



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: PUBLIC RELATIONS

### General Scope

The Puerto Rico Destination Marketing Organization (DMO), Discover Puerto Rico 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 thru a robust, innovative, cutting edge and outstanding public relations strategy.

Puerto Rico has a unique competitive position in travel and tourism, due in part to its 526 years of rich heritage, remarkable attractions, stunning outdoor product, music, gastronomy and extraordinary people. Amidst an increasingly competitive global marketplace and challenging travel climate, growing the visitor economy of Puerto Rico is pivotal to the future success of the Island.

In spite of 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 three 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 the brand awareness of the destination in the mainland US, where roughly 95% of our visitors originate from.

### About Discover Puerto Rico

Discover Puerto Rico is a private, not-for-profit enterprise whose mission is to make Puerto Rico visible to the world as a premier travel destination. 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 collaboratively with key 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 a buzz and piquing the interest of media and influencers to cut through the cluttered media cycle and position Puerto Rico as the destination of choice for leisure and business travelers.

The selected firm will be responsible for supporting and amplifying all of Discover Puerto Rico's public relations, talent/influencer and earned media efforts as it relates to engaging in an "overarching" communications effort. The communications plan will be guided by the organization's key strategic objectives and should work in tandem with the local communications strategy.

Candidates must demonstrate a proven track record of strategic and effective travel and tourism-related public relations services across the U.S. as well as strong crisis management. Must understand the local idiosyncrasy, politics, key players and how they impact the DMO. Ideally, should have experience in the DE&I space, with a strong focus on African American, US Hispanic and LGBTQ+ markets. The public relations plan will recommend the most effective channels to reach the right people at the right time to inspire travel to Puerto Rico.

## 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 top media relations agency. The selected agency will provide strong strategy and insight development for initiatives that inform Discover Puerto Rico's overall earned media direction across communication channels.

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

### **Objectives**

- Position Discover Puerto Rico as a world-class tourism destination for leisure and business travelers.
- Ability to maintain, evolve and activate robust crisis management plans both on the ground in Puerto Rico and off-Island.
- Identify and develop 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.
- Develop outstanding brand awareness and publicity representing the entire Island (beyond San Juan and iconic tourism attractions) to build equity.
- Establish working relationships with influential media to elevate Puerto Rico as a destination.
- Develop relationships with high-profile celebrities for content creation and a destination ambassador 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 level of 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 (i.e. Gastronomy, LBGTQ+, etc.)
- Alignment with partners who share common objectives and can elevate awareness and desirability of Puerto Rico’s brand.
- Must stay abreast of local developments, paying special attention to politics, public affairs and the tourism industry, among several 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.
- Integration and collaboration with other agencies (creative, digital, traditional media, etc.) is required, including joint activations, shared plans, work collaboratively and find synergies to amplify the message.
- 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 10 pages excluding cover):

- 1) Brief company history.
- 2) Examples of successful crisis PR work (minimum of two case studies) demonstrating preparedness and management expertise.
- 3) Overview of process and methodology used for earned media strategy development.
- 4) Brief overview of assigned team, identifying roles and who will service 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 (for current and incremental budget allocations) as well as hourly billing method and rates.
- 7) Description of tactical process (for day-to-day earned media projects).
- 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.
- 10) Describe experience working with PR budgets \$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 on the basis of (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 July 1, 2022.

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: October 1, 2021.

Ten (10) hard copies of proposals must be delivered to the Discover Puerto Rico office by 5:00pm AST on Friday, November 5, 2021 (address below.) Additionally, an electronic copy must be submitted by 5:00pm AST on Friday November 5, 2021, delivered to [communications@discoverpuertorico.com](mailto:communications@discoverpuertorico.com)

Leah Chandler  
Chief Marketing Officer  
Discover Puerto Rico  
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Suite 402B  
San Juan, PR 00901, USA

Final agency selection will be completed before January 14, 2022.

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](mailto: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.