

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

Santa Monica Travel & Tourism (SMTT)

United Kingdom & Ireland Travel Trade & PR Representation

*Contract Term: July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027 (with optional extension to 2028)*

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### **1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

Santa Monica Travel & Tourism (SMTT), founded in 1982, is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to increasing visitation, economic impact, and destination awareness for the City of Santa Monica as a travel destination. SMTT is funded by the City of Santa Monica and the Santa Monica Tourism Marketing District (TMD), governed by a 6-member Hotel Council.

### **2. PURPOSE OF THE RFP**

SMTT seeks an experienced travel trade and PR firm based in the United Kingdom or Ireland to elevate Santa Monica's presence with travel trade, media, and consumers; deliver proactive sales, training, PR strategies; support cooperative marketing; and provide measurable results.

### **3. CONTRACT TERM & BUDGET**

**Contract Term:** July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027, with potential extension to June 30, 2028.

**Budget:** Maximum USD \$120,000 annually, inclusive of travel trade development, co-op marketing, PR, digital support, and administration.

## **4. SCOPE OF WORK**

### **A. Travel Trade**

- Identify and maintain targeted list of luxury-focused agencies and tour operators.
- Conduct regular sales calls with decision-makers.
- Deliver one agent training/workshop per month.
- Promote Santa Monica STAR training module.
- Review and enhance existing product, support development of new product.
- Participate in relevant trade shows and support SMTT when needed.
- Present at least two co-op marketing opportunities; execute two annually.
- Recommend annual FAM candidates and coordinate approved FAMs, including a minimum of at least one group FAM.
- Collaborate with Visit California, Brand USA and Visit USA UK and Ireland.
- Organize one annual sales and media mission.
- Produce quarterly trade newsletters using SMTT content.
- Recommend new assets and content for trade.

### **B. MICE**

- Provide market intelligence and recommendations for shows and events.
- Support SMTT hotel/venue partners with exposure opportunities.

### **C. Public Relations**

- Develop and execute media strategy to increase destination visibility.
- Secure proactive media coverage across channels.
- Serve as primary contact for reactive media inquiries.
- Maintain relationships with key media.
- Organize one annual sales and media mission.
- Coordinate media meetings during SMTT visits.
- Draft and distribute four press releases annually.
- Recommend annual FAM candidates and coordinate approved FAMs, including a minimum of at least one group FAM.
- Provide story ideas, tailored pitching, and creative exposure strategies.
- Collaborate with Brand USA and Visit California PR teams.
- Support PR strategy for co-op marketing campaigns.
- Support crisis communication if needed.
- Provide monthly media landscape updates.

#### **D. Consumer / Digital Support**

- Support SMTT's digital strategy.
- Provide monthly digital reporting.

#### **E. Administration**

- Develop annual plan, budget, and timeline.
- Provide receipts and documentation for reimbursables.
- Maintain SMTT collateral and promotional materials.

#### **F. Metrics & Reporting**

- Monthly wrap up reports due by the 5th must include market updates, airline route changes, trade leads, co-op recaps, training details, industry updates, sales production summaries, and economic forecasts.
- Monthly market status calls required.
- Quarterly and annual fiscal report metrics.

## **5. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Narrative**

- UK & Ireland market overview
- Economic forecast, consumer trends, airline developments
- Competitive landscape
- Strategy and tactics for trade, co-op marketing, PR, and digital support

### **B. Company Profile**

- Company overview, staffing, office location
- Account team bios
- Accreditations and memberships
- Three references
- Client list for past 24 months
- Experience with Visit California or Brand USA

### **C. Organizational Capability**

- Ability to perform Scope of Work
- Experience in travel trade and PR
- Ability to coordinate with U.S. destinations and stakeholders

### **D. Written Responses**

- How can SMTT leverage existing U.S. travel partner relationships to amplify messaging and increase high-value visitation?
- Develop an in-market campaign integrating travel trade, PR and co-op marketing to position Santa Monica as a top luxury destination for travelers from the UK and Ireland.

## 6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Quality of Proposed Approach	40 points
Relevant Experience	30 points
Qualifications of Personnel	20 points
Cost / Financial Stability	10 points
<b>Total: 100 points</b>	

## 7. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

- SMTT may renew the agreement through June 2028.
- All agreements subject to legal review; NDA may be required.
- Budget form must be completed in USD.
- Firms must show financial stability and disclose conflicts of interest.
- Subcontractors over \$5,000 must be identified.
- Firms must be registered to do business in the UK or Ireland and have minimum five years of tourism representation experience.

## 8. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS & TIMELINE

Notice of Intent to Bid:	February 2, 2026
Proposal Deadline:	February 20, 2026 at 5:00pm PST
Submit to:	<a href="mailto:trade@santamonica.com">trade@santamonica.com</a>

### RFP TIMELINE 2026

Jan 14	RFP Issued
Feb 2	Intent to Bid & Questions Due
Feb 12	Q&A Responses Issued
Feb 20	Proposal Deadline
Mar 6	Initial In-market Interviews
Mar 25	Final Interviews via Zoom
May 13	Award Announcement
Jul 1	Services Begin