

Destination Promotion: A Catalyst for Community Vitality



A Destinations International and
Destinations International Foundation
Advocacy / Research Request for Proposals

May 15, 2023

About Destinations International and the Destinations International Foundation

The [Destinations International](#) (DI) Association is the world's largest and most reliable resource for destination organizations. In short - DI educates, equips, and empowers our members to grow the success of their destinations and to excel professionally. Membership grants access to a wealth of important industry resources, access to educational opportunities and exclusive benefits.

DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL'S SERVICE STANDARDS

1. We deliver value at every level of our members' organization.
2. We provide the most sophisticated and focused professional development for DMO professionals in the world.
3. We host the most comprehensive and accessible networking events in the industry.
4. We create the industry's most trusted tools to bolster our members' impact on their communities.
5. We provide inspiration and the tools and professional development for our members to advocate on their own behalf and of the industry as a whole.

We believe that destination organizations positively impact local communities as a dynamic place to visit, live and work. As such, DI elevates tourism by educating, equipping, empowering, and connecting its members to better fulfill their missions and achieve positive results around the world.

Destinations International's Core Pillars

1. **Community** - DI fosters a strong, global community of professionals and promotes the exchange of information, knowledge, and best practices. Our over 800 member organizations and strategic partners from across the globe connect to exchange knowledge, best practices, and network with each other to help their individual communities thrive.

- 2. Destination Tools** - DI offers a suite of products built on best practices, insights, and research. We work to raise the effectiveness of destination organizations; increase relevancy among the destination's community; raise the level of professionalism through accreditation; and provide actionable best practices and strategies for the sustainable success of destinations.
- 3. Professional Development** - We are the definitive resource for professional development within the destination marketing and management industry. We offer ongoing educational opportunities both in person and online and are committed to providing professional development and lifelong learning for our members.
- 4. Advocacy & Research** - DI is the collective voice of destination organizations, empowering destinations on issues big and small. We strive to be champions for our members and recognize the importance of keeping our members abreast of the challenges and opportunities presenting themselves in the marketplace. DI educates, equips, and empowers its members to advocate on behalf of their destination organizations and their destination communities. We use our collective voice to elevate and advance the mission, goals, and efforts of destination organizations. DI is constantly expanding industry knowledge, introducing new ideas and developing forward-focused research and relevant data.

Destinations International's 2023 Strategic Goals

- 1. Maintain Robust Member and Partner Engagement** - Our mission is to empower our members so that their destinations excel. We do this by remaining relevant and addressing member needs, listening, appreciating differences, and finding common ground. Ongoing engagement between our members and our team, our members and their peers, and our members and industry partners are paramount to our association's success.
- 2. Extend Our Reach** - As the world's largest trade association for destination organizations, we will continue our efforts to increase our global footprint, raise the profile of both our industry and our individual members, and create tools and research to assist our members.
- 3. Enhance Our Content and Professional Development Offerings** - As the definitive resource for industry content, professional development, and

career advancement for the destination organization community, we will enhance our offerings, expand our delivery platforms, and enrich our content. To maximize the impact of our educational efforts, we will increase our integrated content approach across all Destinations International's delivery channels to meet our member's needs, industry requests, and our business objectives.

- 4. Tackle Our Industry Strategic Issues Through the Development of Relevant Content, Education, Solutions and Tools** - Our industry strategic issues represent significant global threats and opportunities that impact the direction of our industry and the success of our members. Each one of these issues is addressed in our activities, programs, and solutions developed in the areas represented by our core pillars.
- 5. Provide Leadership and Resources Focused on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** - DI recognizes and advocates the importance of cultivating a unified travel industry where everyone is welcome and where there is equitable access for all. Through meaningful collaboration, DI will clarify our EDI value proposition, resources, and service offerings for our membership.
- 6. Create a Comprehensive Sustainability Plan and a Roadmap to Develop Member Resources** - Sustainability is commonly described as having three dimensions: environmental, economic, and social. These plans can also be referred to as an ESG plan (environmental, social and governance). Knowing that tourism can play a significant role in delivering sustainable solutions for people, the planet, prosperity and peace, DI will seek to define what sustainable models look like for destination organizations and create educational content, tools, and resources to benefit our global membership. The cornerstone of this effort will be to incorporate the United Nations' 2030 agenda that includes a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 17 SDGs and the corresponding 169 SDG targets offer the world a new direction and tourism can and must play a significant role in delivering sustainable solutions for people, the planet, prosperity, and peace.

The Destinations International Foundation

The Destinations International Foundation (DIF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering destinations globally to excel through innovation and resource incubation. DIF believes that destination organizations are essential to the success of destinations worldwide and the cornerstone of their communities.

That is why DIF invests in research, advocacy, talent development and global engagement and exchange.

With every dollar raised, DIF takes aim at and helps ensure the continued growth of our industry worldwide. We know that destination organizations must compete with every other community for their share of the world's attention, customers, and investment. Efforts must be made to promote, market, sell and engage potential visitors. However, we know that the need for destination promotion is for the benefit and well-being of every person in a community. We believe it is a common good and essential to develop opportunities for all the residents.

Investment in the Foundation directly supports innovation and incubation. We ensure that people working at destination organizations are supported with knowledge, programs, and tools.

- Project Scope -

DI and DIF looks to return in 2023 with an updated iteration of one of its signature studies, [Destination Promotion: An Engine of Economic Development](#). To expand on the work from 2014, this study will evaluate what happens to a region when tourism is at its peak and the effect this has on its surrounding areas. This report will become the centerpiece of explaining destination promotion as a catalyst for community vitality.

This report will evaluate the following four (4) core areas within a destination.

- ✓ Visitor spending values and behaviors.
- ✓ Destination attendance and visitation behaviors.
- ✓ Occupancy revenue.
- ✓ Consumer spending values and habits.

The report seeks to accomplish the following.

- ✓ Show the impact not only to the traditional tourism benefactors (accommodations, restaurants, attractions) who obviously benefit, but also the many nontraditional tourism benefactors throughout a destination who are often ignored in this type of research. (See DI Industry Brief: [If They Value You, They Will Fund You.](#))
- ✓ Identify social and cultural benefactors of destination promotion as well as economic.

- ✓ Providing destination organizations with evidence that a community that invests in destination promotion is performing at a higher level in the competitive landscape.

- Project Description -

The Opportunity

Prior to 2020, destination organizations had been continually tasked by their communities to validate their worth. In many, it would simply be a measurement of hotel room nights booked on behalf of the sales activities of the destination organization or a general visitor spend value for the year consumed. Even back then, these metrics were already outdated and, worse, failed to properly articulate the reach and true mission of a destination organization towards their economic and cultural influence on their respective communities.

With the evolving nature of the pandemic, now is the time for destination organizations to reframe their existence and support through new destination promotion measurement metrics. These metrics, both quantitative and qualitative, will be used to showcase how destination promotion becomes a vital investment that communities should support.

The Solution

Destinations International is seeking the services from a qualified party(s) interested in developing and conducting a comprehensive research study and report (Tentatively titled - "Destination Promotion: A Catalyst of Community Vitality") on demonstrating the value of a community having a destination organization and its influence on a community's vitality. This includes its influence and investment within economic, social, and cultural terms onto a destination. Additional outcomes and objections we're looking for the study to analyze include:

- ✓ reframing destination promotion as a vital and essential investment for a community to thrive in economic, social, and cultural metrics.
- ✓ demonstrating to a community the economic significance when their destination is operating at ideal levels of tourism, stewarded by a destination organization with positive brand awareness.
- ✓ articulating the value across nontraditional tourism benefactors of our sector including but not limited to universities and colleges, hospitals,

major employers, niche retail (pet stores, pharmacies, etc.), workforce (retention and attraction), home sales, office rents, etc.

- ✓ articulating a community's well-being and sense of belonging from a well-executed destination brand.

- Proposal Request –

Destinations International is looking to form a collation to tackle this research project. Collectively aligning many of the pieces that exist across many of our partners into a cohesive deliverable and narrative. Data and scope, we would be looking to formulate around:

- ✓ Measurement of consumed occupancy values.
- ✓ Measurement of destination attendance and visitation movement and behaviors.
- ✓ Economic evaluation across consumer spends surrounding visitors (credit cards, food & beverage, retail, etc.).
- ✓ Economic evaluation of consumed meetings/conventions/events.

The report will use case studies from 7 to 10 destinations looking at their past ideal tourism periods. These would be evaluated across these four core areas to identify trends, analysis, and information on how each performed and, more importantly, the broader economic development takeaways each provided. Areas of interest of selecting the 7 to 10 would range in size, assets, scope, and region or country of origin. Destinations selected must be representative of the Destinations International global membership, including both group and non-group sales-based destinations (group should be defined to include meetings and conventions, sporting tournaments and special events).

A comprehensive report would then be executed containing but not limited to an executive summary, key takeaways, data points and insights. The report will include research and resources/methodologies used. Additional items such as presentations, templates, webinars, and other live or virtual events would stem from this initial key report.

Conclusion

We look forward to working with you in completion of this monumental research project on behalf of Destinations International Foundation and the broader destination organization sector. The work completed through this initiative would

be used in conjunction with Destinations International's partnership with the U.S Conference of Mayors and other organizations. Our intent is to have the research to better speak to our stakeholders with key new information on our alignment with destination promotion and tourism and economic, social, and cultural development of a community. Furthermore, to allow communities to look at their destination organizations as a mechanism to help not only support economic recovery from the pandemic but thrive in the years to come.

- Submittal Details -

Requirements and Preferences

Destinations International and the Destinations International Foundation will provide topical guidance for the project to ensure its continuing alignment with the objects and goals of the viability study. Destinations International staff will give general oversight of the research, including collaborating with the selected part of final study design. The selected party(s) will be responsible for crafting and implementing the study, including collecting, analyzing, and reporting on the findings.

While Destinations International and the Destinations International Foundation are open to a single vendor approach it has a preference for a team approach. Furthermore, while Destinations International and the Destinations International Foundation has a preference for vendors with a previous history and current membership with the organizations, nonmember vendors are invited to respond acknowledging that as part of any engagement, the vendor will become a member of Destinations International.

Vendors will be expected to provide information on their organizational commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) along with their organizational approach to their sustainability initiatives.

Preference to Vendors who are current partners of Destinations International in good standing.

Evaluation Criteria

The Request for Proposal submittals will be evaluated on the following basis.

- ✓ **Qualifications and Experience:** The proposal should demonstrate that the research team has the necessary qualifications, skills, and experience to

successfully complete the project. This may include information about the team's education, professional experience, and research skills.

- ✓ **Research Design and Methodology:** The proposal should include a clear and detailed research design and methodology that outlines how the research will be conducted, including the research questions, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques.
- ✓ **Relevance:** The proposal should demonstrate that the proposal addresses the project scope and description. This may also include a discussion of the proposers view on the research's potential impact and thoughts on potential audiences.
- ✓ **Budget and Resources:** The proposal should include a detailed budget that outlines the costs associated with the research project, including personnel, equipment, and other expenses. The proposal should also demonstrate that the research team has access to the necessary resources to successfully complete the project. Pro bono (DIF donation credit can be offered) and low bono (at cost) pricing is encouraged.
- ✓ **Timeline:** The proposal should include a timeline that outlines the key milestones and deadlines associated with the research project and demonstrates that the research team has a realistic plan for completing the project on time.
- ✓ **Communication and Collaboration:** The proposal should demonstrate that the research team has effective communication and collaboration skills, and is able to work collaboratively with stakeholders, such as research participants, other researchers, DI, DIF and their members.

Deliverables

At regular intervals, the selected party will prepare a progress report for Destinations International Foundation that describes the current progress of the study and key milestones within the date period. Destinations International Foundation will utilize these progress reports as oversight tools for monitoring aspects of the study. The format of these reports will be discussed after the RFP is awarded.

Upon completion of the study, the selected party will create and deliver a print capable copy of the report, in addition to any electronic and hard copies of all research tools utilized. Including any surveys, questionnaires, forms with any raw data in electronic form.

Specifically, the selected party will provide a:

- ✓ Print capable executive summary of the study.
- ✓ Print capable complete report – including any text or visual representations of the findings.
- ✓ Proposed study title: Destination Promotion: A catalyst for community vitality.

The selected party will have an opportunity to highlight the study findings at the Destination International Advocacy Summit and may have similar opportunities at other Destinations International's events to the destination organization community beginning in 2023.

Timetable

Destinations International Foundation anticipates the project will be occurring as follows.

- ✓ RFP bid due date: 6.12.2023.
- ✓ RFP Awarded date: 7.17.2023
- ✓ Draft Deliverable Date: 9.25.2023
- ✓ Final Deliverable Date: 10.6.2023

Proposal Inclusions

Submitted proposals should include the following:

- ✓ Overview of proposed research/study.
- ✓ Methodology to be used.
- ✓ Professional capability/resume.
- ✓ Bios of any staff expected to be assigned to the project.
- ✓ Samples of previous studies/reports/findings.
- ✓ A commitment to the principles of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. (For more information: <https://destinationsinternational.org/equity-diversity-inclusion>)

Cost Proposal/Breakdown Review

Proposals will be reviewed based upon quality of the proposed study, knowledge base of the proposing research team, including capability, financial feasibility, and completion within the proposed timeframe.

Contract Terms

Contract with successful bidder will address the following items.

- ✓ The duration of the contract including any possible renewals, extensions, or options available to the parties.
- ✓ Scope of Services including all deliverables and milestones required.
- ✓ Compensation and payment terms including any conditions or requirements for invoicing and payment.
- ✓ Intellectual property rights specifying DI's ownership and use of any intellectual property rights associated with the services provided by the contractor.
- ✓ Confidentiality and non-disclosure including any confidentiality requirements and obligations of both parties, including any restrictions on the use or disclosure of confidential information.
- ✓ Termination including the procedures for termination.
- ✓ Liability and indemnification obligations of both parties, including any limitations on liability and requirements for indemnification.
- ✓ Dispute resolution including the procedures for resolving any disputes that may arise under the contract.
- ✓ Governing law including any choice of law or venue provisions. Note that the Association is incorporated in Tennessee and registered to do business in Washington, D.C.
- ✓ Insurance specifying the insurance requirements and obligations of both parties, including any required types and amounts of insurance.

Questions

Contact Andreas Weissenborn, Destinations International, Vice President of Research and Advocacy, in writing to the following email address.

aweissenborn@destinationsinternational.org

Questions and answers will be shared with all known bidders.