



**Global Communications & PR Firm  
RFP Q&A**

- **Would the selected firm be responsible for securing press in international media markets? If so, are there priority markets?**
  - No. The firm will coordinate messaging for international markets and assist Brand USA as conditions evolve. If the firm has existing media relationships, that is a plus, but not a requirement. The firm will collaborate with Brand USA's network of 16 international agencies across five continents.
- **Would the selected firm be responsible for managing the network of global agencies?**
  - No. Brand USA's headquarters team manages the agency network. However, the firm may have touchpoints with international offices for messaging, press event support, major campaign launches, and activations.
- **What does success look like after a year-long engagement?**
  - Success includes a cohesive and relevant messaging calendar, stronger storytelling that enhances Brand USA's value to the U.S. travel industry and its partners, and expanded positive media coverage. It also means protecting the USA's image and amplifying positive storytelling while building relationships with influential domestic media whose coverage reaches key international markets.
- **Has Brand USA conducted recent research that a firm could leverage to craft messages that resonate with target audiences?**
  - Yes. Brand USA's in-house research team leads this effort in collaboration with key vendors. Research and insights will play a key role in storytelling.
- **Scope: Could you clarify the expected geographical coverage for the international media relations efforts? Are there specific markets or regions prioritized beyond the U.S., or is this truly global in scope? Additionally, could**

**you share any upcoming PR campaigns, events, or key moments that should be leveraged in the PR strategy?**

- The firm will act as an extension of Brand USA's headquarters team, unifying messaging and creating new earned media opportunities to elevate the USA and Brand USA globally. Brand USA has an existing network of 16 international agencies across five continents handling day-to-day PR. This firm will support high-level PR planning to strengthen the global PR network's work. As Brand USA evolves, the firm will help publicize new initiatives, marketing campaigns, and trade efforts. A key focus will be leveraging major upcoming events in 2026 and the broader "decade of sports" messaging. The firm will also support thought leadership opportunities in the U.S. and create earned media moments that illustrate Brand USA's value to its industry partners, from DMOs to small businesses.
  
- **Budget Allocation: Should we assume the \$500,000 annual budget includes all out-of-pocket costs (e.g., travel, event support, influencer activations), or is there potential for additional project-based budgets beyond this retainer?**
  - Yes, the \$500,000 budget includes the retainer and all out-of-pocket expenses. There may be additional budget allocated for major one-off PR activations in the future, depending on the organization's needs.
  
- **KPIs & Success Metrics: Can you provide more detail on the key performance indicators Brand USA typically uses to measure the success of its PR and communications initiatives? Are there historical benchmarks we should be aware of?**
  - Success is measured by the ability to generate positive stories about the USA and Brand USA, ensuring a favorable tone in media coverage across both consumer and corporate outlets.
  - A significant PR win would ensure the USA stands out as a premier travel destination in an increasingly competitive global market. The ultimate goal is to maintain the USA's status as the world's most aspirational travel destination.
  
- **Major Events Focus: For the listed major events (America 250, FIFA World Cup, Olympic Games), does Brand USA expect this agency to lead the full event PR strategy and execution, or will we be supporting pre-established event teams and partners?**

- The firm will support pre-established event teams and partners rather than lead full event PR execution.
  
- **Influencer Engagement Strategy: Could you elaborate on the scope of influencer engagement? Are you seeking full campaign management (including identification, contracting, content development, and reporting), or is this more of a strategic advisory role to complement in-house efforts?**
  - This will primarily be a strategic advisory role to complement in-house efforts. The firm may also be asked to develop new templates and frameworks for engaging social media influencers and content creators from an earned media perspective.
  
- **Issues Management Expectations: In the context of “real-time” issues management, will the agency be expected to handle crisis communications independently, or in collaboration with Brand USA’s internal teams and legal counsel?**
  - The firm will work in collaboration with Brand USA’s internal teams in an advisory capacity.
  
- **Thought Leadership: Do you expect the agency to secure speaking opportunities exclusively for Brand USA leadership, or would this extend to key partners and stakeholders as well? Additionally, which recent thought leadership initiatives have been most impactful in your opinion?**
  - Brand USA is open to opportunities but securing speaking engagements is just a small part of the overall role. Any relevant opportunities will be welcomed.
  
- **Staffing: While you’ve requested two full-time staff (VP and Account Director), would Brand USA be open to a more flexible staffing model, such as leveraging senior or specialized resources (e.g., issues management experts) on an as-needed basis? Additionally, who will the U.S.-based agency report into within Brand USA?**
  - The U.S.-based agency will report to Chris Heywood, Chief Communications Officer. Brand USA is open to a flexible staffing model but requires two full-time staff members as outlined in the RFP.

- **Submission Format: Given the five-page proposal limit, may we include supporting documents (e.g., resumes, case studies, budget) as annexes that do not count toward the page limit?**
  - Yes. The proposal should include five pages of strategy, with up to five additional pages for ancillary documents.
- **Monitoring Tools: What tools is Brand USA currently using to monitor social and traditional media conversations about visiting the United States?**
  - Brand USA uses Meltwater for both media tracking and database management.
- **Reputation Management: Has Brand USA conducted any scenario planning or made predictions regarding potential image challenges stemming from the current political landscape, particularly from specific source markets?**
  - Brand USA is actively tracking consumer sentiment and adjusting strategies as needed. The organization has a diversified global reach, with priority markets including, but not limited to, Canada, Mexico, the UK, India, Germany, and France.
- **Public Affairs: Are you seeking public affairs executives on the ground in key markets where you already have in-market PR agencies? How would this role differ from that of the local PR teams at events?**
  - Public affairs is a separate function, but the firm may need to coordinate across departments as needed.
- **Past PR Campaigns: What are examples of successful out-of-the-box PR campaigns Brand USA has conducted in recent years?**
  - Brand USA has focused on highlighting the wealth of new travel products across the U.S., as well as major upcoming events in 2026 and beyond. The organization is working to elevate messaging around luxury travel while also showcasing the value and affordability of the USA due to currency shifts.