



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS OR APPLICATIONS FOR A FULL-TIME TOURISM DIRECTOR

ISSUED: AUGUST 2, 2024

CLOSING: AUGUST 16, 2024 @5PM CDT

The Conference of Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers (GSGP) unites the chief executives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Québec and Wisconsin. The Governors and Premiers work as equal partners to grow the region's \$6 trillion economy and protect the world's largest system of surface fresh water. GSGP manages two partnerships aimed at increasing tourism to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence region—Great Lakes USA (GLUSA) and Cruise the Great Lakes (CTGL).

GLUSA conducts international marketing and sales of the Great Lakes region for the member States and partners with the goal of increasing economic impact through tourism.

CTGL is the region's cruise marketing partnership and a collaboration of the region's States, Provinces and partners working together to grow regional cruising via joint marketing and policy. It promotes cruising in the region through an optimized and unique brand targeted towards current and potential passengers.

Each program is overseen by a board consisting of representatives from each of the participating member States and Provinces. Each program also has a fee-based partnership program open to interested organizations (e.g., Convention and Visitors Bureaus; Chambers of Commerce; Cities; Cruise Ship Operators; Ports; and others).

For more information on GLUSA and CTGL, visit:

<https://greatlakesusa.co.uk/>

<https://www.greatlakes.de/>

<https://www.greatlakesusa.org/>

www.cruisethegreatlakes.com

GSGP is now accepting applications for an employee, independent contractor or agency who will serve as a full-time tourism director who would help lead GSGP's tourism programs, including GLUSA and CTGL. **All proposals must be submitted**

by email to gsgp@gsgp.org by August 16, 2024, at 5 pm CDT, placing the words “Tourism Director” in the subject line of the email.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

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| <i>First operational contract duration:</i> | November 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025 |
| <i>Option to renew beyond first year:</i> | Four consecutive one-year options to renew operational contract, subject to the evaluation of contract performance and budgets. |
| <i>Total anticipated duration:</i> | November 1, 2024 – June 30, 2029 |

The prorated contract will be for US\$80,000 for November 1, 2024-June 30, 2025. This amount represents a budget allocation to be paid for services or salary. GSGP will separately pay any travel costs subject to prior approval by GSGP’s Executive Director. If an individual is hired as an employee, the prorated salary will be US\$80,000 plus benefits (Health insurance, etc.) for November 1, 2024-June 30, 2025. The annual contract (or annual salary for an employee) for July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026, is planned to be US\$120,000.

SCOPE OF SERVICES:

- Define and create strategy for GLUSA and CTGL programs with GSGP staff, participating member States and Provinces, Preferred Partners and other partner organizations. Create, coordinate and oversee implementation of the marketing programs of GLUSA and CTGL in collaboration with partner organizations such as Brand USA and existing contractors.
- Create, coordinate, and oversee implementation of public communications and policy programs of CTGL in collaboration with partner organizations.
- Provide strategic insights and recommendations, based on research.
- Support efforts to identify key international country opportunities for GLUSA based on available infrastructure into the region, appeal of GLUSA product and ongoing opportunities, and latest trends.
- Working with the Chairs of both organizations as well as any sub-committees, develop agendas and organize annual and quarterly in-person and virtual meetings for both organizations.
- Working with the Chairs of both organizations and the Boards, develop marketing and outreach strategies; and budgets that reflect both the revenues received from members and partners as well as the expenditures of these funds to advance the strategies developed by the organizations’ boards.

- Support strategies to earn media coverage including serving as spokesperson, as appropriate, at events and in response to media inquiries.
- Research, apply for and manage any grant proposals.
- Manage the membership strategy and serve as key point of contact for member organizations. Recruit and retain members.
- Track deliverables, share metrics, and lead the accountability of the organization's work.

QUALIFICATIONS:

GSGP is seeking an individual or firm with the following:

- Minimum 5+ years of international tourism marketing experience with expertise working with a regional or multi-state/province consortium.
- Demonstrated effectiveness of programs for current or previous travel clients: maximizing awareness and with full-funnel marketing programs; and, understanding international framework with airlines, tour operators, receptives and media.
- Familiarity with the Great Lakes region product including state/provincial member destinations and cruise industry.
- Experience organizing and facilitating in-person/virtual Board meetings. Understanding and experience with in-country events.
- Experience and ability to work within the Great Lakes community in the travel and tourism field and have the necessary network of contacts to initiate and implement this program.
- All work will be done in English. French and German language skills would be advantageous.

ELEMENTS OF PROPOSAL:

Submissions must include:

- Description of your business or resume including:
 - General overview and years in business.
 - Number of full and part-time employees and consultants/contract employees by functional area (if not a solo practitioner).

- List of clients for the past three years indicating those that are current and length of relationship for all; references, and,
 - Contact person for this RFP or application including mailing address, phone and email.
- Organization’s capabilities as they relate to overseeing and coordinating GLUSA’s and CTGL’s programs.
- Provide examples of related work. Outline the key goals, objectives, and outcomes. If other than a solo practitioner, indicate who from your organization was responsible for the project.
- Resumes for all individuals who would be working with GSGP (if applicable). If other than a solo practitioner, clearly identify the person who will have primary responsibility for managing the account and the person who will be the primary day-to-day contact with the GSGP team.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS:

Proposals, excluding any resumes, should be no more than 10 pages including supporting exhibits. Materials exceeding this limit will not be considered.

All proposals must be submitted by email to gsgp@gsgp.org by August 16, 2024, by 5 pm CDT.

Proposals will be evaluated based upon:

- Demonstrated ability to perform all required services.
- Relevant experience.
- Demonstrated results.
- Overall quality of the submission.

GSGP will conduct virtual interviews with finalists during the week of September 3, 2024, and notify selected firm/individual by September 9, 2024, with a start date of November 1, 2024.

Note: No phone or email inquiries during the application or selection process.