which must be filled in completely and correctly.

6. Economic offer. The proposal must present a detailed breakdown of the budget for the different services to be provided. The economic offer should include all costs following the scope of work of the project (including third party costs if any). 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) and including other taxes, if applicable.

Proposals must be submitted in electronic format via the submission form on ETC’s website: https://etc-corporate.org/requests-for-proposals/submission-form/
5.1. DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

Proposals must be received by **12 January 2024** at 23:59pm (CET).

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

5.2. QUESTIONS

Questions about this Project Brief must be sent in writing via the contact form on the ETC website [https://etc-corporate.org/contact/](https://etc-corporate.org/contact/) until **8 January 2024** at noon (CET).

ETC will have provided the answers to all received questions by **8 January 2024** at 6:00pm (CET) at the latest.

6. AWARD CRITERIA

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

The project will be awarded based on the contractor’s compliance with the requirements set out in this document. The award criteria used will also include:

- The most economically advantageous proposal, namely the project that offers the best value for money;
- The extent to which the contractor can deliver the stated scope of work within the given timeframe;
- The level of clarity, quality, creativity and feasibility of the proposed event concept, methodology, deliverables, and milestones;
- The credentials of the project management team and the proven relevant experience in delivering comparable work and services.

7. FINAL PROVISIONS

This Project Brief is in no way binding on the European Travel Commission, its members, 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 Project Brief as well as to cancel this project, either partially or totally. In the event of cancellation of this Project Brief, this should not entail any financial obligation from ETC.
towards any applicant. Any costs incurred during the preparation and submission of proposals are to be borne by the applicant contractor.

Submission of a proposal implies acceptance of the terms and conditions set out in this document.

We thank you in advance for your time and interest in working with the ETC

Brussels, 22 December 2023

European Travel Commission
Rue du Marché aux Herbes 61
1000 Brussels - Belgium
Tel: + 32 (0)2 - 548 9000
www.etc-corporate.org
**ANNEX 1**

**REFERENCE FORM***

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