

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Consultant Services for Destination Marketing Accreditation Program Readiness and Preparation

Purpose

St. Louis Convention and Visitors Commission, dba Explore St. Louis (ESL), invites qualified consultants or agencies to submit a statement of qualifications and proposed services to assist in evaluating and preparing ESL for the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) offered by Destinations International. The selected consultant will guide a comprehensive readiness assessment, support the organization in addressing gaps, and lead the preparation and submission process.

Background

ESL serves as the official destination marketing organization (DMO) for the St. Louis region. We are committed to operating at the highest standards of professional excellence and accountability. Achieving DMAP accreditation will validate our commitment to industry best practices and enhance our credibility among stakeholders, partners, and visitors.

The DMAP accreditation requires meeting rigorous standards in governance, finance, sales, marketing, management, and community relations. To ensure successful accreditation, ESL seeks expert assistance to evaluate readiness, recommend improvements, and support the full application process.

Objectives

The selected consultant will:

- Conduct a comprehensive readiness assessment against DMAP standards.
- Identify gaps and recommend specific actions to achieve compliance.
- Assist in the development or refinement of necessary policies, procedures, and documentation.
- Support staff in compiling and organizing required materials for the accreditation application.
- Provide project management, advice, and coaching throughout the accreditation process.
- Provide additional support as needed.

The proposal should outline the scope of work with sufficient specificity in areas such as assessment, gap analysis and DMAP application/response.

Qualifications

Responses should demonstrate:

- Experience successfully leading DMOs through DMAP accreditation.
- Familiarity with Destinations International standards and processes.
- Deep understanding of destination marketing operations, governance, and best practices.
- Strong project management and consulting skills.
- A collaborative, coaching-oriented consulting approach.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.

Submission Requirements

Interested consultants should submit a proposal which clearly expresses relevant experience, familiarity with DMAP, summary of at least two similar projects (please include references), anticipated cost and bio/resume of key personnel assigned to the project. Submissions should be emailed to babler@explorestlouis.com in PDF format.

Timeline

- Release Date: May 5, 2025
- RFQ Submission Deadline: May 16, 2026
- Project Start: June 1, 2026

Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience and demonstrated success with DMAP or comparable accreditations (50%).
- Strength and relevance of project team (20%).
- Understanding of the scope and project approach (10%).
- References (20%)

Commitment to Equitable Business Practices

The St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission (Explore St. Louis) is committed to advancing equity and inclusion across all aspects of our operations. As part of this commitment, we actively encourage participation from businesses that are certified as Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs) and Women Business Enterprises (WBEs). Vendors submitting proposals are encouraged to identify their certification status and any subcontracting or partnership opportunities with MBE/WBE-certified firms. Certification as an MBE or WBE will be taken into consideration during the evaluation process as part of our broader goal to promote diverse economic participation and reflect the inclusive values of our region.