



**Destination Ready Program:
March – September 2021**

**Request for Qualifications:
January 14 – February 9, 2021**

ABOUT TRAVEL OREGON

The Oregon Tourism Commission (OTC), dba Travel Oregon, is a semi-independent agency that serves as the state's destination management organization. Travel Oregon is focused on building strong, stable communities that welcome a diversity of explorers. A nine-member, governor-appointed commission oversees the work of the agency approving the budget and strategic plan. The OTC strives to create a better life for all Oregonians through product and community development, destination sales and marketing, regional investments and matching grants that strengthen the economic impact of the state's multi-billion tourism industry that employs tens of thousands of Oregonians.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Travel Oregon is seeking contracted content experts and/or project implementors to support portions of the Destination Ready program that will be delivered March-September. The purpose for sharing this RFQ is to solicit contractors interested in working with Travel Oregon on one or more of the below areas of support needed. To align with Travel Oregon's diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, we strongly encourage minority and women-owned businesses to submit responses to this RFQ.

Please note that because the programming process includes an application intake and review period, Travel Oregon will not have confirmed focus areas and projects until mid-February. This document outlines *possible* work that *may* result from the Destination Ready program. If destination work aligns with a contractor's experience and skills, Travel Oregon will reach out to discuss further details of the work. If a specific body of work does not surface as a focus area for any destination, there will not be a contractor need related to that work at this time. However, Travel Oregon plans to save RFQ responses and material; and as support needs arise, there is potential for future work. If a contractor would *not* like to be considered for future work, please make note of that when submitting materials.

CONTRACTOR ROLES

Travel Oregon is specifically seeking content experts and/or project implementors with experience developing or supporting the creation of world-class visitor experiences through product development. Ideal candidates will also have experience conducting these activities in a virtual environment.

A content expert is someone who attends the virtual action planning meeting, offers input on a specific content area, provides the most effective strategies during the meeting, and can potentially support the action teams as part of follow-up. A project implementor is someone who works with, and leads, a destination action team throughout the process of developing tourism product and preparing it for market. A trainer is someone who manages the delivery process, works with Travel Oregon on the engagement agenda, organizes speakers and facilitates the engagement – it is ideal to have strong content knowledge of the delivery area but maybe not to the depth of a content expert.

ABOUT THE DESTINATION READY PROGRAM

In March, Travel Oregon is launching the Destination Ready program to provide funding and assistance to destination-based organizations to develop and bolster visitor experiences that follow appropriate public health and safety protocols, and that will aid economic recovery, enhance local livability and provide access to a diversity of explorers. Project awards can range from \$10,000 - \$50,000 in cash and consulting time per project category; all projects are expected to be completed within six months of the execution of a financial agreement.

Oregon's communities and destinations have been impacted by COVID-19, wildfires and significant social and civic unrest. In response, Travel Oregon's Destination Ready program aims to partner with Oregon's tourism destinations—geographic areas consisting of a set of resources and attractions that are visited by tourists—to bolster key tourism products and experiences that will aid in destination recovery and resiliency. The program is led by Travel Oregon's Destination Development (DDEV) department, which has a strong history of engaging with tourism destination organizations and partners to support the development of the key visitor experiences, businesses and organizations that make up a destination's fabric. To continue this work amid unpredictable industry conditions, DDEV has created a set of visitor experience projects categories and associated projects that are available to destination organizations for immediate funding and support by Travel Oregon. Destinations will specify which visitor experience projects they would like to focus on in the program application.

Anticipated Community Outcomes

- Destination assets are enhanced and stewarded to support safe and sustainable visitor experiences that support local livability.
- Businesses are informed and operating effectively to maximize the economic impact of visitation.
- Visitors are engaged, resulting in safer experiences and improved stewardship of community assets.
- Visitors are satisfied with core destination experiences.
- Destination experiences are marketable when inspirational marketing resumes.

Programming Process

Destinations are invited to apply for the Destination Ready program between Jan. 14 and Feb. 3 (deadline is Feb. 3 at 12 p.m.). After internal review of applications, Travel Oregon will announce destinations selected for the program on Feb. 10. Then, programming and meetings will take place between Feb. 22-March 5.

Once the programming delivery phase begins, Travel Oregon will meet with each destination project team at least three times: Once for initial project planning, once mid-project, and once at project conclusion to gather input and assess effectiveness. However, depending on community and project needs, Travel Oregon's Destination Development team and partnered contract firms will be at the ready to participate in a much deeper level to support the success of destination projects. All destination projects are expected to be completed within six months of the execution of a financial agreement at the onset of the program.

[Find full program details on Travel Oregon's industry website here.](#)

PROGRAM AREAS OF SUPPORT

Culinary & Agritourism (Content Experts, Project Implementors and Trainers Needed)

Oregon is known for its culinary splendors and visitors crave unique culinary experiences. A contractor in this space would help Travel Oregon tap into the statewide foodie scene and help us further support and grow the Oregon Food Trails program. Travel Oregon is seeking the following:

- Facilitator/trainer specializing in culinary and agritourism for support of business workshops for food or farm trail participants.
- Food and/or farm small business specialist, with expertise in navigating land use and permitting.

Water Recreation (Content Experts and Project Implementors Needed)

Water recreation is a growing subset of the greater outdoor recreation experience that visitors come to Oregon for – especially whitewater rafting, SUPing, kayaking, surfing, scuba diving, and more. Travel Oregon is receiving new requests for water-based tourism development and is looking at key water-based initiatives that would build on Oregon's competitive advantage. To serve Oregon's communities and the state, consultants should have experience with water-based recreation and conservation principles and strategies to advance both at once. Travel Oregon is seeking a contractor to advise/assist with projects including:

- Planned river, lake or beach clean-up events and efforts.
- New boat launch development (in progress) or improvement of existing launches.
- River or water trail mapping (online or printed).
- Signage projects (river mile markers, educational signage, etc.).

High-Use and Destination Critical Outdoor Recreation (Content Experts and Project Managers Needed)

A recent focus of Travel Oregon has been the advancement of destination management activities across Oregon's tourism industry. The primary objective is to mitigate unintended negative impacts from tourism in high-use destinations such as the Columbia River Gorge and Oregon's North Coast. Travel Oregon is seeking a contractor to advise/guide implementation of projects related to:

- Trail stewardship efforts, including volunteer events.
- Garbage management solutions.
- Parking/transportation strategies and solutions.
- Responsible recreation messaging development and/or deployment of [Take Care Out There](#) messaging framework and assets.

Small Business Marketing (Content Experts and Trainers Needed)

With the world turning to the internet for ideas on what can be done (and safely) during a global pandemic, online marketing and accuracy of online business information is more important than ever. Small businesses in Oregon are requesting training and technical assistance to support their online presence. Travel Oregon is seeking a contractor to work with destinations to train and provide one-on-one technical assistance to businesses on topics including:

- Website fundamentals.

- eCommerce basics.
- Online listing best practices (Google My Business, Yelp, TripAdvisor).
- Social media strategies and content planning.
- Search engine optimization and analytics.

IMPORTANT PROGRAM DATES

Jan. 14-Feb. 9: Destination Ready RFQ is open.

Feb. 9: Deadline to respond to RFQ. Submit a letter, CV/resume and optional links to website/work samples to Travel Oregon by 8 a.m. PST. All shared information and accompanying materials must be submitted in electronic form and emailed to development@traveloregon.com. Please include “Destination Ready RFQ” in the subject line.

March-Sept.: Destinations Ready program work takes place; projects are implemented and executed. The Travel Oregon staff and contractor team is fully engaged with destinations during this time period.

MATERIALS REQUESTED

1. Cover Letter or Letter of Interest (not to exceed two pages): A letter describing the proposer’s background, clients, experience and specific areas of expertise in relation to needed areas of support outlined in this document. Include number of years in business and scope of general services provided to clients. Please include professional affiliation with any industry associations and groups. List availability and scheduling notes related to delivering work between March and September. The letter must be signed by an official who has authority to enter into a service agreement on behalf of the firm.
2. CV, Resume or Work Samples (not to exceed two pages): Detailed description of background, experience, and specific areas of expertise in relation to the needs outlined in this document, providing work and work samples and links to website/LinkedIn/material as appropriate.
3. Fees (not to exceed one page): Outline daily fees and/or hourly rate for personnel who will be assigned to the Travel Oregon programs. List any cost savings and/or added value proposals offered.
4. Certification of Disadvantaged Business Form: Complete and submit.
5. Anti-Discrimination Certification: Complete and submit.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

OTC reserves the right to award a contract based solely upon information submitted. OTC may also choose to request additional information or to conduct interviews to provide clarification or answer questions OTC may have in conjunction with the written responses to this request.

Confidentiality: Travel Oregon is a semi-independent agency of the State of Oregon. It is understood that RFQ responses may contain confidential information relating to a previous client strategies, goals and results. Any materials submitted to Travel Oregon, including proposals, documents, correspondence or other materials, may be subject to Oregon Public Records Law. Travel Oregon cannot guarantee confidentiality of any materials received. Whether documents or any portion of a document submitted as part of a proposal may be exempt from disclosure may depend upon official or judicial determinations made pursuant to the Public Records Law. As a result, respondents are advised to consult with legal counsel regarding disclosure issues.

Material Rights/Ownership: Materials developed and produced by contractor toward Travel Oregon scope of work is directly owned by Travel Oregon. Materials may not be repurposed or republished without prior expressed written consent by Travel Oregon staff.

Questions/Clarifications: Questions regarding this non-competitive process may be emailed to development@traveloregon.com.

Cost for Preparation of Proposals: Travel Oregon is not responsible under any circumstances for any costs incurred as the result of the preparation or submission of the respondent's proposals.

Equal Opportunity: Travel Oregon encourages minority and women-owned businesses to submit proposals in response to this RFP. Oregon companies and entities are strongly preferred.

CERTIFICATION OF DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS

Respondent certifies that it [*check one*] is ___ is not ___ certified by the Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) under ORS 200.055 as a disadvantaged business enterprise, a minority-owned business, a woman-owned business, a business that a service-disabled veteran owns or an emerging small business. If responder is COBID-certified, it further certifies that Respondent is certified by COBID as [*check all that apply*]:

- | | |
|---|-------|
| A disadvantaged business enterprise | _____ |
| A minority-owned business | _____ |
| A woman-owned business | _____ |
| A business that a service-disabled veteran owns | _____ |
| An emerging small business | _____ |

If Travel Oregon awards a contract to Respondent, Respondent certifies that they will provide the name(s) of any subcontractor that Respondent intends to utilize in the performance of work that is certified by COBID under ORS 200.055 as a disadvantaged business enterprise, a minority-owned business, a woman-owned business, a business that a service-disabled veteran owns, or an emerging small business.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION CERTIFICATION

By my signature, I certify that I am authorized to act on behalf of Respondent in this matter and that, pursuant to ORS 279A.110, Respondent has not discriminated and will not discriminate against a subcontractor in awarding a subcontract because the subcontractor is a disadvantaged business enterprise, a minority-owned business, a woman-owned business, a business that a service-disabled veteran owns or an emerging small business.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Authorized Agent's Signature

Date: _____