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**GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE  
CALL FOR PROPOSAL**

**DATE OF ISSUE: 8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2021**

**APPOINTMENT OF FULL-SERVICE PR, COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING AGENCY**

**Ref: NTB/PCU/PFMU/SLEDP/03**

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’. Government under Policy Cluster 2 of the Medium-Term National Development Plan (2019-2023), identified tourism as a key sector in supporting economic diversification and highlighted strategies committed to diversifying the economy by improving productivity, promoting value addition and enhancing competitiveness in the sector. In addition, the National Ecotourism Policy includes Government’s goal of receiving 20,000 international and 30,000 domestic ecotourism visits to sites by 2025 (GoSL, 2017). Considering its unique natural assets and abundant adventure, eco-tourism and cultural tourism potential, Sierra Leone could emerge as an attractive tourism destination for inbound international tourists, particularly those from niche tourism segments, such as birding, eco-adventurers, etc. An international marketing strategy focussing on ecotourism and sustainable tourism, with a firm focus on digital marketing platforms and a new brand, aims to correct negative perceptions of the country based on the long civil war, Ebola outbreak and the recent mudslide. This is critical if inbound international tourism is to flourish and the losses experienced during COVID are to be recovered and built upon.

However, the uncertainty of the ongoing COVID pandemic, as it pertains particularly to ease of international travel, affects Sierra Leone as much as it does other destinations worldwide. Tourism businesses in Sierra Leone are operating at low occupancies and inbound arrivals declined 62% in 2020 (41,238 visitors in 2020 vs 107,630 in 2019). Sierra Leone did not record visitor arrivals from April 2020 to July 2020 as the country’s airspace was closed. Since the second wave of COVID-19 has affected Sierra Leone, and additional restrictions are imposed by international source markets affecting the desire of international travellers to travel to the destination, the level of uncertainty for the country’s travel and tourism sector increases. To mitigate the ongoing risk to Sierra Leone’s tourism sector and build a strong base for international tourism, it is necessary to implement a robust domestic tourism marketing strategy and campaign, which will foster a vibrant culture of travel amongst Sierra Leonean residents and help to position tourism as a vehicle for economic diversification and sustainable source of revenue generation.

**The domestic travel and awareness campaign**

**Goals**

The campaign is underpinned by two main goals, namely:

**Domestic Travel Stimulation**

This entails marketing tourism experiences and destinations, as well as packaged travel opportunities, to the domestic market – measured by number of people that travel and spend. More specifically the aims are to:

- Instil the culture of domestic travel among citizens and other residents in Sierra Leone.
- Locally create more awareness about our tourist destinations and explore niche segments.

### **Domestic Tourism Awareness Raising**

This entails communicating opportunities and benefits of tourism for all Sierra Leoneans, the importance of excellent service delivery and the responsibility of all citizens to ensure a vibrant and successful tourism sector. More specifically the aim is to:

- Raise awareness of benefits and responsibilities associated with tourism.

### **Key Audiences and Messages**

Based on the objectives of the campaign, the following core narrative and content pillars can be identified for PR, Content Marketing and Social Media content creation.

<b>Domestic Tourism Awareness</b>		<b>Domestic Travel Stimulation</b>	
Importance of Tourism Service Delivery	Economic Benefits & Value Chain	Local Pride – I am Salone	Tourism Experiences & Destinations

In terms of the identified audiences and messages that will achieve the goal of domestic tourism promotion and awareness raising, the following audiences have been identified with the associated messaging:

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Awareness Messages</b>	<b>Travel Messages</b>
Parliamentarians, Ministries, traditional leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism is a potent force for economic growth and job creation and needs to be prioritized in decision making and local communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the way. Travel your own country and be advocates for tourism – #IAmSalone</li> </ul>
Local communities in tourism areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are custodians of the natural and cultural tourism resources</li> <li>• Benefits and responsibilities of tourism in your areas – especially women and youth</li> <li>• Need for clean, security and environmentally conserved environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore and enjoy your local nature and culture experiences and attractions</li> <li>• Develop local experiences and attractions for visitors</li> </ul>

Domestic families (Including Expats)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everybody benefits from tourism</li> <li>• Value of tourism for economic and social development – support local entrepreneurs and communities</li> <li>• Be proud of your tourism assets, conserve the environment and keep it clean and litter free</li> <li>• Tourism requires a welcoming attitude</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Save and spend on leisure getaways. Tourism is a lifestyle</li> <li>• The leisure opportunities that exist for affordable breaks - special offers available</li> <li>• Take more short breaks and discover beyond Freetown: many opportunities exist</li> </ul>
Tourism value chain stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Importance of quality service delivery and value for money</li> <li>• The finer points of customer care are important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work together to provide the domestic market with special travel offers</li> <li>• Maintain a consistent pricing policy for the domestic market, don't undercut each other and the middleman</li> </ul>
Corporates not in tourism value chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the tourism sector: Deep and extended value chain – even if you're not 'tourism', you benefit</li> <li>• Consider allocating some of your CSR budget to tourism development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel is an essential part of wellbeing. Encourage staff to travel with their families</li> <li>• We are one Salone community – show your pride and support for Sierra Leone by advocating for travel on behalf of your staff</li> </ul>
School and university students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You are the future custodians of tourism in your area – be proud of your local cultural and natural assets</li> <li>• You may find a career in tourism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for travel to conduct field studies and enhance your practical first-hand experience of what you're learning in theory</li> </ul>
Youth and other clubs and organizations –	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be responsible travellers</li> <li>• Value of tourism for economic and social development – support local entrepreneurs and communities</li> <li>• Be proud of your tourism assets, conserve the environment and keep it clean and litter free</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore further and longer when you travel as a group – not just day trips</li> <li>• Events around the country as hooks for group travel</li> <li>• The leisure opportunities that exist for affordable breaks - special offers available</li> </ul>

### **Campaign theme and slogan**

Since the core goals of domestic travel stimulation and domestic tourism awareness raising, the campaign will be run under the banner of “Tourism is Everybody’s Business”.

The rationale behind the catch phase is that everyone benefits from tourism, either directly or indirectly, through a) job creation and economic benefits of tourism expenditure and b) being enriched through travelling and experiencing the amazingly beautiful Sierra Leon, contrary to the negative views being portrayed.

The following campaign slogan will be used:

### **Torizm Na All Man Bizness**

*Sub line: Sierraously Surprising (to be used as and when appropriate)*

A suitable campaign slogan and accompanying mascot will be produced, to be used on all visual materials and promotions

### **Campaign Execution**

The “Torizm Na All Man Bizness” campaign will be executed across Paid, Earned, Social and Owned platforms, with the mutual goals of creating awareness of the benefits of tourism to local communities and the national economy, as well as the variety of tourism experiences on offer for selected domestic market segments.

In preparing for the campaign NTB will produce the following supportive materials and content:

- Industry Special Offers travel packages, which can be incorporated on printed and electronic materials owned by the NTB and private sector tourism stakeholders and promoted through social media, websites and media.
- Pop-up stands for promotions, deployed to government offices, embassies, events and large corporates to promote the travel packages.
- Print collateral, including a campaign flyer for distribution and outdoor billboards.
- Campaign promotional wear and special children’s give-aways.
- Digital media including “*Torizm Na All Man Bizness*” domestic tourism website landing page, Facebook and Instagram accounts.
- Radio and television advertisements and editorial materials.

### **Call for proposals**

NTB hereby invites proposals and price quotes from suitable national and international service providers for:

The appointment of a full-service public relations, communications and marketing agency for a period of six months to provide support in terms of strategy, media relations, communications, content creation, digital marketing, events coordination and media buying.

### **Scope of deliverables**

#### **1. PR, Communications and Marketing Strategy Development**

- a. Develop a compelling, practical, and implementable PR, Communications and Marketing Plan to position Sierra Leone’s domestic tourism proposition strongly in local market. The plan must be informed by the NTB’s domestic tourism strategy.

- b. Develop a 6-month activity plan in line with the PR, Communications and Marketing Plan.
- c. Develop a 6-month social media and user engagement strategy and plan
- d. Bidders must show how they will add value to the services they are offering to NTB through a value-add submission with their response to this tender

## **2. Media and Stakeholder Relations**

- a. Develop and continuously update a stakeholder database, including private-sector tourism trade, media, private and public sector partners.
- b. Develop guidelines for media liaison between NTB and the media.
- c. Develop monthly media activities, projects and events and key domestic tourism messages in line with all NTB's key activities outlined in the Domestic Tourism Marketing Strategy, including schools' tourism competition, President's annual tourism awards, best community tourism initiative, etc.
- d. Coordinate media engagements with strategic media partners in line with NTB's Domestic Tourism Marketing Strategy.
- e. Assist NTB with the coordination of familiarisation trips for media and key stakeholders.
- f. Source strategic media partnerships and trade exchanges to promote domestic tourism.
- g. Identify news and media opportunities to promote domestic tourism.
- h. Draft and provide input to all content and messaging being disseminated to the public and stakeholders.
- i. Identify key domestic platforms for NTB to participate to promote domestic tourism messaging.
- j. Provide media coverage reporting and trends.
- k. Develop and implement awards and competition activities, and associated publicity thereof, defined within the domestic tourism marketing strategy.

## **3. Communication Services**

- a. Generate compelling and visually engaging content for various electronic and print platforms, including:
  - i. Social Media
  - ii. NTB Website, which will include blogs, brand stories, landing pages
  - iii. Newsletters
  - iv. Brochures and flyers

## **4. Digital Marketing**

- a. Maintenance and updating of NTB website
- b. Developing high-quality, user-centric website content, including research, writing, and editing of content
- c. Development of landing pages for domestic tourism campaign carrying special offers and added value provided by private sector
- d. Development of landing page on tourism awareness and the campaigns and initiatives that form part of the campaign
- e. Sourcing external written, video and photo content where required
- f. Development and maintenance of content for other digital channels, e.g., social media

- g. Optimising content for search engine ranking
- h. Generating digital content at events and around NTB activities
- i. Hosting NTB digital content in a digital library which can be accessed by staff and external stakeholders
- j. Categorising and tagging of content according to requirements
- k. Moderation and optimal use of user-generated content on social media and website
- l. Ensure compliance with copyright and other relevant laws and policies
- m. Establish and follow editorial and messaging guidelines
- n. Implementation of the social media and user engagement strategy and plan
- o. Interaction with followers on various social media platforms, encouraging engagement, conversion, and word-of-mouth, and providing information with inspiration in a responsible manner
- p. Conduct a 'Tourizm na all man business' UGC social media competition as per domestic tourism marketing strategy
- q. Grow social media followers and various engagement indicators
- r. Provide website analytics and social media reporting and trends

### **Assignment period**

The period of producing the final deliverables shall not exceed six (6) months.

### **Required qualifications and experience**

Tenders are invited from national and international service providers.

It is expected that the service provider has excellent skills, track record and experience in developing and implementing an integrated PR, Communications and Marketing strategy and campaigns. The company should possess the following demonstrated qualifications and experience:

- Proven experience in dealing with diversified entities, especially multi-lateral organisations
- Proven record of any previous work done in Sierra Leone in the past five years with the same project line
- At least seven years of working experience with the same project line.
- Experience in the destination marketing space (advantageous)

### **Tender process**

### **Technical proposal**

Bidders must submit a comprehensive proposal that outlines the methodology and capacity they intend applying to meet the deliverables specified above and covering the following:

- A stepwise project implementation workplan with timelines and methodology, indicating how the bidder will undertake the project.
- A company/service provider profile including:
  - Overview of services offered by the service provider
  - Experience, track record and short description of similar or related projects implemented, a) in Sierra Leone and b) Elsewhere
  - Examples of previous work delivered
  - Contact details (Name, position, email and telephone) of at least two previous clients for similar projects conducted

- A clearly articulated resourcing plan with roles and responsibilities, including:
  - An organisational structure indicating all persons involved in executing the assignment and their roles
  - Short CVs of each person involved in executing the assignment, indicating qualifications and experience in similar projects
- Financial proposal as indicated below.

### **Price proposal and remuneration**

The service provider should provide:

- A detailed budget for the project, which must be broken down according to the target and outputs, milestones and timings thereof.
- An associated schedule of costs and total price proposal. The price should be stated clearly as inclusive of VAT and any withholding taxes.
- Proposed payments schedule, which will be agreed and finalised upon contracting.
- Any additional services over and above those outlined in the scope above should be communicated to the NTB in advance and quoted for separately. Neither NTB nor any organ of state will be held liable for any additional expenses incurred by the bidders.
- The price offered should include:
  - Any equipment needed to complete this assignment. No equipment will be purchased or provided by the NTB.
  - All costs relating to service provider’s accommodation, meals, and transport.
  - All costs pertaining to media buying.

### **Proposal evaluation**

All proposals received will be evaluated by a panel on a basis of technical functionality (70 points) and will then have their bids scored for price (30 points).

Qualifying tender applications need to meet the following basic functionality evaluation criteria, which will be considered and applied during the adjudication process; the maximum weight of each criterion is indicated in brackets below:

- Clarity of proposal (10)
- Credentials and qualifications (15)
- Technical resources and capabilities (15)
- Previous track record and experience (30)

A bidder that scores less than 50 points in respect of “functionality” will be regarded as submitting a non-responsive proposal and will be disqualified.

### **Proposal submission**

Proposals should be submitted in a sealed envelope and marked “CONFIDENTIAL: APPOINTMENT OF FULL-SERVICE PR, COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING AGENCY”.

Proposals should be hand-delivered **no later than 12:00 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021** to:

ATT: Team Lead – PFMU  
 The Public Fiduciary Management Unit,  
 Ministry of Finance,

13 Howe Street,  
Freetown,  
Sierra Leone

All proposals should contain a covering letter with name, position and contact details of a relevant contact person.

Any proposal reaching PFMU later than the above deadline date and time will not be considered.

The client reserves the right to seek further information from bidders, as it considers necessary.

**The detailed Terms of Reference can be obtained from the address above.**

### **Contractual arrangements and supervision**

The service will be hired under PFMU terms of contract and supervised by the appointed NTB management, solely for the purpose of delivering the above outputs, within the agreed time frame.

The client shall provide necessary support to the service provider in order to execute the assignment during the duration of the consultancy. These shall include:

- Access to relevant project documents necessary for execution of the duties under this consultancy.
- Contact details of relevant tourism industry stakeholders who may be able to assist with the work.

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

It must be noted that the NTB will have unlimited access to all documents and content applied by the successful service provider and after the completion of the project.

The successful service provider undertakes to obtain necessary consent or licences should the bidder make use of the intellectual property of any third party.

The successful service provider hereby indemnifies the client against any action, claim, damage, or legal cost that may be instituted against the client on the ground of an alleged infringement of any copyright or other intellectual property right in connection with the work outlined in this bid.

The successful service provider further indemnifies the client against any claim or action (including costs) caused by and/or arising from the failure to obtain such consent.

Any content materials generated by the service provider (documentary, audio, digital, cyber, project documents, etc.) within the scope of this tender shall become the property of the National Tourist Board (NTB) who shall have exclusive rights over their use.

The successful service provider will not make any of the content generated within the scope of this bid to any third party without the prior consent of the NTB and shall take the necessary steps to safeguard against this happening.

Copyright of all content will thus be owned by the NTB and NTB will have unlimited access and free use of the material as and when required

### **Non-appointment and negotiation**

PFMU reserves the right not to make an appointment and/or appoint the bidder with the lowest pricing proposal. PFMU also reserves its right to negotiate the final price of those bids deemed technically compliant.