

Request for proposals

Planning, execution and evaluation of a B2B marketing and sales campaign in North America

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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 of strengthening Europe's global perception as a sustainable, inclusive, and safe travel destination in long-haul source markets, as well as to encourage responsible travel behaviours.

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.

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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.

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 destination marketing and in-depth knowledge of the North American travel trade. The contractor will be responsible for planning, executing, and evaluating a B2B marketing and sales campaign targeting tour operators and travel advisors in North America (USA and Canada), hereinafter referred to as the project. The aim of the project is to increase awareness of the Alps-Adriatic region and create business opportunities

The project is implemented by ETC in partnership with the following organisations (hereinafter referred to as **partners**):

- Javni zavod za turizem Nova Gorica in Vipavska dolina (Slovenia)
- Tourism Bohinj, for the Julian Alps Association (Slovenia)
- ORA Krasa in Brkinov d.o.o (Slovenia)
- PromoTurismoFVG (Italy)
- City of Umag Tourist Board (Croatia)

2.2 GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The geographical scope of the project covers the partners' destinations within the **Alps-Adriatic region**: the Julian Alps, the Karst Region, and Vipava Valley in Slovenia; Friuli Venezia Giulia in Italy; and Umag and its surroundings in Croatian Istria.

The Alps-Adriatic region offers a captivating blend of history, culture, and nature that is uniquely European. Nowhere else will you find such a remarkable mix of soaring Alpine peaks, serene lakes, rolling vineyards, ancient forests, dramatic caves, medieval hilltop towns, fortified castles, and the sparkling blue of the Adriatic Sea, all within a compact area.

The region's diverse landscapes, from the Julian Alps, through the vineyard hills and rugged Karst plateau to the sun-kissed coasts of the north-east Adriatic, offer breathtaking scenery and a wealth of outdoor activities, all within easy reach. Visitors can hike through pristine mountain trails in the morning, enjoy a leisurely vineyard lunch, or stroll to the medieval hilltop village by afternoon, and watch the sunset over the Adriatic by evening. The well-developed network of cycling and hiking routes allows travellers to experience this variety effortlessly, with open borders making multi-country exploration seamless.

History comes alive here, woven into every stone-paved alleyway. This region has been a meeting point of civilisations for millennia. It is where Slavic, Romance, and Germanic cultures converge—an occurrence found nowhere else in the world. The legacy of past empires is reflected in their architecture, from Roman ruins to Venetian coastal towns and to Austro-Hungarian palaces, offering an unmistakable sense of place that is distinctly European.

This historical context gives rise to a land of exceptional gastronomy and viniculture, where age-old traditions dictate that food is seasonal, locally sourced, and meant to be savoured. Vineyards here produce world-class wines. Many old indigenous varieties of grape hail from here, and boutique producers are at the forefront of the orange wine movement of today. Truffle-laden forests, fresh seafood, and farmhouse cheeses and smoked meats make every meal a journey through history and terroir.

The ease of travel across open borders makes this region a dream destination for those seeking authentic yet safe European experiences. Whether kayaking along the emerald-green Soča River (one of the symbols of the cross border Capital of European Culture of 2025 in Nova Gorica-Gorizia), exploring the mystical depths of the UNESCO listed Škocjan Caves, or savouring a glass of local Prosecco or Zelen in a rustic cellar, travellers will find themselves immersed in a lifestyle that is both timeless and uniquely European.

2.3 RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

The project must showcase experiences and positive stories that increase awareness about the importance of responsible travel, defined as behaviours and practices that benefit both visitors and locals while minimising negative impacts on the environment and host communities. Examples include off-peak season experiences¹, off-the-beaten-path destinations², eco-friendly transportation options³, and activities that support local communities⁴.

2.4 OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the project is to raise awareness of the Alps-Adriatic region in North America and position it as a premier, inclusive, safe, culturally and naturally rich, and sustainable travel destination within a broader pan-European context. Secondary key objectives include:

- Positioning the region as a unified destination, connected by eco-friendly transport, a shared natural and cultural heritage, and strong cross-border cooperation, thereby promoting responsible, multi-country travel.
- Enhancing perceptions of Europe's sustainable tourism offering by spotlighting the region's unique outdoor activities, cross-border adventures, natural wonders, and ecotourism experiences, underpinned by award-winning local community engagement.
- Driving sustainable tourism demand and business opportunities by encouraging regional dispersal to lesser-known destinations, promoting longer stays, increased visitor spending, and off-season travel.
- Showcase Europe's culinary excellence through the region's rich gastronomic traditions and high-quality, locally rooted food and wine experiences.
- Inspire visits from North America's "community of explorers of cultural identity and roots" by leveraging the region's deep historical and cultural heritage, which spans millennia and offers meaningful connections for heritage-motivated travellers.

¹ Off-season travel is defined as travel outside the peak seasons, primarily avoiding the summer.

² Off-the-beaten-path destinations are defined as lesser-known or unconventional destinations that are not frequented by travellers beyond the famous hotspots.

³ Eco-friendly transportation options are represented especially by those involving public, electric, or human-powered modes of transportation.

⁴ Supporting local communities is intended as favouring experiences that facilitate active engagement and immersion in the local culture, traditions, and way of life of the destination.

2.5 TARGET GROUPS

The project targets **North American tour operators (TOs)⁵ and travel advisors (TAs)⁶** who actively promote and sell premium travel products that align with responsible travel practices (see 2.3 Responsible travel). The project will identify and engage professionals who cater to Free Independent Travellers ⁷ seeking responsible travel experiences across Europe, focusing on one of the following pan-European themes:

- **Nature and the Outdoors:** Inspiring experiences and stories framed around human or nature-powered journeys that connect with the outdoors in line with the ethos of the **Slow Adventure movement⁸**. This theme connects with the community of **Immersive Explorers⁹**; 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.
- **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 Roots¹⁰**; 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.

In addition to the above themes, the project may also showcase experiences and stories that relate to **local gastronomy and lifestyle**.

3. REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES

The contractor must fulfil 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 the evaluation process.

⁵ Tour operators (TOs) are defined as: TOs that already offer products in the project's destinations (see 2.2 Geographical scope); TOs that currently sell similar products in Europe; TOs that are new to the market but have shown clear interest in developing and selling travel products for this region.

⁶ Travel advisors (TAs) are defined as: travel agents; travel advisors; concierge agents.

⁷ A FIT is an individual or a small group (<10) of individuals who travel independently (not in an organised group). They book individual products and services arranged by a tour operator or advisor for use by independent travellers.

⁸ 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

⁹ For further information on the profile the community of Immersive Explorers see <https://etc-corporate.org/reports/tourism-passion-communities-immersive-explorers/>

¹⁰ 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/>

3.1 KNOWLEDGE OF THE ALPS-ADRIATIC REGION AND RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

The contractor must have proven knowledge of the Alps-Adriatic region’s travel products ¹¹.

Given the project’s focus on responsible travel, as outlined in 2.3 Responsible travel, this focus must be reflected in the project’s activities. It is therefore essential that the contractor possesses both a solid understanding of responsible travel principles and the expertise to highlight these elements effectively throughout the planning and implementation of the project.

3.2 REPRESENTATION SERVICES

The contractor is required to represent the project partners (see 2.1 Project overview) and deliver the services outlined below. Additional tactics may be proposed, provided they align with the overall scope and objectives of the project. All KPIs and expected results must be clearly defined in the contractor's proposal and will be considered guaranteed.

3.2.1 PRESS LAUNCH

The contractor is expected to plan, coordinate, and execute an introductory press launch to announce the project. The aim is to generate initial awareness and engagement among relevant trade professionals and strategic partners through a targeted B2B approach.

This includes producing and distributing a press release or newsletter through a relevant trade body with advertorial content, leveraging B2B social media platforms such as LinkedIn, as well as securing visibility in key travel trade media outlets.

A key priority will be to ensure that the press launch reaches major tour operators and/or travel advisor offices across the USA and Canada that align with the project’s target audience. The contractor's proposal must elaborate on the press launch strategy, including selected channels, KPIs, guaranteed results, and outputs, following the structure of the table below.

Channel	KPIs	Outputs
Press release	Number of media outlets contacted; number and quality of unique relevant tour operators and/or travel advisors reached through the press launch	Copy of the press releases distributed; resulting media placements (clippings, links and screenshots, copy of printed materials)
Newsletter	Send-outs, average CTR over the send-outs, average open rate over the send-outs. Number and quality of unique relevant	Copy of the emails sent; resulting media placements (clippings, links and screenshots, copy of printed materials)

¹¹ Familiarisation trips (FAMs) to the contractor will not be provided.

	tour operators and/or travel advisors reached through the press launch	
Social media	Number of posts, impressions, engagements, engagement rate	Links and screenshots of the social media posts

3.2.2 IDENTIFICATION OF RELEVANT TOUR OPERATORS AND TRAVEL ADVISORS

The contractor is expected to identify tour operators and travel advisors who actively sell premium European travel products, aligned with the project's target audience (see 2.5 Target groups). This process should combine independent research and insights gathered from the press launch.

The contractor's proposal must elaborate on the KPIs, related guaranteed results, and outputs, following the structure of the table below.

KPIs	Outputs
Number and quality of selected tour operators and/or travel advisors; their product offerings' alignment with the project's target group	List of selected professionals (including full name, job title, company name, product speciality, focus on responsible travel and email contact)

3.2.3 TRAVEL TRADE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Following identification, the contractor shall engage the selected tour operators and travel advisors through targeted B2B activities designed to deepen their knowledge of and interest in the Alps-Adriatic region, in line with the project's objectives.

Travel trade engagement must comprise three core activities: sales missions, webinars, and participation in trade shows.

A) Sales missions

The contractor is expected to plan, execute and evaluate sales missions across the USA and Canada, resulting in direct B2B meetings with key tour operators and travel advisors. These meetings should aim to secure the inclusion of the project destinations in their product portfolio or enhance existing offerings in line with the project's objectives.

The contractor will be responsible for managing all aspects of the sales missions, including, but not limited to, the following tasks:

- Database management.
- Planning itineraries and arranging meetings, including sourcing and booking meeting venues as required, and taking care of all travel arrangements. The B2B meetings part of the sales missions are intended to be workshops for TAs and in-person sales meetings for TOs.
- Pre-sales mission communication, which may include social media and B2B email tactics.

- Post-sales mission communication, including follow-up e-mails and handling of enquiries.
- Reporting, including a detailed activity report for each sales mission. This should cover the meetings held, their outcomes and potential, any new leads generated, and relevant contact details for further follow-up by the project partners.

The contractor's proposal must elaborate on the sales mission activities, including the channels, KPIs, guaranteed results, and outputs that will be provided, following the structure of the table below.

Channel	KPIs	Outputs
Workshop(s)	Number and quality of relevant TAs met (minimum 10)	List of TAs met (including full name, job title, company name, product speciality, focus on responsible travel and email contact)
In-person sales meetings ¹²	Number and quality of in-person sales meetings (minimum 25) with relevant TOs	List of TOs met (including full name, job title, company name, product speciality, focus on responsible travel and email contact)

B) Webinars

The contractor is expected to plan, execute and evaluate one, or potentially a series of, high-quality webinars specifically tailored to tour operators and travel advisors aligned with the project's target audience (see 2.5 Target groups). The webinar(s) should serve as an integrated presentation, consistent with the other travel trade engagement activities of the project to ensure coherent messaging. The webinar(s) should also feature a short promotional video of the destinations, a presentation and a map (all to be produced by the contractor).

The contractor will be responsible for managing all aspects of the webinar(s), including but not limited to the following tasks.

- Conceive, develop, and manage a bespoke webinar, using a suitable online platform or delivery partner.
- Produce and distribute promotional materials to encourage registrations: a collage of existing videos, a presentation and a map are required. Additional materials and distribution channels may include social media, press releases, e-mail blasts, etc.
- Identify and target a qualified audience.
- Manage registrations and attendance.
- Collect contact details of webinar attendees and conduct follow-ups when specific interest and leads are clear.
- The contractor's proposal must elaborate on the channels, KPIs, guaranteed results, and outputs, following the structure of the table below.

¹² Given the evolving post-pandemic work environment, it is acknowledged that not all meetings will occur at the offices of targeted companies; some may need to be held off-site or conducted virtually.

Channel	KPIs	Outputs
Webinar(s)	Number of webinars, registrations, attendees	Recording of the webinar and presentations used; list of registrants and attendees (including full name, job title, company name, product speciality, focus on responsible travel and email contact)
Content marketing	Number of content pieces (specify, e.g. social media, press releases, e-mail blasts, video and photo materials, etc.)	Promotional materials

C) Trade shows

The contractor is expected to represent the project partners at three B2B travel trade shows in the USA and Canada. As the project partners will not be attending these events, the contractor must have previous experience with these specific trade shows or similar to ensure a strong volume of high-quality business meetings. The contractor must appoint at least one staff member to serve as the exclusive representative of the project partners at these events. The travel trade shows include:

- **National Tour Association (NTA) Travel Exchange** taking place in Ottawa, Ontario (Canada) from 9 to 12 November 2025. The contractor must:
 - Manage the relationship with NTA, overseeing all aspects of participation, including coordination and participation fees, which may be covered under the overall project budget.
 - Schedule appointments during the event.
 - Organise all travel arrangements.
 - Produce a final report consistent with the format and standards used for the sales missions.
- **USTOA Annual Conference and Marketplace** taking place in National Harbor, Maryland (USA) from 1 to 5 December 2025. The contractor must:
 - Manage the relationship with USTOA, overseeing all aspects of participation, including coordination and participation fees, which may be covered under the overall project budget.
 - Produce a pre-conference PR digital campaign, ideally in blog format, for a B2B audience.
 - Schedule appointments at the marketplace and conference.
 - Organise all travel arrangements.
 - Produce a final report consistent with the format and standards used for the sales missions.
- The **third trade show in North America**, to be confirmed by ETC, is expected to take place in November 2025. The contractor will be responsible for tasks similar to those carried out at the aforementioned travel trade shows, with the exception of handling any eventual participation fees, which in this case will be covered by ETC and the project partners.

The contractor's proposal must elaborate on the channels, KPIs, guaranteed results, and outputs, following the structure of the table below.

Event	KPIs	Outputs
USTOA Annual Conference and Marketplace	Number and quality of TOs and/or TAs met	List of contacts reached (including full name, job title, company name, product speciality, focus on responsible travel and email contact), specifying existing contacts from the identification activity (see section 3.2.2) and new contacts generated during the event
National Tour Association (NTA) Travel Exchange	Number and quality of TOs and/or TAs met	List of contacts reached (including full name, job title, company name, product speciality, focus on responsible travel and email contact), specifying existing and new contacts
Third event TBC	Number and quality of TOs and/or TAs met	List of contacts reached (including full name, job title, company name, product speciality, focus on responsible travel and email contact), specifying existing and new contacts

3.3 ACTIVITIES EVALUATION

Following the implementation of the travel trade engagement activities, the contractor must evaluate their outcomes. An online survey or similar should be used to collect comprehensive feedback from the target audience and evaluate the overall impact of the activities. The survey should report on, but not be limited to, the extent to which targeted tour operators and travel advisors have increased their awareness and perceptions of the Alps-Adriatic region, particularly regarding responsible travel elements, as well as their intention to create new itineraries or enhance existing ones. The evaluation should clearly present the survey findings and incorporate the relevant KPIs associated with the project activities.

3.4 IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD

The implementation period of the project is expected to start in **June 2025** and shall not extend beyond **31 December 2025**.

3.5 REPORTING

The contractor is required to deliver a comprehensive technical and financial project report in English, in electronic format, breaking down the information for the activities listed in 3. Requirements and deliverables.

The **technical report** should encompass a detailed summary of all tasks executed, a description of all project services and deliverables, images/video of the meetings, media coverage, and include the results for all the KPIs and

the outputs outlined above for each activity and channel, as well as the survey results. The report should anticipate future impacts on the target groups resulting from the project and incorporate insights, outlining successes, lessons learned, and recommendations for the future.

The **financial report** should encompass a detailed breakdown of all costs of the project, including supporting documents for third-party costs (see also 4. Budget and terms of payment).

The technical and financial reports should be sent to ETC and the project partners by **31 January 2026** at the latest.

3.6 PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The contractor must have a professional project management team that is able to provide adequate staffing over the duration of the entire contract period. The contractor should designate at least one English-speaking staff member to manage the account and all project-related communication. The account manager should provide regular updates to ETC and the partners on the project implementation, either by email, on the phone or via an online call. The contractor is expected to work closely with ETC and its partners throughout the entire project.

ETC and its partners must be involved and consulted throughout the project, providing guidance and any other necessary inputs.

3.7 PUBLICITY

The project outputs must clearly acknowledge ETC 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 project:

Logo of Europe-visiteurope.com



Name and emblem of the European Union



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

The guidelines for the use of the Europe-visiteurope.com logo and the EU emblem, as well as the respective graphic files, are available to download through the following link: <https://etc-corporate.org/publicity-guidelines/>

In addition to the above, ETC reserves the right to request the use of partners' logos in any materials produced:



JULIJSKE ALPE
TRIGLAVSKI NARODNI PARK

**IO SONO
FRIULI
VENEZIA
GIULIA**



**EUROPEAN
TRAVEL
COMMISSION**

The guidelines for the use of these logos will be provided at the kick-off of the project.

3.8 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

The contractor should obtain any licenses or permits as needed.

4. BUDGET AND TERMS OF PAYMENT

The maximum available budget for this project is **82,500.00 EUR** (eighty-two thousand five hundred euros), covering all project-related costs, excluding VAT but including any other applicable taxes.

Invoicing will be done in a maximum of two instalments: one intermediate and one upon project completion. ETC will first review and approve the deliverables, reports and supporting documents to ensure their correctness before asking the contractor to submit the corresponding invoice. All payments to the contractor will be made in **Euros**.

The contractor shall submit a detailed statement report, i.e. financial report (see 3.5 Reporting), of the actual expenses incurred on behalf of ETC and the project partners (including all expenses, fees and applicable taxes) and duly justified based on supporting documents (e.g. invoices from third parties; proof of run, breakdown of KPIs reached). ETC reserves the right to ask for further explanations and supporting documents.

As part of the proposal, the contractor must submit a detailed budget breakdown per activity of the project, where the fixed management agency fee of the contractor must be clearly distinguished from third-party costs. Third-party costs refer to expenses paid by the contractor to subcontractors and/or any external provider for goods and services required to implement the project.

The contractor shall submit the budget breakdown following the structure of the example table below.

Fixed management agency fee	In EUR
Third-party costs per activity¹³	
PRESS LAUNCH	In EUR
e.g. Advertorial content provided by a trade body	
SALES MISSIONS	In EUR
e.g. Travel expenses	In EUR
e.g. Venue rental	In EUR
e.g. Catering	In EUR
WEBINARS	In EUR
e.g. Software	In EUR
TRADE SHOWS	In EUR
e.g. Travel expenses	In EUR
e.g. Participation fee	In EUR
Others (specify)	In EUR
e.g. Survey	In EUR
Total	Maximum 82,500.00 EUR

This project is subject to co-funding from the European Union. The payment from ETC to the contractor may be subject to reduction in the event of any breach of the contractor's obligations. Breaches may include, but are not limited to, failure to deliver the required deliverables, not meeting established Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or incorrect use of the Europe-visiteurope.com logo and the European Union emblem.

5. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be clear, concise (not exceeding 15 pages in total) and written in English, so there can be no doubt as to word meaning and figures. 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 project proposal**, including the foreseen activities and provided services, with their description, KPIs to measure the project's impact on target groups, including their guaranteed results and methods of verification. The proposal must clearly state how it will reach the target audience described in section 2.5 Target groups.

¹³ Third-party costs are estimated in advance and will be adjusted based on the actual expenses proven through supporting documents and invoices, and respecting the maximum project budget.

- 3) At least three **references** to relevant experience in delivering comparable work as outlined in 3. Requirements and deliverables (i.e. case studies or reference list - including project goals, processes, dates and verifiable deliverables) and with a similar contract value (minimum 50,000 EUR). The tenderer should use the template part of Annex 1. Reference form submitted in a different format or partially providing the information requested in Annex 1 will receive a lower score.
- 4) Description of **team credentials**, field of expertise and roles of the people involved in the project, and **methodology** to be deployed for the execution of the project and explanation of how the work will be organised to guarantee high quality, efficiency and timely delivery of the provision of services.
- 5) Detailed **timeline** for the implementation and completion of the project.
- 6) Detailed breakdown of the **economic offer**, including a budget line for each of the project's activities. All prices must be quoted in Euro and exclude VAT and include all taxes, costs and fees. Please note that any differences in pricing (e.g., exchange rate difference) between the date of the proposal and the final report are not covered by ETC and the partners. The economic offer should include all costs following the scope of work of the project (including third-party costs, if any). The economic offer must clearly distinguish between the fixed management agency fee of the contractor and all other costs. The budget breakdown must follow the structure of the example in 4. Budget and terms of payment.

If any work for the project is to be subcontracted to a third party, the contractor must clearly identify the subcontractor in its proposal and specify all tasks, services 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. Subcontracting or outsourcing of activities to subsidiary companies of the contractor is not permitted.

5.1 USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The contractor is allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the preparation and submission of a proposal. However, the contractor is required to disclose any AI usage involved in the proposal preparation. This disclosure must include:

- A description of the AI tools or technologies used.
- The specific areas of the proposal where AI was applied.

5.2 SUBMISSION AND DEADLINE

Proposals must be submitted in electronic format via the form on the ETC's website <https://etc-corporate.org/requests-for-proposals/submission-form/>, selecting the RFP "**Alps-Adriatic B2B marketing and sales campaign**".

Proposals must be received by **20 May 2025 at 14:00 (CEST)**. Proposals submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

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

A contractor may submit one proposal only. Any contractor who submits multiple proposals will have all their proposals rejected.

5.3 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Questions about this Request for Proposal must be sent in writing via the contact form on the ETC website <https://etc-corporate.org/contact/> with the subject “**Questions on RfP: Alps-Adriatic B2B marketing and sales campaign**” until **14 May 2025 at 14:00 (CEST)**.

ETC will publish the answers to all the questions received in due course on this page <https://etc-corporate.org/rfp-b2b-marketing-and-sales-campaign-in-north-america-qa/> by **15 May 2025 at 18:00 (CEST)**.

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. The criteria for awarding this tender consist of two parts:

1. **Quality criteria:** 60% of the evaluation points.
2. **Financial criteria:** 40% of the evaluation points.

Proposals will firstly be evaluated against the quality criteria and secondly against the financial criteria outlined below. Proposals must achieve a minimum score of 50 out of 100 points in the quality score. Proposals that score below this threshold will be excluded from further evaluation and will not be ranked.

The following formula will be used to calculate the final total score of the proposal:

$$\text{Final score} = ((\text{lowest price among all proposals} / \text{proposal price}) \times 100 \times 0.4) + (\text{quality score} \times 0.6)$$

On the basis of the final total score of all proposals, the contract will be awarded to the contractor with the highest total score (out of 100).

In the event of a tie in the final total score, the following tiebreaker criteria apply in order of prevalence:

- a. proposal with the highest total score obtained in the financial criteria;
- b. proposal with the highest total score obtained in the quality criteria.

If the tie persists after applying the above tiebreaker criteria between one or more proposals, the proposal selected in a draw will be awarded.

6.1 QUALITY CRITERIA

The quality of the proposal is defined as a minimum set of delivered services as described in section 3. Requirements and deliverables. Each of these criteria and the relative weights assigned to them are described below.

Quality criteria	Weight
<p>Company profile, experience, and qualifications of the project team</p> <p>This criterion is assessed based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The extent to which the degree of specialisation and expertise of the contractor and proven references are relevant and appropriate for the project, in particular knowledge of the Alps-Adriatic region's travel products 	20
<p>Project management and methodology</p> <p>The quality of the methodology for executing and managing the project is assessed based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The extent to which the methodology is appropriate and clearly structured (10) - The extent to which quality, efficiency, achievement of expected results against set KPIs and timely delivery of services can be ensured (10) 	20
<p>Relevance of the proposed solution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The extent to which the proposed solution is innovative and appropriate to the scope of work, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The proposed tactics of the press launch (10) o The methodology for identifying relevant travel advisors and tour operators (10) o The travel trade engagement concept and the appropriateness of the proposed activities and related tactics (20); - The extent to which human and financial resources are efficiently allocated. (10) - The extent to which the proposal presents accountable, verifiable, and well-defined KPIs and guarantees the expected results. (10) 	60

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:

0 Not available/not provided	The application fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
1-2 Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

3-4 Fair	The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
5-6 Good	The application addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
7-8 Very good	The application addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
9-10 Excellent	The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

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

6.2 FINANCIAL CRITERIA

The contractor shall provide a fixed fee for the entire management of the project. This fee must include all expenses derived from the services offered by the contractor as per their proposal, excluding third-party costs.

The financial criteria will be assessed on the basis of the fixed management agency fee offered by the contractor.

7. FINAL PROVISIONS

This Request for Proposals is in no way binding on the European Travel Commission, its partners or 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. 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 ETC.

Brussels, 5 May 2025
European Travel Commission
Rue du Marché aux Herbes 61
1000 - Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +32 2548 90 00

Annex 1 – Reference form

Name of the project:	
Scope and objectives of the project:	
Total value of the contract (in euros):	
Period of execution:	
Place of execution:	
Description of the work performed by the contractor and main results:	
Client	
Name:	
Registered address:	
Website:	
Attached certificate of good execution:	YES / NO
Contact person at the client	
Name:	
Position:	
Phone:	
E-mail:	

* All fields in the form are required.