



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: PUBLIC RELATIONS

General Scope

Discover Puerto Rico, the Island's official Destination Marketing Organization seeks a world-class Public Relations firm to continue elevating and protecting the Discover Puerto Rico brand and keep Puerto Rico top-of-mind for travelers through a robust, innovative, cutting-edge public relations strategy.

Puerto Rico has a unique competitive position in travel and tourism, due in part to its rich heritage, remarkable attractions, stunning outdoor product, music, and gastronomy. Amidst an increasingly competitive global marketplace and challenging economic travel climate, growing the visitor economy of Puerto Rico is critical to the future success of the Island.

Despite challenges resulting from hurricane Maria, political unrest, earthquakes, and COVID-19. Discover Puerto Rico continued to gain visibility and create awareness of the destination through strategic marketing and public relations efforts. After five years, Discover Puerto Rico has positioned a brand that truly embodies the essence of the destination and appeals to global travelers.

We believe in leveraging Puerto Rico's tourism offerings to increase media coverage in the Mainland US, which will inspire visitation to the Island. As a destination in transformation, strategic earned media efforts are crucial to raise brand awareness of the destination in the Mainland, where roughly 95% of our visitors originate.

About Discover Puerto Rico

Discover Puerto Rico is a private, not-for-profit enterprise. The DMO will bring prosperity to the people of Puerto Rico by collaboratively positioning the Island's diversity and uniqueness for leisure, business and events. It is responsible for all global marketing, sales and promotion of the destination, working with local governmental and non-governmental stakeholders throughout Puerto Rico's visitor economy and community at large, while powering economic growth.



Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify a Public Relations partner.

As Discover Puerto Rico continues to build brand awareness and claim its position as the premier travel destination in the Caribbean, we require a partner who is strategic, innovative, and creative when it comes to creating buzz and piquing the interest of media and influencers.

The selected firm will be responsible for supporting and amplifying all of Discover Puerto Rico's public relations, talent/influencer and earned media efforts. The communications plan is guided by the organization's key strategic objectives and works in tandem with the local communications strategy.

Candidates must demonstrate a proven track record of effective travel and tourism-related public relations services across the U.S. as well as strong crisis management. Must understand or be willing to learn the local idiosyncrasy, politics, and key players and how they impact the DMO. Should have advanced knowledge and experience in DE&I.

Scope of Work

Discover Puerto Rico seeks to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of its communication and media efforts through the selection of a strategic and results-oriented media relations agency. The selected agency will provide strong strategy and insight for initiatives that elevate Puerto Rico nationally.

The selected agency's responsibilities may include but are not limited to:

- Position Discover Puerto Rico as a world-class tourism destination for leisure and business travelers.
- Maintain, evolve and activate robust crisis management plans both on the ground in Puerto Rico and off-Island.
- Identify and leverage industry and market-specific trends to generate coverage for Puerto Rico and differentiate the Island.
- Generate creative, innovative ideas to set the destination apart, increase awareness and maintain momentum.
- Generate outstanding publicity representing the entire Island (beyond San Juan and iconic tourism attractions).
- Identify and leverage celebrity and entertainment opportunities.



- Develop, maintain and leverage influencer program.
- Expand and strategically solidify the destination's DE&I strategy.
- Enhance the credibility of the organization and its effectiveness in attracting visitors to Puerto Rico through thought leadership opportunities.
- Mitigate potential negative issues and perception while increasing goodwill for the organization locally and on the Mainland.
- Manage potential media crisis and protect brand reputation.
- Promote Puerto Rico's diverse tourism product.
- Secure targeted broadcast opportunities for Discover Puerto Rico's key programs and initiatives.
- Align with external partners and leverage existing agency partners/clients who share common objectives and can elevate awareness and desirability of Puerto Rico's brand.
- Stay abreast of local developments, paying special attention to politics, public affairs and the tourism industry, among other areas.
- Establish relationships with trade and industry publications to leverage and support MICE.
- Full alignment and integration with internal teams (digital, creative, social) for content creation and asset management.
- Integrate and collaborate with other agencies (creative, digital, traditional media, etc.), including joint activations, shared plans, collaborations etc.
- Monthly, quarterly and annual reporting on media coverage, quality, value, and impact. Responsible for all tracking (media and influencer tools/software licensing.)
- Keep detailed records and meet stringent requirements established by federal and local government agencies, including billing, reporting, and measuring results.

Proposal

Minimum requirements for proposal (no more than 15 pages excluding cover):

- 1) Brief company history.
- 2) Examples of successful creative or promotional activations or buzz-worthy PR campaigns. (maximum two case studies).
- 3) Overview of process and methodology used for earned media strategy development.
- 4) Brief overview of assigned team, identifying roles and who will service the account.
- 5) Current tourism-specific client list and confirmation there are no conflicts of interest between any existing contract or client relationship.
- 6) Fee structure as well as hourly billing method and rates.
- 7) Description of tactical process (for day-to-day earned media initiatives).
- 8) Description of agency's entertainment department or resources which would be used to leverage celebrity integrations, partnerships and opportunities.



- 9) Describe agency approach to on-Island representation and destination/product immersion.
- 10) Describe experience working with PR budgets of \$1 million or more.
- 11) Describe methodology for measurement/ROI of Public Relations investment.
- 12) Approach to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion within your agency.

Selection Criteria

Agency will be selected based on (but not limited to) the following:

- 1) Superior qualifications with respect to the overall agency and the individual(s) assigned to work on this business.
- 2) Successful strategies with other travel-related companies and destinations.
- 3) Demonstrated ability to develop and execute effective and results-oriented earned media activations.
- 4) Demonstrated superior travel/tourism/destination knowledge
- 5) Background working with a committee (taking and giving direction as appropriate).
- 6) The quality and clarity of response, demonstrating the agency's ability to communicate clearly and creatively.
- 7) Crisis management expertise.
- 8) Responsiveness.

Other considerations

Once selected, the firm must be prepared to begin work with Discover Puerto Rico starting December 1st, 2023.

Evaluation of the proposals will be under the jurisdiction of Discover Puerto Rico. Discover Puerto Rico will evaluate **all** material submitted and engage in interviews and/or discussions with the respondents deemed as most qualified based on initial responses.

Discover Puerto Rico will select the agency that best represents itself as capable of meeting the needs of Puerto Rico as a tourism destination. Discussions will then take place between Discover Puerto Rico and the agency to define a more detailed scope of work. Ultimately, a contract will be executed between the selected agency and Discover Puerto Rico.

If Discover Puerto Rico is unable to negotiate a satisfactory contract with the selected agency, negotiations with that agency shall be terminated and the organization shall undertake negotiations with another qualified agency until a satisfactory contract is negotiated. If Discover Puerto Rico is unable to negotiate a contract with any of the selected



agencies, the organization shall re-evaluate the scope of services and fee requirements.

Discover Puerto Rico and the selection committee reserve the right to reject any or **all** qualification submittals or to waive any minor defects or irregularities in any submittal. Discover Puerto Rico further reserves the right, without prior notice, to supplement, amend or otherwise modify this request for qualifications or otherwise request additional information from any or all applicants.



Proposals & Timing

RFP release date: **July 7, 2023**

Ten (10) hard copies of proposals must be delivered to the Discover Puerto Rico office by 5:00pm AST on Friday, August 11th, 2023 (address below.) Additionally, an electronic copy must be submitted by 5:00pm AST on Friday, August 11th, 2023, delivered to communications@discoverpuertorico.com

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Final agency selection will be completed before October 31st, 2023.

By submitting a proposal, the applicant thereby agrees that Discover Puerto Rico's decision concerning any submittal in any respect is final, binding and conclusive upon it for all purposes, and acknowledges that Discover Puerto Rico, in its sole and unqualified discretion, may waive or deviate from the procedures and/or timeline outlined at any time.

All materials submitted will become the property of Discover Puerto Rico and may be made available to the public. All costs incurred in connection with responding to this Request for Proposal will be borne by the submitting organization.

Please direct questions to communications@discoverpuertorico.com

Confidentiality

The recipients hereto agree that this Request for Proposal, its concept, and all matters relating to Discover Puerto Rico and its marketing plans are strictly confidential. This information is not to be discussed with any parties not directly involved in this process.