



SIERRA LEONE ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION PROJECT

**INTERNATIONAL AND LOCAL HIRE
CALL FOR PROPOSAL FOR CONSULTANCY FIRM
DIGITAL MARKETING AGENCY FOR THE SIERRA LEONE NATIONAL
TOURIST BOARD
NTB/PCU/DMASLNTB/001**

**ISSUANCE DATE
11TH APRIL 2022**

1. Background

Sierra Leone possesses pristine beaches and islands, mountains and rich biodiversity, interesting wildlife, friendliness and rich cultural capital among people and its special place in the world history of anti-slavery movement as ‘the land of the free.’ The Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has officially prioritized tourism in the Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019 -2023. The National Tourism Policy states the goal of tourism in Sierra Leone as to “generate foreign exchange, encourage even development, promote tourism-based rural enterprises, generate employment, accelerate rural-urban integration and foster socio-cultural unity among the various regions of the country through the promotion of domestic and international tourism.” (GoSL, 2017). Its National Ecotourism Policy states the goal of receiving 20,000 international and 30,000 domestic ecotourism visits to sites by 2025 (GoSL, 2017).

The World Bank is supporting an Economic Diversification Project, one of the components of which will take an integrated destination approach to improving the performance of Sierra Leone’s tourism sector. This will include facilitating the reduction of barriers to business success, assisting existing tourism providers with market access, and improving the quality of selected tourism products in order to place the country’s tourism sector on a sustainable and inclusive growth trajectory. This will be achieved through a mix of institutional, and policy reforms, market development and national re-branding as well as building B2B linkages and strategically developing tourism products in selected areas.

Sierra Leone is endowed with a rich wildlife biodiversity and is a home to approximately 2090 known higher plant species, 147 known species of mammals, 172 known breeding bird species, 67 known reptile species and 99 known species of fish. Sierra Leone is further a home to 15 identified species of primates, including the bushbaby, monkeys and chimpanzees (the largest primate in the country) with a wildlife population of more than 5500 across the country (according to the 2010 chimpanzee census). This constitutes the second largest population of the endangered subspecies of western chimpanzee, after Guinea, with the largest density in the Loma area (2.69 individuals per km²) and the Outamba – Kilimi National Park (1.21 individuals per km²).

The Government of Sierra Leone has recognized the need for securing the services of a digital marketing agency to raise the profile of the destination within its primary source markets and within the prioritized market segments within these target markets. The Sierra Leone National Tourism Board (NTB) secured Journey Tourism Consulting and Marketing and Acorn Tourism Consulting, Inc. to complete a National Marketing and Branding Strategy in 2021, which will be made available upon request. As part of the strategy a new website and blog content were developed. In the strategy, core source markets were identified in the Americas (USA and Canada, capitalizing on Sierra Leone diaspora, historical ties and networks); Europe (UK, Germany, Benelux France and Scandinavia). Currently, there is a low level of awareness of the country in these international markets and little marketing has been done.

As an emerging nature, adventure and cultural destination, Sierra Leone is poised to attract visitors from the United States of America (USA), Canada, the UK and Germany. These markets represent the majority of visitors who travel to the destination annually. Many visitor arrivals are diaspora travelling from the USA, Canada and the UK. NTB is now seeking to engage intrepid explorers, mature explorers, outdoor adventure and eco enthusiasts, SAVE travelers (Scientific, Academic, Volunteer and Education) and the diaspora from its primary source markets.

NTB is seeking to secure a digital marketing agency, with a results-orientation that can grow with the organization and destination over time, to develop and manage a multifaceted digital strategy developed aimed at helping to achieve the overall mandate of promoting destination Sierra Leone. The period of engagement is for one year but may be extended for one or more

ensuing years if the desired outcomes are achieved. NTB is also in the process of securing market representative agencies to represent Sierra Leone in the Americas, UK and Germany within its primary source markets year-round. In addition, NTB will continue to lead public relations and other marketing activities. Through this integrated approach, NTB is focused on maximizing resource efficiencies and effectiveness in promoting Sierra Leone as a preferred tourist destination in order to increase its market share in the global tourism sector.

II. Objective of the assignment

The objective of securing a digital marketing agency is to build brand and destination awareness and market demand through constant and increasing online engagement with NTB's current audience and with its market segments within its primary source markets as measured by an increase in key digital marketing metrics and an increase in visitors to Sierra Leone.

III. Scope of Work

1. Social Media Management

The agency will be responsible for managing all official destination social media handles and profiles with an emphasis on Facebook and Instagram and on online reputation management on TripAdvisor and Google. This includes developing and posting engaging NTB-vetted content at least once per day per channel that meets the requirements of each individual channel, filtering of user comments, and providing timely responses. All posts on the destination's social media handles should reflect current events and activities in Sierra Leone. The agency will also be responsible for securing new video and photography content and repurposing existing videos and photographs into suitable formats.

2. Innovative Digital Marketing Campaigns

The agency will be responsible for using Sierra Leone's newly created tourism marketing brand to implement innovative and creative digital marketing campaigns. This includes evolving and maintaining a consistent brand voice and designing, implementing, managing and evaluating innovative digital marketing campaigns that are designed to promote Sierra Leone to its prioritized market segments within its primary source markets. This will include the development and implementation of a social media influencer campaign and FAM trip and will involve identifying and securing suitable social media travel influencers to raise the profile of Sierra Leone by creating content via blogs, vlogs, imagery, videos, etc. Campaigns will also be developed to cater to our main target audiences (holistically or individually) based in the type of campaign. Demographically, this includes international travellers that are looking for the experiences Sierra Leone offers, diaspora travellers and domestic travellers.

3. Content Marketing

The agency will be responsible for creating and updating content for the destination website (<https://ntb.gov.sl/tourism/>) with support and involvement from the NTB team. The agency will also be responsible for creating content for third-party websites including, for example, TripAdvisor, WikiTravel and Wikipedia. Additional responsibilities include but may not be limited to creating new website copy and pages, blogs, feature articles, advertorials, social media posts/content, product descriptions, case studies, pay-per-click advertising, email copy, and sourcing of videos and images for all of the above.

4. Email Marketing

The agency will be responsible for creating a bi-monthly B2C and a B2B newsletter (six times annually), distributing it through NTB's email server, and building an email marketing list of trade, media and consumers that have an interest in and affinity for Sierra Leone.

5. Online Reputation Management

The agency will be responsible for responding to queries within 24 hours as per pre-defined response or escalation levels. The agency shall also be responsible for removal of non-relevant or offensive posts/information from all social media handles.

6. Data Analytics and Analysis

The agency will be responsible for collecting, monitoring and leveraging web analytics and social media analytics to improvise web and social media presence and optimize the effectiveness of campaigns and resource efficiencies related to the campaigns. Additionally, the agency will provide analytics and analysis to the NTB as and when required, including through monthly KPI reports. NTB will provide a template.

7. Capacity Building

The agency will be responsible for building the capacity of the NTB marketing department to successfully implement social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, and digital marketing campaigns and strategies and stay attuned to best practice, tools that support implementation and evaluation of digital marketing, and changing trends. This will be facilitated through online webinars, in-person workshops when in country, and ongoing mentorship.

IV. Deliverables

An example of the deliverables schedule is as follows. The schedule will be converted into a detailed strategic action plan and a related work plan based upon a results-oriented approach and pre-identified priorities identified between the market representative firm and NTB.

MONTH	TASKS
April 2022	- Complete a detailed strategic action plan for digital marketing, related work plan, and implementation schedule
April 2022 – March 2023	- Implementation of social media marketing, content marketing, email marketing, and digital marketing campaigns and strategies; monthly reporting of KPIs; and revision to strategies and tactics as required
March 2023	- Final report on metrics and lessons learned

V. Reporting

The agency will report to the General Manager of NTB. NTB will liaise with the selected agency on an ongoing basis and meet at least once a month to track performance and discuss progress on the tasks assigned and work through any issues that are faced by the agency. NTB will provide information to the agency as needed including introductions and referrals to key stakeholders. NTB will also advise the selected firms on new developments in Sierra Leone tourism related to new or enhanced product, inbound trade developments, local news, upcoming shows/events, etc. NTB will monitor the agency's work output through the monthly reports. The agency will be responsible for preparing monthly reports on the work plan, KPIs, and tasks that are assigned by NTB and sharing this by the 5th of each month with NTB. Monthly reports must be submitted to the Marketing Manager of NTB and carbon copied to the General Manager of NTB who will review monthly reports and assess any recommendations put forward by the agency. Reports will also be submitted to the NTB Board of Members and the Director of Tourism for the attention of the Minister of Tourism for their feedback and assessments. The agency's performance will be assessed against the following core criteria:

- The agency's ability to lead the body of work and efficiently and effectively prioritise activities and manage the budgeted resources with the NTB's support as needed
- The design and execution of digital marketing activities and strategies geared towards NTB's core source markets and pre-identified market segments
- The ability to tangibly increase digital engagement rates, social media following and online activity around Sierra Leone tourism. awareness, demand and visitation to Sierra Leone as measured by increases in arrivals from primary source markets

At the end of the contract, the agency will prepare a full report on the tasks completed inclusive of performance measurements, positive outcomes, key challenges, and recommendations for improvement.

VI. Criteria for selection

Minimum Requirements

Minimum requirements of the technical and financial proposal include the following in a maximum of 10 pages excluding appendices:

1. Description of the agency's proposed approach and tactical process to learning about and becoming familiar with Sierra Leone's tourism product and executing digital marketing day-to-day activities and strategies for Sierra Leone targeting trade, consumers and the media in its primary source markets.
2. An overview of the dedicated account team including brief bios, tourism-specific experience as applicable, and the involvement of any local counterparts in Sierra Leone.
3. Current client list and three references including length of engagement. Experience working in comparable emerging destinations similar with Sierra Leone's situation is desired.
4. Describe experience working with relatively small digital media budgets that will grow over time based on performance.
5. A maximum of two case studies featuring relevant assignments and the resultant outcomes.
6. Campaign samples relevant to this assignment (creative samples can be an appendix to the max 10-page proposal).
7. A clear list of proposed monthly and year long KPIs and suggested targets.

Selection Criteria

An agency will be short-listed and 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 the digital marketing activities and strategies.
2. Successful digital strategies with tourism companies and other comparable destinations.
3. Demonstrated ability to develop and execute effective digital advertising campaigns.
4. The quality and clarity of response, demonstrating the agency's ability to communicate clearly and creatively.
5. The prioritized digital marketing activities and financial budget proposed, which will be finalized in the negotiation phase prior to contracting.

If selected as a finalist, the agency may be asked to meet virtually to present or interview with the selection committee.

Mode of Application

Interested Firms must provide specific information which demonstrates that they are fully qualified to provide the services.

All Proposals should be submitted via email or in writing and addressed to:

The Head of Procurement

Project Fiduciary Management Unit

Ministry of Finance

13a Howe Street Freetown

Tel: +23276672186

or

By E-mail application as attachment (including all supporting documents) to: info@sledp.gov.sl copy osmantommy@sledp.info

Please indicate clearly on the envelop (in the case of hard copy application) or in the email subject heading and attachment (in the case of electronic proposal) the post for which application is made.

Closing Date:

The Closing Date and time for receipt of applications is **25th April 2022**.