

May 21, 2025

Request for Proposals: Strategic Planning

Summary of this request:

Travel Portland, the official Destination Marketing and Management Organization for Portland, Oregon, seeks a consultant to research and recommend a strategic vision and framework for the practice of Destination Stewardship by Travel Portland.

The contract period is intended to run from July to October 31st, 2025.

Confidentiality:

All information concerning this RFP, including any related information that is subsequently disclosed by Travel Portland during the bid and proposal process, is Travel Portland's confidential information. Interested firms will not disclose such information or use it for any purpose other than responding to this RFP without Travel Portland's prior written consent, except as required by law. Travel Portland will not disclose any non-public information in responses submitted by interested firms to this RFP, provided that such information is identified as non-public and confidential in the response. Submission of a proposal constitutes acceptance of these terms.

Not Binding:

Except for the confidentiality obligations described above, this RFP is a solicitation of bids only and neither the issuance of this RFP nor the submission of a responsive proposal shall be binding on Travel Portland. Travel Portland reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or to cancel, withdraw or amend this RFP for any reason or no reason. No binding agreement shall exist with respect to the provision of services unless and until a definitive agreement has been agreed and executed by both Travel Portland and the selected bidder. Travel Portland will not be liable under any circumstances for any expenses incurred by any bidder in connection with the RFP proposal submission or selection process.

Background:

Across Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO's) in the U.S., there is much variation in how the concept of "Destination Stewardship" is interpreted and applied. Travel Portland leadership recognizes that Destination Stewardship is important to the broader mission of the organization, but a clear vision is needed for what the practice of Destination Stewardship entails for Travel Portland in 2025 and beyond. Clearly defined and understood Destination Stewardship strategies are critical for the

foreseeable future to ensure Travel Portland engages effectively in Portland's ongoing reimagining and revitalization and that resident, visitor and industry priorities are balanced as the destination evolves.

Currently, Destination Stewardship at Travel Portland includes a set of somewhat discrete yet partially overlapping scopes, programs and projects that could better leverage each other, internal teams and external partners to support organizational pillars in the service of the organization's broader mission. The goal of this project is to establish a framework for defining Travel Portland's vision for the practice of Destination Stewardship and recommending objectives and tactics to inform a body of work for the Destination, Industry and Public Affairs team.

Objectives:

The goal of this project is to create a unified Destination Stewardship framework that serves Travel Portland's broader mission through clear alignment with organizational pillars, strengthened connections across Travel Portland teams, measurable outcomes to communicate Travel Portland's contributions in this space and strategic coordination with industry and destination partners to maximize outcomes.

The project will develop a vision and strategic framework to delineate and clarify Travel Portland's Destination Stewardship scope of work for a defined timeframe. Defining a vision and articulating a strategic framework for Destination Stewardship will strengthen the organization's ability to deliver on its mission by:

- defining stewardship goals, objectives and metrics
- aligning them with Travel Portland's organizational pillars
- strengthening connections and coordination across Travel Portland teams, and
- facilitating strategic engagements and consistent messaging with industry and destination partners in support of Travel Portland's mission.

The strategy for achieving the project's goal is to undergo a visioning and strategic planning process with the assistance of a consultant. The process will include:

- examination and analysis of current systems, resources, tools, inputs and outputs
- identification of comparable peer models and replicable examples
- goal-setting and identification of concrete, achievable objectives tied to timeframes
- assessment of resources needed to achieve defined objectives, and
- clear metrics to be applied in Travel Portland's practice of Destination Stewardship going forward.

Key Consultant Competencies:

Travel Portland is seeking an experienced Strategic Planning Consultancy with the following competencies:

- **Destination Knowledge:** A baseline knowledge and understanding of Portland's characteristics and recent performance and challenges as a destination for leisure and business travel or demonstration of how the consultancy will gain on-the-ground knowledge of challenges, successes and developments.
- **Industry Knowledge:** Extensive knowledge of national and regional tourism industry practices and trends in destination marketing and management. Experience with destination stewardship concepts and practices as well as prior experience working with destination marketing and/or management organizations is preferred.
- **Research Capabilities:** Access to national industry networks and other quantitative and qualitative information resources for identifying peer models and developing case studies to inform recommended actions.
- **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** is a key pillar in how Travel Portland approaches its work and we look for similar intention in our vendors and agency partners. Please address the role EDI plays in your consultancy, staffing and approach to strategic planning.
- **Strategic Planning:** Knowledge of methods for organizing teams and scopes of work, aligning resources and structuring long-term work plans to achieve organizational objectives.
- Track record of creating successful strategic plans for private, non-profit organizations is preferred.

Travel Portland - Who We Are and What We Do

Travel Portland is the official destination marketing and management organization for the city of Portland, Oregon. Its mission is to strengthen the local economy by marketing and promoting the Portland metropolitan area as a preferred destination for meetings, conventions and leisure travel. Travel Portland is committed to telling stories that communicate the city's authenticity, diversity and overall positioning as a desirable visitor destination.

How to respond and next steps:

Interested firms should submit:

- a staffing plan
- an overview of the project team's knowledge and experience that directly relates to each of the competencies described above

- a description of the intended methodology
- a proposed project scope and timeline for the 6-month contract period
- relevant case studies involving members included in the staffing plan
- a proposed budget with a total not to exceed \$40,000.00
- billing preferences and other contractual issues

Please submit responses electronically to DIPA@travelportland.com by **June 4th, 2025**.

Travel Portland will schedule virtual interviews with selected consultant teams after reviewing submitted materials, ideally before **June 18th, 2025**.

The target start date for the project is **July 1, 2025**.

For inquiries and clarifications, please contact:

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Inquiries and their associated responses will be shared with other submitting firms for clarification and transparency.