

**STANDING OFFER
FOR TOURISM SPECIALISTS IN ATLANTIC CANADA**

BACKGROUND

The Tourism Industry Association of PEI (TIAPEI) is seeking to expand its list of qualified tourism consultants to deliver destination development programs in Atlantic Canada. Tourism specialists on this standing offer will be able to deliver STAR, STEP, DMR and AMR programs in Atlantic Canada. Delivery of these programs requires extensive knowledge of the tourism industry in the region, demonstrated expertise and flexibility to adapt as the sector starts to recover from the COVID 19 pandemic. Consultants who are deemed eligible to be on the standing offer will be able to bid on STAR, STEP, DMR and AMR programs as they roll out across the region.

The PROGRAMS

This standing offer list enables consultants to deliver four destination and market readiness programs developed by Tourism Atlantic, a division of ACOA. A brief description of each program is provided below, and additional program documentation is available on the TIAPEI website and should be reviewed prior to submitting an application. Consultants will be required to indicate which programs they believe they are qualified to deliver and why, based on the eligibility criteria detailed below.

1) ACCELERATED MARKET READINESS (AMR)

The Accelerated Market Readiness program strives to grow Atlantic Canada's tourism industry one operator at a time. Through AMR, small to medium sized tourism enterprises (SMEs) receive individualized, one-on-one expert mentoring to implement actionable, achievable, affordable and measurable initiatives to increase yield, extend the season and build capacity. Designed for application within clusters of tourism operators (geographic or sector based), AMR gives tourism SMEs the opportunity to consult with independent and qualified experts on issues specific to their business and provides the support they need to become market ready.

Through the AMR process, a project proponent -- often a destination marketing organization or industry association -- engages a qualified consultant to work with a group of 5-20 tourism SMEs they represent. Each participating operator works with the consultant to undergo an individualized assessment, and receives recommendations to improve market readiness. Consultants provide mentorship to implement these recommendations and continue to follow up with the operator at six and twelve months post project to monitor success. Consultants also provide valuable insight to project proponents on trends or key themes that emerge within the cluster of operators.

Consultants who deliver this program are provided with a Program Booklet (Appendix A) and expected to use the templates provided to deliver reports to operators, proponents and project committees.

2) DESTINATION MARKET READINESS (DMR)

Destination Market Readiness is a destination development program that combines elements of strategic destination assessment, one-on-one coaching for tourism operators and broadly based community capacity building sessions. The DMR program takes place over approximately six months, and includes four distinct phases: assessment, delivery of the AMR program detailed above to a

minimum of five individual operators, capacity building sessions for the broader community of stakeholders, and reporting/mentoring.

Through the assessment, the consultant should identify potential strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for tourism development in the community. AMR with individual operators will further highlight overarching trends in the sector for broader community development. The capacity building component should reflect these findings and provide the broader community of stakeholders the opportunity to learn more on key themes of relevance to the area. The final reporting and mentoring will ensure the destination has support as it begins to implement recommendations.

Consultants who deliver this program, as well as participating communities, are provided with a program booklet (Appendix B).

3) STRATEGIC TOURISM EXPANSION PROGRAM (STEP)

Tourism Atlantic's Strategic Tourism Expansion Program (STEP) is an innovative and comprehensive process that addresses gaps that exist within Atlantic Canadian communities around experiential tourism. Through analysis and visioning, STEP creates the unified stream of thinking required to invent and grow dynamic travel destinations. STEP provides communities (and entrepreneurs) with an understanding of destination development, industry trends and experiential tourism development. It engages community leaders and other stakeholders in the design and execution of actionable, sustainable tourism development plans.

Through the STEP process, a project proponent engages a qualified consultant to facilitate and lead the community through the STEP program, which takes place over the span of at least twelve months. There are seven distinct phases within the STEP process and accompanying tools, outlined in the program guide (Appendix C).

4) STRATEGIC TOURISM FOR AREAS AND REGIONS (STAR)

The Strategic Tourism for Areas and Regions (STAR) program is a regional tourism development program built to support economic growth in large tourism regions in Atlantic Canada with proven tourism success, by encouraging strategic and collaborative destination development. This customized tourism development program guides destinations through the STAR process; a series of practical activities and capacity building sessions that focus on strategic and sustainable tourism planning.

The Strategic Regional Tourism Plan, which results from the process, is tailored to the region and considers economic, environmental and social/cultural elements that are relevant and beneficial to tourism in the region. Input and active participation from the tourism industry, local organizations, communities and residents is critical to the success of STAR. The process spans over approximately twelve months, with implementation support provided over the next twelve months. There are seven distinct phases for the STAR program, which are outlined in the program guide (Appendix D).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible to deliver AMR, DMR, STEP and/or STAR, proposals must clearly demonstrate that the tourism consultant has the following **required experience**:

- At least 5 years of experience in tourism destination planning or tourism product readiness development.

- Proven and strong facilitation skills.
- Experience working with tourism groups and/or tourism operators.
- Strong knowledge of Atlantic Canada’s tourism sector including key stakeholders, relevant strategies and the importance of product and cluster development.
- Demonstrated knowledge of tourism industry trends.

Additional criteria will be required, specific to each program. Applications should clearly state which programs the consultant is applying to deliver, and provide demonstrated understanding of the program objectives. In addition to the required experience above, the consultant should also include how they meet the following **program eligibility criteria**, specific to each program they wish to deliver:

AMR & DMR	STEP	STAR
<p>Demonstrated experience providing one on one mentoring to tourism operators.</p> <p>Demonstrated knowledge of business planning and operational planning.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience in strategic assessment and planning in tourism.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience identifying key themes, challenges and opportunities among a varied group of stakeholders.</p>	<p>Demonstrated experience working with communities in tourism planning and development.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience in tourism product development.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience leading industry groups through strategic discussions.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience developing strategic and/or tactical documents through an iterative process.</p>	<p>Demonstrated experience working with multiple communities or large regions in tourism planning and development.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience in tourism product development.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience facilitating broad groups of stakeholders from differing sectors.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience in balancing and integrating different strategic priorities from varied stakeholders.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience developing strategic and/or tactical documents through an iterative process.</p>

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Applicants should review these guidelines in their entirety before submitting a proposal. Incomplete or ineligible proposals will not be considered. Applicants must state which programs they are applying to deliver, and proposals must clearly demonstrate that **required experience** and **program eligibility criteria** are met.

If consultants are applying as a group, team or firm to deliver these programs, they must clearly link each team member to the required expertise and discuss how the team would work together to deliver these programs. Please note that groups who are deemed eligible must include all team members in any subsequent project bids.

Additionally, proposals should clearly demonstrate the following:

- A strong understanding of the Tourism Atlantic program(s) the consultant wishes to deliver including goals, objectives, processes and associated models.
- At least five sample projects that clearly demonstrate the qualifications listed under **required experience**, and **program eligibility criteria** required for each program. Candidates should connect a minimum of three projects to each program they wish to deliver. Past project examples should include:
 - Project descriptions and overview of deliverables
 - Roles and responsibilities of the applying consultant(s) within the project
 - Timeframe of the project
 - Overview of the client and their needs
- A minimum of three (3) references who can address the candidate's experience and demonstrated ability to meet the **program eligibility criteria**
- Resume detailing recent, relevant experience in the tourism industry (recent is defined as within the last five years)

Consultants can choose to apply for one or all programs, and must clearly link work samples in their application to the criteria required for each program. If one work sample demonstrates criteria for multiple programs, include a note to that effect in the proposal. Consultants are not required to submit any rate information, as these programs have pre-determined budgets as noted in the program documentation. Please note that by applying to the standing offer, consultant(s) agree to deliver these programs within the predetermined budget ranges.

PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

An oversight committee made up of key industry stakeholders will assess proposals against the eligibility criteria and proposal requirements. If a proposal is deemed ineligible for one program, the committee may use their discretion to evaluate it against another program's criteria. The committee will contact successful consultants for a brief interview before the standing offer is finalized, and will discuss applicability for any other programs if relevant.

STANDING OFFER

The standing offer to deliver AMR, DMR, STEP and STAR is valid for two years. At the end of two years, consultants may be required to re-apply if they have not delivered any of these programs during that time.

Each of the above programs is thoroughly evaluated and consultants who are not meeting agreed upon expectations could be removed from the list at any time.

Consultants on the standing offer may receive Requests for Proposals for the above listed programs while on the list.

DEADLINE

All applications for the 2022 pool must be received no later than 12:00 PM noon on Thursday, March 3, 2022, 2022. After this time, applications will remain closed until December of 2022.

Application packages can be submitted to the Tourism Industry Association of Prince Edward Island in care of Dianne Bishop at dbishop@tiapei.pe.ca