

TO HIRE AN AGENCY TO REPRESENT MALDIVES IN USA FOR 1 YEAR

RFP NUMBER: (IUL)MMPRC-PRO/MMPRC/2021/6

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
FOR THE PURPOSE OF HIRING AN AGENCY TO REPRESENT MALDIVES IN
USA FOR 1 YEAR

18th February 2021

1. BID PROCESS SCHEDULE

The indicative schedule of the submitting Bid Proposal in accordance with this RFP is as set out herein below;

#	Event Description	Deadline (Date & Time)
1	HIRING AN AGENCY TO REPRESENT MALDIVES IN USA FOR 1 YEAR	4 th March 2021 via E-Mail, before 1500 hours (LOCAL TIME)

Note: The above Bid Process Schedule is indicative and is subject to change at the sole discretion of Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation (MMPRC); and MMPRC shall not be responsible for any change in timelines in any manner whatsoever.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1. This RFP is an invitation for interested eligible Parties to submit Bids for the purpose of hiring an Agency to represent Maldives in USA as per the scope of work set out in Appendix 2 of this RFP.
- 2.1.1 MMPRC is the national tourism office of Maldives responsible for carrying out promotional and marketing activities to become the most preferred island destination in the world under the slogan of ‘Maldives... *the sunny side of life*’; whilst adhering to its mission to promote quality and sustainable growth in the local tourism industry to deliver long term economic, social and cultural benefits to the country.
- 2.1.2 Tourism has been described as the driving force of the Maldives economy. If both its direct and indirect impacts are combined, it is responsible for a high percentage of the country’s GDP. The volume of international visitor’s arrival has risen from 42,000 in 1980 to over 1,702,887 in 2019, which is a huge increase. This has been accompanied by an increase in the supply of tourist accommodation from 2,400 beds to 51,432 beds over the same period.
- 2.2 The services required include the development implementation of public relations campaigns to position Maldives as preferred tourist destination; to monitor and report the developments to the outbound market from these destinations; to report the developments in the tourism related regulations and to update MMPRC on promotional campaigns and other activities of potential competitors.
- 2.3 MMPRC reserves the right to, without limitation, without incurring any obligation or liability vis-à-vis any Bidder and without expressing any cause or reason thereof, at any time before the Bid Due Date and at its sole discretion, to amend RFP and/or the Bid Process including but not limited to the dates or other terms and conditions relating thereto, and/or suspend or cancel the Bid Process, and/or reject all of the Bids.
- 2.4 MMPRC reserves the right to verify any or all statements made by a Bidder in response to the RFP to establish to its satisfaction about the Bidder’s capacity to perform.
- 2.5 A Bidder, including the respective members/ shareholders officers, employees, agents or its advisers shall not engage in collusive bidding, anti-competitive conduct or any other similar conduct, in any form or manner, with any other person or in relation to.

- 2.6 The Bidder shall not engage in corrupt or fraudulent practices in the preparation or lodgment of a Bid. The Bidder shall not have any commercial mutual benefits with other Bidder(s) submitting the Bids on the date of submission of the Bid.
- 2.7 This RFP does not bind MMPRC to a Bidder with respect to the subject matter of the RFP; and MMPRC shall not under any circumstances be responsible for any costs incurred by any Bidder, including the respective members/ shareholders officers, employees, agents and advisers of the Bidder in participating in the Bid Process.
- 2.8 The Bidder shall be responsible for all of the costs associated with the preparation of its Bid and its participation in the Bid Process. MMPRC will not be responsible or in any way liable for any costs, expenses and charges incurred by any Bidder in connection with the preparation and submission of its Bid or the Bid Process in any manner whatsoever, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the Bid Process including cancellation of the Bid Process by MMPRC.
- 2.9 Unless specifically stated otherwise in this RFP, all queries and communications in respect to the RFP or the Bid Process shall be addressed by any Bidder to MMPRC, by e-mail or in writing and shall be delivered in person, or by courier or by certified or registered mail, postage prepaid, at the address as set out hereunder, or such other address as may be informed by MMPRC from time to time;
- 2.10 Interested parties must submit an expression of interest along with a written statement of qualification within the proposal. Upon evaluation of all submittals, MMPRC may select various respondents to provide an oral presentation for further evaluation of a respondent's ability to assist MMPRC towards achieving the expected results of this solicitation as outlined in this RFP. However, MMPRC may select contractors based on written proposals alone.

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Director, Procurement
Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation
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Republic of Maldives
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procurement@visitmaldives.com

- 2.11 This RFP and all the entities participating in the Bid Process shall be governed by the laws of Maldives, without having regard to its principles of conflict of laws. Only the courts at Maldives shall have exclusive jurisdiction to entertain, hold trial, and adjudicate upon any dispute in relation to the RFP, Bid Process or any other aspect in relation thereto.
- 2.12 The budget allocated for this project is USD 4,475 (US Dollar Four Thousand and Four Hundred and Seventy-Five including 10% WITHHOLDING TAX) as a monthly retainer. If the retainer fee quoted by the bidder exceeds allocated budget, MMPRC Evaluation Committee has the discretion to disqualify the proposal during evaluation.
- 2.13 The contract period will be 01 year with possibility of extension, if the work conducted by the selected party meets the expectations of MMPRC. In case if the contract is renewed by MMPRC, the monthly retainer fee can be increased by a maximum of 20% of the existing contract price depending on the changes in the "Scope of the Work" proposed.

3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- 3.1. This RFP is open to all Interested Parties meeting the eligibility criteria stipulated below. Proposals are to be prepared taking into account the Eligibility criteria stipulated below and presented in a manner consistent with the checklist in Appendix 4.
 - 3.1.1. The Bidder/Respondent should be a registered company or a partnership or a registered subsidiary of a parent company (Refer to 4.8.2 and 4.8.3);
 - 3.1.2. The Bidder/Respondent should have extensive knowledge of the USA market; (Refer to 7.3)
 - 3.1.3. The Bidder/Respondent should be familiar with Maldives as a tourist destination (Refer to 7.2);
 - 3.1.4. The Bidder/Respondent should have an Account Manager with minimum (2) years' experience in destination PR. (Refer to 4.8.4);
 - 3.1.5. Bidder/Respondent should have the experience and ability to work within the community in the travel and tourism field and have necessary network contacts to initiate and implement this assignment (Refer to 4.8.8);
 - 3.1.6. Bidder/Respondent should have current knowledge and expertise in destination PR, such that selected Agency is able to give vital contribution to the process of designing and implementing a comprehensive strategic plan for the travel trade and media; (Refer to 4.8.7 and 7.6)
 - 3.1.7. Sound financial background (Refer to 4.8.5 and 7.4);
 - 3.1.8. The Bidder/Respondent should have at least 1 registered office in USA (Refer to 4.8.6).

4. SUBMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL

- 4.1. **Proposal Specifications**
All communications, responses and documentations must be in English language and all costs quoted in US Dollar currency. All responses must be submitted electronically. An original hardcopy may need to be submitted via post upon request.
- 4.2. **Bidder Communication**
Bidders may contact the designated contact person for additional information or clarifications if needed.
- 4.3. **Best Value Selection and Negotiation**

MMPRC may select the response(s) which demonstrates the best overall value, including proposed alternatives that will achieve the goals of MMPRC. MMPRC and a selected bidder may negotiate a change in element of contract performance or cost identified in the original proposal or the selected bidder's response which results in lower costs or more cost effective or better value than was presented in the selected bidder's original value.

4.4. **Costs**

Itemized Cost estimates must be specifically identified in the proposals. MMPRC will not be responsible for any costs or expenses by bidders responding to this call for proposal.

4.5. **Compliance**

MMPRC does not accept any liability damages done due to inadequacy of the submitted proposal and will provide no compensations for their loss.

4.6. **Expected duration of the Contract**

The expected duration of the Agreement is 01 year. However, where a Selected Bidder does not comply with the common terms of the Agreement upon signing the Agreement, MMPRC reserves the right to reject a Selected Bidder within the term of the Agreement.

4.7. **Anticipated expenditures, funding or compensation for contract duration**

4.7.1. The monthly retainer fee to be proposed by the bidders shall include all fixed costs related to the execution of the proposed services that is not exceeding US\$ 4,475 and a pre-approved amount for variable costs regularly incurring in the normal course of business, such as local transportation, postage/communications expenses, telecommunication costs relating to media coordination, stationary costs, directly related to the PR and trade activities for MMPRC.

4.7.2. Variable costs should explicitly be agreed upon between the contractor and MMPRC in advance and hence will be allotted or budgeted by MMPRC. These variable costs should also be estimated and included in the proposal in addition this contractor should be willing to bear the payments on behalf of MMPRC (with prior approval) for the events organized by the corporation. The expenses for such services and activities can be invoiced in the following month with retainer fee. The selected contractor will be compensated for its services by MMPRC upon an agreed schedule of payments including pre-approved/ out of pocket (marketing) expenses. Invoices will be paid on a monthly basis following MMPRC receipt and approval of the monthly status report and appropriate supporting documentation.

4.8. **Elements of proposal submission**

An applicant must submit a written proposal. The proposal must include comprehensive narratives that address the entire proposal requirements. Interested bidders must include the following information as part of their proposal;

4.8.1. A full Agency profile, inclusive of the names and credentials of principals, ownership with the Agency's organizational structure, proposed account team: number of years in operation; current public relations annual billings; location of office(s) and services offered directly by agency personnel.

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- 4.8.2. Each Bidder/Respondent shall state with clarity the type of business entity their Company is (E.g. Sole Proprietorship or Partnership or Corporation or a Subsidiary of a Parent Company etc.), and submit the relevant Registration Certificate AND Tax Registration Certificate;
- 4.8.3. If Bidder/Respondent is part of a Corporation or has a Parent Company, but has been legally incorporated independent of the Corporation or the Parent Company, the Bidder/Respondent shall submit a copy of their own Certificate of Incorporation AND Tax Registration Certificate. If these certificates are in any other language, the Bidder/Respondent should submit an English translation along with the proposal;
- 4.8.4. Each Bidder/Respondent should provide the details of the Account Manager stating credentials and the number of years of experience he/she has in the industry or a related field;
- 4.8.5. Each Bidder/Respondent should submit proof of financial capability by submitting one of the following documents. In case if urgent payments are required to be made, the selected party should be able to make the payment on behalf of MMPRC and MMPRC will reimburse the amount upon prior written approval.
- Bank reference letter. This letter should be in bank letterhead with authorized signature or bank stamp. The Bidder/Respondent should have a minimum of 20 percent of the quoted price in their bank account and this should be also stated in the reference letter. Letter should be translated if it is not in ENGLISH with authorized signature or stamp of the bank.
- Or**
- Last 3 months' bank statement on the bank letterhead with the authorised signature or the stamp. If the bank statement is in any other language, please provide a translation and the translation should have the seal or an authorised signature of the Bank. The Bidder/Respondent should have a minimum of 20 percent of the quoted price in their bank account.
- 4.8.6. Each Bidder/Respondent should include the address of their registered office in their profiles;
- 4.8.7. Proof of previous works and awards for similar projects shall be provided, including testimonials and contact details for references ;
- 4.8.8. To ensure the experience and ability to work within the community in the travel and tourism field list of key travel trade and media should be provided. Case Studies indicating ability to conduct such events, supported by reference contacts should be provided;
- 4.8.9. One-year marketing campaign proposed with cost breakdown. Components of the proposed campaign is in addition to the obligatory scope within the retainer contract.

5. PREPARATION AND SEALING OF THE PROPOSAL

- 5.1. All correspondence in connection with the Proposal and all accompanying documents, which are relevant to its examination, shall be written in ENGLISH language only. Translation must be provided where the correspondences are in any other language.
- 5.2. Each Proposal shall be accompanied by the following documents. Marks will be deducted for the documents as per the submission criteria.
 - 5.2.1. Completed Cover Letter as provided in Appendix 1;
 - 5.2.2. Completed Checklist as provided in Appendix 4 indicating the whereabouts of the necessary information and required documents within the Proposal;
 - 5.2.3. Each Bidder/Respondent should submit all the documents mentioned in **4.8 (Elements of proposal submission)**
 - 5.2.4. A detailed cost breakdown of the services. All costs should be in US Dollar (\$);
 - 5.2.5. Each Bidder/Respondent should be clearly mentioned Crisis Management Fee ((Appendix 2, Scope of work during crisis). (Evaluation Criteria, 7.1.2))
 - 5.2.6. The Proposal shall be signed by the authorized signatory of the Respondent;
 - 5.2.7. The Proposal shall contain no alterations, omissions or additions, except those to comply with instructions issued by MMPRC, or as necessary to correct errors made by the Respondent, in which case such corrections shall be initialed by the person or persons signing the Proposal.

6. EVALUATION PROCESS

- 6.1. To assist in the examination, evaluation, and comparison of Bids, MMPRC may, at its discretion, ask any Bidder for clarification of its Bid. The request for clarification and the response shall be in writing, but no change in the price or substance of the Bid shall be sought, offered, or permitted except as required to confirm the correction of arithmetic errors discovered by MMPRC in the evaluation of the Bids.
- 6.2. From the Bid Due Date until the issue of the Letter of Award, if any Bidder wishes to contact MMPRC on any matter related to the Bid or the Bid Process, it should be done in writing.
- 6.3. Any effort on the part of the Bidders to influence MMPRC in the examination, evaluation, ranking of Bids may result in the rejection of the respective Bidder's Bid.
- 6.4. Prior to detailed evaluation of the Bid, MMPRC will examine the Bid to determine whether it is compliant, i.e. whether;
 - 6.4.1. The Bid is complete in all respects with due authorization;

- 6.4.2. The documents have been properly signed and provided in the prescribed Formats;
- 6.4.3. The Bid is responsive.
- 6.5. A responsive Bid is one that conforms to all the terms, conditions, and specifications of the RFP without material deviation or reservation.
- 6.6. A material deviation or reservation is one:
 - 6.6.1. Which limits in any substantial way, MMPRC's rights or the Bidder's obligations; or
 - 6.6.2. The rectification of which would affect unfairly the competitive position of other Bidders presenting responsive Bids.
- 6.7. If a Bid is not responsive and/or is incomplete, it will not be included for further consideration, and may not subsequently be made responsive by correction or withdrawal of the non-conforming deviation or reservation.
- 6.8. Bids determined to be responsive will be checked by MMPRC for any arithmetic errors.
- 6.9. Where there is a discrepancy between the amounts in figures and in words, the amount in words shall govern.
- 6.10. The discrepancy between the amounts in figures and in words will be adjusted by MMPRC with the concurrence of the Bidder, and shall be considered as binding upon the Bidder. If the Bidder does not accept the corrected amount, the Bidder's Bid shall be rejected.
- 6.11. Bids determined to be responsive, the arithmetic errors of which, if any, have been corrected, shall be evaluated and compared based on the Evaluation Criteria stated in this RFP.
- 6.12. Variations, alternative offers, and other factors that are in excess of the requirements of the stated in the RFP shall not be taken into account in the evaluation of the Bid.

7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Responsive Bids will be evaluated according to the following criteria;

- 7.1. Evaluated costs and effectiveness of the prospective contractor's budget. (40 marks)

A - Retainer Fee (30 marks)

- 7.1.1. **Price: A (Retainer Fee):** The Bid proposing the lowest "Retainer Fee" shall receive a maximum score of Thirty (30) marks, and points will be allocated to other Bids according to pro-rata basis.

B- Crisis Management Fee (10 marks)

- 7.1.2 **Price: B (Crisis Management Fee) (10 marks):** General crisis management should include daily media monitoring and proactive timely reporting in cases of concern within the current scope and retainer fee.

In the event of a major crisis which requires extensive hours of additional work, it can be invoiced separately with prior written approval from MMPRC. For major crises, the charge per hour should be stated clearly in the proposal.

7.2. **Demonstrated and documented familiarity with Maldives as a tourist destination. (15 marks)**

The Bidder/Respondent should include a report indicating their familiarity to Maldives. Report should highlight about Maldives as a tourist destination, USPs aspiring to the target, USA Market performance to Maldives and major tour operators selling Maldives. Marks will be given considering the above-mentioned points.

7.3. **Demonstrated and documented familiarity with the USA market. (15marks)**

The Bidder/Respondent should include a report documenting proof of extensive knowledge of USA and including outbound travel, USA and travel trade and media landscape, competitor analysis and economic outlook. Marks will be given considering the above-mentioned points.

7.4. **Financial Capability (15 marks)**

7.4.1 Each Bidder/Respondent should submit proof of financial capability by submitting one of the following documents. In case if urgent payments are required to be made, the selected party should be able to make the payment on behalf of MMPRC and MMPRC will reimburse the amount upon prior written approval.

- Bank reference letter. This letter should be in bank letterhead with authorized signature or bank stamp. The Bidder/Respondent should have a minimum of 20 percent of the quoted price in their bank account and this should be also stated in the reference letter. Letter should be translated if it is not in ENGLISH with authorized signature or stamp of the bank.

Or

- Last 3 months' bank statement on the bank letterhead with the authorised signature or the stamp. If the bank statement is in any other language, please provide a translation and the translation should have the seal or an authorised signature of the Bank. The Bidder/Respondent should have a minimum of 20 percent of the quoted price in their bank account.

7.4.2 The bidder should clearly mention in the proposal the bank account number to transfer the monthly payments.

7.5. **Company Profile (5 marks)**

Highest marks will be provided to the company who are working in the field of destination marketing and who represents similar destinations like the Maldives and presents the complete set of documents mentioned below.

7.5.1. Company Profile.

7.5.2. Tax registration certificate. In case if tax registration certificate is not available in bidder country, please provide an official document stating which type of tax registration is provided in the bidder country. If Certificates or documents are in any other language, English translation should be provided.

- 7.5.3. Company registration certificate. If Certificates are in any other language English translation should be provided.
- 7.5.4. Account Manager with 2 years' experience.
- 7.5.5. 1 registered office in the country.
- 7.6. **Past Experience (10 marks):** where supporting document have been provided to MMPRCs' satisfaction, points for experience with related works will be given as mentioned below. Following are the supporting documents that are required;
- Reference Letters or emails of similar recent projects of minimum 3 parties along with contact details. The letters or the emails should clearly mention the type of work undertaken for the clients. Marks will be awarded based on the work mentioned in the reference letters or emails and their relatedness to the scope of work mentioned in the RFP.
- 8. AWARD OF CONTRACT**
- 8.2. MMPRC will issue the Letter of Award to the Bidder whose Bid has been determined to be responsive, and has the highest score (the "Selected Bidder").
- 8.3. The Letter of Award will be issued to the Selected Bidder or posted to the Selected Bidder's address or a scanned version of the Letter of Award shall be sent via e-mail at the address given in the Bid and such handing or posting or e-mail shall be deemed good service of such a notice.
- 8.4. If the Selected Bidder fails to sign the Agreement within the Bid Validity Period (unless an alternate timeline is prescribed in the Letter of Award, in which case the Selected Bidder shall conform to the requirements in the Letter of Award), MMPRC shall have the right at its absolute discretion to select the Bid with the highest score among the remaining responsive Bidders, or annul the Bidding Process.
- 8.5. MMPRC reserves the right to annul the Bidding Process and reject all Bids, at any time prior to signing of the Agreement, without thereby incurring any liability to the Bidders, or any obligation to inform the Bidders of the grounds for MMPRC's action.

[END]

**APPENDIX 1
BID FORM**

Date:

The Managing Director,
Maldives Marketing and Public Relations Corporation
H. Zonaria, 2nd Floor, Boduthakurufaanu Magu, Male'
Republic of Maldives

Dear Sir,

Sub: Bid to hire an Agency to represent Maldives in USA for 1 year.

Having examined all the information provided, we the undersigned offer to represent Maldives in USA as per the requirements of the RFP (the "Works") as set out in this Bid.

We agree to undertake and complete the Work for a monthly retainer fee of USD (\$) (The 'Monthly Retainer Fee') inclusive of all applicable taxes including (Withholding Tax of 10%). A summary of the annual breakdown of the Contract Price is provided below;

Description	Tax (\$)	Total Price (\$)
Retainer Fee		
Major crisis management fee (per hour rate)		
Withholding Tax (10 %)		
Contract Price(\$)		

The details of the key personnel who shall undertake the Works are provided below;

Name	Qualification	Designation	Experience including number of years

Of the personnel mentioned in the table above, shall be the team leader, who shall oversee the Work and liaise with MMPRC on all matters related to the Work.

We undertake, if our Bid is accepted, to complete the Work within the proposed Delivery Period and as per the specifications provided by MMPRC. We have examined the RFP and have no reservations to the RFP Documents, including Addenda issued.

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We are not insolvent, in receivership, bankrupt or being wound up. Our affairs are not being administered by a court or a judicial officer and our business activities are not being suspended and not the subject of legal proceedings for any of the foregoing.

Until a formal agreement is executed with MMPRC, this Bid, together with written acceptance thereof and MMPRC's notification of award, shall constitute a binding contract if we are selected as the Successful Bidder.

Date this day of 2021.

(Signature)

Duly authorized to sign Bid for and on behalf of: _____ (Company/business's name)

APPENDIX 2
Scope of Work and Deliverables

1. Scope of Work

1. Work in close collaboration with MMPRC to achieve the strategic marketing objectives for the respective target market derived from the key global marketing objectives of the destination which are to

- a) Increase arrival to achieve the organizational strategic goal.
- b) Re-orient the perception of Maldives solely as a honeymoon, luxury destination.
- c) Increase the benefits of tourism to the community through greater emphasis on experiential tourism.
- d) Maintain tourism sustainability: Increase yield by stimulating balanced incremental growth that delivers the greatest economic impact through programs/activities that focus on;
 - o Sustaining growing visitor volume
 - o Increasing spending (through design of wholesome tourist experiences)
 - o Extending length of stay
 - o Increasing visit frequency and visitor retention
 - o Reducing the gap between seasonal highs and lows
 - o Encouraging travel to various atolls/regions

2. Assist MMPRC to utilise various marketing tactics in the target market to achieve the marketing strategies.

2.1 Promote Maldives as a premier luxury destination with various options to experience it.

- a) Promoting and maintaining the image of the Maldives around the globe as a premium luxury beach destination
- b) Promote the affordable options of Maldives..
- c) Promote Brand Maldives under one umbrella.
- d) Communicate various options to experience the Maldives under the unified umbrella of Brand Maldives which includes resorts, guesthouses and safaris.
- e) Communicate specific features of regional destinations including specific atolls and islands to include resorts and guesthouses.

2.2 Promote Maldives as a safe tourist destination

- a) Continue to promote the Maldives as one of the safest destinations in the world due to its geography;
- b) One-island-one-resort, guesthouse islands, safaris.
- c) Safety measures in place
- d) Control of infection rates (when that happens)

2.3 Promote the diverse experiences offered (not just a honeymoon destination)

- a) Promote diverse holiday experiences in Maldives under one umbrella. Focus on nature; preservation, beaches, reefs and other natural attractions such as mangroves.
- b) Communicate various experiences; nature, cuisine, culture, diving, beaches, MICE.
- c) Greater focus on various types of resorts; luxury, fun and adventure, family.

2.4 Build and establish image of the Maldives as a top of the mind destination in target markets

- a) Strategically target individual markets to raise awareness and raise the Maldives as the top of the mind destination. (measurable on Google search rankings etc.)
- b) Use of various communications tools and platforms to raise awareness in important markets through a more localized approach;

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- c) Greater use of local languages,
- d) Use of people from nationality in ads and PR programs both on conventional and digital media.
- e) Depictions on how the destination caters to tastes and preferences of specific nationalities.

2.5 Propose and assist in the development and expansion of effective social media platforms and programs for direct engagement, while maintaining effective offline presence.

- a) Continue the development of effective social media platforms developed during the pandemic, for direct communication and engagement with various stakeholders.
- b) Webinars
- c) Online press conferences
- d) Engagement directly with travel agents in various countries
- e) Achieve the perfect balance between offline and online activities as the opportunity for offline activities increase, with the easing of restrictions imposed due to Covid-19 around the world.

2.6 Promote strategic partnership with travel service providers.

- a) Identify effective partnerships with international travel and tourism stakeholders such as airlines and tour operators which serve the Maldives.
- b) Focused joint promotional activities with such stakeholders to boost arrivals from specific source markets and for specific time periods.
- c) Drive towards uniform marketing themes with local industry stakeholders.

2.7 Maintaining the perfect balance between B2C and B2B promotional campaigns and activities.

- a) Conduct scheduled online B2C destination specific and global campaigns throughout the year.
- b) Identify and organize effective offline B2C activities in various source markets.
- c) Localize B2C online and offline campaigns to suit the source market in which activities are conducted.

2.8 Building greater capacity in MMPRC to conduct effective localized campaigns with emphasis on conducting activities in the local language of the source markets.

- a) Creating the means to access language resources in the languages of the main source markets such as Chinese, Russian, German, Italian, Japanese, Arabic and French.

3. Monthly market report (to be submitted before the end of the first week of every month). The report format should consist of two parts,

- i. Market report: (consisting of market research/intelligence information and current economic and market trends as well as competitor activity analysis) and
- ii. Report and presentation of activities undertaken during the month such as:
 - a) Brief summary of the meeting held with stakeholders and their contact name email address, phone number and;
 - b) trade-related activities undertaken by the Agency on behalf of MMPRC, media clippings).
 - c) Metrics/ROI for each activity conducted and reach generated through PR influence

4. Plan, coordinate and execute a minimum of 3 group familiarisation trips (approximately 5 representatives in every group) and a stream of individual familiarisation trips (as agreed in initial roll-out plan) throughout the contract period of 12 months. That is, 2 group media fam trips, 1 group Travel agent fam trip and an agreed number of individual media/influencers/KOL/celebrity/blogger fam trips.

Representative of PR agency to join group familiarisation trips where necessary.

5. Production & distribution of bi-monthly (monthly?) Newsletter and press releases distributed to the media travel trade database. Database should include all major travel trade, mainstream news, travel trade and relevant tourism industry contacts.

6. Managing and updating a media and tour operator database for MMPRC. Databases should be shared with MMPRC at a mutually agreed date at the beginning of the contract and updated and shared every quarter. The database should be updated with all the information that is required by MMPRC. To share contact details of participants of events, sales calls, etc held during the contract periods.

7. PR Agency should monitor the media as part of regular monthly tasks, except for the cases where the PR Agency is requested to use a specialized monitoring firm by MMPRC in writing to carry out such monitoring outside the monthly scope of work. Media monitoring reports should identify PR generated articles (through news blasts/newsletters, familiarisation trips and other means) and other clippings of the destination generated in the market, their reach and media value. Monitoring reports should give an analysis of general topics of interest about the destination in the market, identify positive vs. negative articles and include professional advice on recommended actions to diffuse negative impact to the destination that may arise. This report should be shared with MMPRC within the first 10 days of each month.

Issues that need immediate addressing, especially that may cause negative rift to the destination image should be proactively addressed to MMPRC in a timely manner.

8. Attend, assist and **represent** Maldives in exhibitions/fairs in the target market, assist MMPRC to **arrange meetings and interviews** with travel professionals (tour ops/travel agents, airlines, hotel representatives, etc.) during travel trade fairs and **follow-up** on meetings conducted and other requests such as promotional material requests, etc.

In the event that MMPRC officials do not travel to the exhibition due to various reasons (such as restrictions to travel due to Covid-19 or due to any other unforeseen reason), PR should manage the stand and conduct activities throughout the exhibition on behalf of MMPRC.

No additional management costs should be charged to MMPRC. In the case of the event being held in a city other than the city where the agency office is located then MMPRC will bear the cost for food, lodging and transport. This cost should be pre-approved by MMPRC in writing.

Database of all contacts established during the event including Name of person, title, Agency, address, phone number and email addresses, should be shared with MMPRC along with the follow up report within 10 working days after the close event.

9. Organise and manage a minimum of one Roadshow in multiple cities OR a marketing event approved by MMPRC based on the annual marketing plan for the target market within the year.

All arrangements from planning to execution, including recommendation for potential cities, quotation options for various venues (venue hire, food and beverage, AV, etc.), rate negotiations, internal travel options for Maldives officials and industry participants (travel itinerary, booking trains/airline, negotiating special rates at host hotels, booking hotels, provision of database of top travel trade invitees in each respective city prior to the event and invitations management should be conducted by the Agency with written request from MMPRC.

No additional management costs should be charged to MMPRC. In the case of the event being held in a city other than the city where the agency office is located then MMPRC will bear the cost for food, lodging and transport. This cost should be pre-approved by MMPRC in writing. All costs related to hosting the Roadshow will be borne by MMPRC.

Agency should provide a confirmed list of attendees for the roadshow (by city) 2 weeks in advance of the date of the event, allowing Maldives industry partners lead time to pre-schedule meetings as required.

Database of all contacts established during the event including Name of person, title, Agency, address, phone number and email addresses, should be shared with MMPRC along with the follow up report within 10 working days after the close event.

A “Management Fee” can be applied to organise additional road shows or marketing events. This management fee will have to be pre-approved in writing by MMPRC.

10. Actively seek out opportunities in the market for promoting Maldives and advise MMPRC. Particular emphasis should be given to identifying traditional PR opportunities to generate positive PR for the destination through non-paid collaborations/barter arrangements and joint campaigns. Minimum of two such high impact campaigns should be carried out throughout the year within the retainer fee.

11. Liaise with stakeholders including tour operators (online and offline) and airlines to develop partnership opportunities and build relationships and handle trade inquiries through establishment of effective information service for the travel trade. The Agency should be able to answer questions and fulfil inquiries on all Maldives aspects. Trade inquiries will be fulfilled by distribution of digital information or fact sheets/brochures, product news/information, videos, photos, slides and other content.

Actively seek out and propose a minimum of 2 (two) opportunities with Airlines, at least 1 (one) for non-paid joint collaborations (e.g.: social media updates/campaigns, familiarisation trip support in return for exposure).

12. Assist MMPRC with Agency-know-how to establish and maintain close contact to all sectors of the travel trade industry such as tour operators, travel agencies, airlines, incentive and congress organisers, major commercial accounts and other potential organisations.

13. Maintain media relations and actively pitch to relevant media on a regular basis to generate positive coverage of the Maldives.

14. Suggest most appropriate media to be selected for destination promotion and purchase media slots on behalf of MMPRC (where advised) for Agent rates and coordination with MMPRC in executing the task. Assistance should be provided in the content development, specifically is required in the localised language. Messaging and creatives will be provided by MMPRC.

15. Propose roll-out campaign for the market for a period of one year in line with the marketing strategies, assist MMPRC through professional guidance to identify the most relevant tactical plan for the year and assist in executing the various activities (as advised and approved by MMPRC).

16. Serve as a **liaison office** in the target market between MMPRC/local tourism related companies and Respective travel trade and tourism industry at large of the target market.

Type of inquiries received, liaisons, and recommendations for efficiency and improvement should be specified in the reports.

17. Assignment of **dedicated telephone number and email address** for “Maldives” PR and travel trade inquiries. All communications should be via email address created within the visit Maldives domain provided by MMPRC.

18. Organise in-house or virtual presentations with the most important tour operators and incentive houses (minimum 4 group presentations per year) to increase Maldives awareness, push destination interest for sales and communicate the latest news updates with presentations.

If the situation allows, these meetings are to be organised at the respective tour operator offices. This allows reach to all key personnel of the agency in one session (average of 10/20 people).

19. **Sales calls & meetings with;**

- a) **tour operators** featuring the Maldives to push sales and include all product segments in the brochure
- b) other potential tour operators to encourage them to include the destination in their brochure and for more people to sell the Maldives

20. **Sales calls & meetings with scheduled airlines** and charter companies servicing the Maldives to develop partnership opportunities and mediate connection between MMPRC with potential airlines to start charter operations or schedule flights to Maldives (various regional airports).

21. **Postage of brochures** to travel trade contacts (tour ops, travel agents, airlines, etc.) This will have to be pre-approved and the list of posted brochures to be sent to MMPRC by email.

22. Conduct a **bi-annual review** / tour operator audit to relate the changing TO landscape, identify number of tour operators featuring the Maldives in their brochure and how PR intervention has led to increase in this number. This comprehensive study should feature the tour operators/product managers' full contact name and address, the content of the packages (number of room nights, category, prices, etc.) of the featured products (resorts/guest houses/liveaboards/hotels), connecting airlines against a clear picture of competitors featured and how Maldives can gain an edge.

23. Organisation of an annual media event independently or in conjunction with major events held in the target market. The purpose of this event is to provide news about the destination and to maintain a close relationship with the media. This should be proposed as a component of the annual campaign activities and approved by MMPRC. Costs for hosting the event will be borne by MMPRC.

24. Develop content plan, manage and run campaigns on visitmaldives dedicated social accounts in localized language to the target market throughout the year to achieve pre-set KPIs. Costs related to boosting and campaigns will be borne by MMPRC.

25. A management fee of not more than US\$ 1,200 per month can be charged by the Agency to promote the Maldives in all social media platforms in their respective language other than the social media platforms of MMPRC. This should include a minimum of 1 post daily and for boosting the social media handles in local language. The actual cost has to be pre-approved in writing with MMPRC.

26. **Measuring success:** Recommend and develop a "measure of success" for the annual PR and Trade plan.

27. **Monthly meetings** of all PR representatives with MMPRC in the Maldives on a pre-scheduled date by MMPRC as a web conference. The objective of the meeting would be for all PR representatives of the destination to meet and exchange views and to;

- i. Understand MMPRC's overall destination marketing directive,
- ii. Educate about the latest product information and new developments in the destination,
- iii. Share information about the individual market situations,
- iv. How to streamline work in spreading consistent PR message across the markets of focus

- v. Discuss on how to effectively address possible challenges in implementing most effective PR and trade strategy for the destination and
- vi. How to measure the return on investment
- vii. Present current issues and suggestion on how it can be solved

Respective PR Agency should present an overview of the respective market with latest information and suggested plan for Maldives together with justification as to why particular activities were chosen as well as suggestions on how to effectively measure ROI of each activity and current issues in the market with suggestions on how it can be solved.

2. Scope of work during a Crisis

The agency should pro-actively monitor and be the first to alert MMPRC on possible crisis situations which result in negative publicity to the destination. Timely action, professional advice on minimising the impact, formulation of action plan and implementation as advised by MMPRC should be included in crisis management.

General crisis management should include daily media monitoring, preparation of PR statements and proactive timely reporting in cases of concern within the current scope and retainer fee. In the event of a major incident the implementation of plan and extensive media monitoring work, reporting, communication with stakeholders, press formulation and distribution, etc can be invoiced separately with prior written approval from MMPRC.

For major crisis an hourly rate should be charged, and this has to be mentioned in the cost breakdown provided in the proposal.

3. Additional Information

3.1 The price quoted by the bidder should include all the aforementioned activities mentioned in the scope and general crisis management. MMPRC should not be borne to pay any additional charge.

3.2 The shortlisted parties shall make a presentation of 10 minutes with an additional 15 minutes for Q&A.

APPENDIX 3

CONTRACT PRICE & PAYMENT TERMS

1. Payment will be made by MMPRC in the manner set out below;
 - 1.1. In consideration of this Agreement, MMPRC will pay the Agency a monthly retainer fee US\$----- for PR and Trade activities during the period of agreement. Payment of Representation Fee shall be executed within 30 working days of Maldives Post Exchange of formal contract. In addition, MMPRC hereby agrees to compensate the Agency for other charges and expenses as agreed by both the parties.
 - 1.2. The contractor will be compensated for its services by MMPRC upon an agreed schedule of payments, including pre-approved/ out-of-pocket (marketing) expenses.
 - 1.3. Invoices will be paid on a monthly basis, following MMPRC's receipt and approval of the monthly status report and appropriate supporting documentation.
 - 1.4. Activities arranged during crisis must be invoiced separately with prior approval from MMPRC.
 - 1.5. Third Party Costs; Third Party Costs incurred on behalf of MMPRC shall be approved in writing by MMPRC in advance. The agency will provide an estimate and quotation so that payment can be provided to the Agency in advance of the date due to the third party. For the purpose of this clause, Third Party Costs may include, but not limited to venue rentals; outside staff hire (e.g. MCs, celebrities, models, dancers, photographers, videographers, translators, guides, hostesses, drivers, etc.); hardware production costs; audio-visual equipment rental; finished art; mechanical production; bulk printing; display materials; mail-drop services; itemised long distance phone calls; entertainment, travel and accommodation for the Agency's staff; outside supplier costs; photography; premiums; rights; talent; bulk photocopying; bulk notional or international postage or couriers; any and all services purchased from outside of the Agency; and any and all other components of the public relations program not included in the Services.
 - 1.6. Payment shall be in US Dollar/s with the mode of payment to be telegraphic transferred to designated bank account upon receiving the invoices.
 - 1.7. No Commission will be paid for the General Marketing and Promotional Expenses or for the handling charges.

APPENDIX 4
CHECK LIST

#	Description	Page Number	Remark (✓)
1	Budget Breakdown		
2	Crisis Management Fee in details		
3	Major crises charge per hour		
4	Demonstrated familiarity of Maldives as tourist destination		
5	Extensive knowledge of the USA Market		
6	Sound financial background		
7	Account Manager with a minimum 2 years' experience in destination PR demonstrated.		
8	Copy of Company Registration Certificate (If the Certificate is in any other language than ENGLISH, Bidder shall submit a translated copy of the Certificate)		
9	The bidder should have at least 1 registered office in the country		
10	Copy of Tax Registration Certificate (If the Certificate is in any other language than ENGLISH, Bidder shall submit a translated copy of the Certificate)		
11	Current knowledge and expertise in destination PR, such that selected Agency is able to give vital contribution to the process of designing and implementing a comprehensive strategic plan for the travel trade and media		
12	Demonstrated experience and ability to work within the community in the travel and tourism field and have necessary network contacts to initiate and implement this assignment.		

Please note that, the bidder should complete this check list and submit along with the proposal. Details of the points are highlighted in the RFP.

APPENDIX 5

1. Minimum Required Information

1.1. All the bidders shall include the following information in their proposals

1.1.1. **Demonstrated and documented familiarity with Maldives as a tourist destination**

- 1.1.1.1. A brief introduction of Maldives as a tourist destination
- 1.1.1.2. USP's
- 1.1.1.3. USA market performance to Maldives
- 1.1.1.4. Major Tour Operators selling Maldives
- 1.1.1.5. Others

1.1.2. **Demonstrated and documented familiarity with the USA market**

- 1.1.2.1. Outbound Travel
- 1.1.2.2. Travel Trade and Media Landscape
- 1.1.2.3. Competitor Analysis
- 1.1.2.4. Economic outlook
- 1.1.2.5. Others

1.1.3. **Financial Capability**

1.1.3.1. Each Bidder/Respondent should submit proof of financial capability by submitting;

- Bank reference letter. This letter should be in bank letterhead with authorized signature or bank stamp. The Bidder/Respondent should have a minimum of 20 percent of the quoted price in their bank account and this should be also stated in the reference letter. Letter should be translated if it is not in ENGLISH with authorized signature or stamp of the bank.

Or

- Last 3 months' bank statement on the bank letterhead with the authorised signature or the stamp. If the bank statement is in any other language, please provide a translation and the translation should have the seal or an authorised signature of the Bank. The Bidder/Respondent should have a minimum of 20 percent of the quoted price in their bank account
- The bidder should provide the bank account number to transfer the monthly payments.

1.1.4. **Company Profile**

Highest marks will be provided to the company who are working in the field of destination marketing and who represents similar destinations like the Maldives and presents the complete set of documents mentioned below.

1.1.4.1. Company Profile.

1.1.4.2. Tax registration certificate. In case if tax registration certificate is not available in bidder country, please provide an official document stating which type of tax registration is provided in the bidder country. If Certificates or documents are in any other language, English translation should be provided.

TO HIRE AN AGENCY TO REPRESENT MALDIVES IN USA FOR 1 YEAR

- 1.1.4.3. Company registration certificate. If Certificates are in any other language English translation should be provided.
 - 1.1.4.4. Account Manager with 2 years' experience.
 - 1.1.4.5. Registered office in the country.
- 1.1.5. Past Experience**
- 1.1.5.1. The Bidder/Respondent should provide proof of destination PR projects, other similar projects undertaken in the form of reference Letters or emails of similar past projects of minimum 3 parties along with contact details.