



**BRAND  
USA**

**Brand USA**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**Contracted Senior Meeting Planner Services**

**June 9, 2026**

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

## Contracted Senior Meeting Planner Services

*Primary Focus: Canada Connect 2026 | Additional Brand USA Events As Assigned | Issued June 2026*

### OVERVIEW

<b>Issuing Organization</b>	Brand USA
<b>Event Name</b>	Canada Connect 2026
<b>Event Dates</b>	October 26–29, 2026 (with departure October 30)
<b>Event Cities</b>	Toronto, ON → Montreal, QC
<b>Toronto Venue</b>	One King West Hotel & Residence, Toronto
<b>Montreal Venue</b>	Fairmont Queen Elizabeth, Montreal
<b>Contract Period</b>	Mid-June 2026 through Mid-November 2026 (with potential for additional event support)
<b>RFP Issued</b>	June 2026

### BACKGROUND & STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, responsible for promoting the United States as a premier travel destination to international visitors. Canada Connect is Brand USA's flagship B2B and media event in Canada, bringing together U.S. travel exhibitors, Canadian trade partners, media, and industry stakeholders across a multi-day format in Toronto and Montreal.

This RFP seeks a highly experienced contracted Senior Meeting Planner to serve as the operational lead for Canada Connect 2026, with the capacity to support additional Brand USA events as needed throughout the engagement period. This role carries significant strategic weight: flawless physical execution is central to rebuilding and strengthening corporate trust with exhibitors, trade partners, and internal stakeholders.

While Canada Connect 2026 represents the primary deliverable of this engagement, Brand USA may call upon the contracted planner to contribute to other domestic or international events in a support or advisory capacity. The scope and compensation for any additional event assignments will be mutually agreed upon at the time of request.

### EVENT OVERVIEW & SCHEDULE

Canada Connect 2026 spans five days across two cities. The Trade/PR Track is contracted at One King West Hotel, Toronto and Fairmont Queen Elizabeth, Montreal. A CEO Track runs concurrently in Toronto on October 27; venue sourcing for the CEO Track is part of this engagement's scope.

Date & Location	Program Elements
<b>Mon, Oct 26 – Toronto</b>	Exhibitor arrival. Market insights panel & discussion (65 pax). Welcome reception & dinner (65 pax).
<b>Tue, Oct 27 – Toronto</b>	B2B trade meetings: 45 tabletops, 65 exhibitor delegates, 45 trade delegates. Evening reception at hotel (120 pax). CEO Track: afternoon roundtable/presentations (30 pax); off-site dinner (30 pax).
<b>Wed, Oct 28 – Toronto</b>	All-day media meetings in partnership with Discover America Canada (40 PR exhibitors, 40 media). Evening: travel to Montreal.
<b>Thu, Oct 29 – Montreal</b>	Quebec agent engagement: 40 exhibitors, 40 travel agents. Evening networking reception (80 pax).
<b>Fri, Oct 30</b>	Recommended departure from Montreal.

## SCOPE OF WORK

### Core Mandate

The Senior Meeting Planner will serve as the single point of accountability for all operational and logistical aspects of Canada Connect 2026, with availability to support additional Brand USA events as directed. Key areas of ownership include:

- Master event timeline development and ongoing management through event close
- Communication calendars for all internal and external stakeholders
- Complex AV/production design, specification, and on-site management
- Venue contract negotiations, amendments, and BEO review and approval
- Budget stewardship: tracking, reconciliation, and variance reporting
- Day-of operations leadership across Toronto and Montreal programs
- Post-event reconciliation and final budget close-out (through mid-November 2026)

### Hotel & Venue Management

- Serve as primary liaison One King West Hotel, Toronto and Fairmont Queen Elizabeth, Montreal, and CEO Track venue (TBD)
- Review, negotiate, and approve all Banquet Event Orders (BEOs)
- Manage room blocks, meeting space assignments, and F&B minimums
- Coordinate rooming lists, VIP accommodations, and exhibitor room pickups
- Manage attrition and cancellation exposure

### AV & Production

- Design and specify AV/production requirements for all general sessions, receptions, and B2B meeting environments
- Issue AV RFP and manage vendor selection in coordination with Brand USA
- On-site AV supervision and troubleshooting throughout both cities
- Coordinate staging, signage placement, and production rundowns

### **Branding & Marketing Coordination**

- Partner with Brand USA Marketing team to identify and execute branding opportunities throughout the event (signage, digital, environmental, collateral)
- Ensure all produced materials adhere to Brand USA brand standards
- Coordinate branding deliverables and deadlines with external vendors

### **Agency & DMC Coordination**

- Work closely with Brand USA's SVP of Global Trade and VP of Global Trade, who serve as the primary organizational leads for in-market agency and DMC relationships
- Interact regularly with in-market agencies and DMCs in Toronto and Montreal to coordinate logistics, review deliverables, and ensure alignment with event timelines and standards
- Provide the SVP and VP with timely updates, flag issues, and support decision-making on agency-related matters
- Review agency deliverables for accuracy, brand consistency, and operational feasibility

### **Stakeholder Communication**

- Consult with internal Brand USA department heads (PR, Trade, Marketing, Executive) to align operational plans with program objectives
- Produce and distribute exhibitor communications, FAQs, and logistics guides
- Manage the exhibitor and delegate experience from pre-arrival through departure

### **CEO Track — Venue Sourcing & Execution**

The CEO Track is a separate, senior-level program running concurrently with the Trade/PR Track in Toronto on October 27. The contracted planner will own end-to-end logistics for this track, including:

- Source and evaluate venue options for the CEO Track afternoon program (roundtable discussions and presentations for approximately 30-40 attendees)
- Source and secure an off-site dinner venue for approximately 30-40 guests on the evening of October 27
- Present venue recommendations and options to Brand USA Senior Leadership Team (SLT) for approval
- Collaborate with Brand USA SLT on agenda development, run-of-show, and program flow for the CEO Track
- Manage all BEO review, negotiation, and approval with the selected CEO Track venue(s)
- Specify and oversee AV/production requirements for the CEO Track program, including any presentation or facilitation support needs
- Coordinate F&B, room setup, and staffing for both the afternoon program and evening dinner
- Ensure seamless coordination between the CEO Track and the concurrent Trade/PR program

### **ADDITIONAL BRAND USA EVENT SUPPORT**

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Beyond Canada Connect 2026, Brand USA operates a portfolio of international trade and media events throughout the year. The contracted planner may be engaged to provide support across other Brand USA events during the contract period on an as-needed basis. Examples of potential engagements include:

- Advisory or consultative support for event planning teams on other Brand USA programs
- Vendor sourcing, RFP issuance, or contract review for events in planning stages
- On-site support at select Brand USA events where additional senior-level operational capacity is required

- Cross-event process documentation and best practices capture

Any additional event assignments will be scoped separately and will not detract from the planner's primary commitment to Canada Connect 2026. Respondents should indicate in their proposal their general availability and interest in supporting a broader Brand USA events portfolio. The position reports to the SVP Global Markets.

## QUALIFICATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

- 10+ years of progressive meeting planning and event management experience, with demonstrated expertise in multi-city, multi-track events
- Proven experience managing hotel contracts, BEO negotiations, and complex AV/production environments
- Proficiency with Cvent or similar event management software (attendee management, event websites, reporting)
- Proficiency with Wrike or comparable project management software
- Exceptional communication and presentation skills; comfort interfacing with C-suite and senior stakeholders
- Meticulous proofreading and documentation skills
- Experience working with in-market DMCs and third-party vendors
- Comfort and familiarity with AI platforms to streamline workflow
- CMP, CMM, or equivalent work experience preferred

## KEY DELIVERABLES

Deliverable	Target Date	Notes
Onboarding & initial vendor review	Early July 2026	Review existing contracts, supplier status
Master timeline & communication calendar	Mid-July 2026	Shared in Wrike or equivalent
AV/production specification & RFP	Late July 2026	
BEO review cycle begins	August 2026	Ongoing through event
Exhibitor logistics guide (v1)	August 2026	
Budget reconciliation report	September 2026	
On-site event execution	Oct 26–29, 2026	Toronto + Montreal
Post-event debrief document	November 2026	
Final budget close & reconciliation	Mid-December 2026	Project ends

## CONTRACT TERMS

- Engagement Type: Independent Contractor / Consulting Agreement
- Contract Period: July 2026 through Mid-December 2026 (5-6 months)

- Compensation: Please provide a proposed fee structure for Canada Connect 2026 as the primary engagement (flat project fee preferred; hourly rate with estimated hours also acceptable). Please also include a proposed rate or mechanism for any additional Brand USA event support beyond the primary scope.
- Travel & Expenses: Reasonable pre-approved travel and out-of-pocket expenses reimbursed per Brand USA T&E policy
- On-site Presence: Required in Toronto (Oct 26–28) and Montreal (Oct 29)

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following weighted criteria:

Criteria	Weight	What We're Looking For
Event Management Experience	<b>35%</b>	Multi-city, multi-track events; hotel/venue management; budget stewardship; Canadian market familiarity
AV / Production Experience	<b>25%</b>	Complex AV design and specification; on-site production management; staging and signage coordination
Systems Proficiency	<b>15%</b>	Cvent (attendee management, event websites); Wrike or comparable project management software
Fee / Value	<b>15%</b>	Competitiveness of proposed fee relative to scope; clarity of fee structure and assumptions
C-Suite / Executive Interaction	<b>10%</b>	Demonstrated experience

		working with and presenting to senior leadership and executive stakeholders
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	

## HOW TO RESPOND

We've kept this process intentionally streamlined. Please submit the following:

- Resume or professional biography highlighting relevant meeting planning experience
- One or two examples of comparable events you've managed (brief descriptions are fine)
- Two references from recent clients or colleagues
- Proposed fee structure for the Canada Connect 2026 engagement, including your preferred approach for any additional Brand USA event support

Brand USA anticipates a brief, conversational selection process. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an introductory call rather than asked to submit additional written materials.

## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

<b>Submission Deadline</b>	June 23, 2026 — to be confirmed upon RFP distribution
<b>Submit To</b>	RFPadmin@thebrandusa.com
<b>Subject Line</b>	Canada Connect RFP — [Your Name / Company]
<b>Format</b>	PDF preferred; Word acceptable
<b>Questions</b>	Submit written questions to RFPadmin@thebrandusa.com by June 17, 2026
<b>Award Date</b>	June 30, 2026

*Thank you for your interest in supporting Brand USA and Canada Connect 2026.*