



ITALIAN TRADE AGENCY

February 7, 2023

Prot. **0015631/23**

CIG. **9646224BDB**

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RE.: INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) FOR BOOKING AND TICKETING SERVICES, PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION OF TRAVEL SERVICES AND ANCILLARY ASSISTANCE FOR THE ITALIAN TRADE COMMISSION (ITC) OFFICES IN TORONTO AND MONTREAL - AWARD TO LOWEST PRICE

RE: BOOKING AND TICKETING SERVICES - INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

NOTICE TO BIDDERS: PLEASE READ THIS IFB CAREFULLY AND VERIFY THE REQUIREMENTS IN ADVANCE. INCOMPLETE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. ONCE A COMPLETE SUBMISSION IS RECEIVED, YOU ARE DEEMED TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF THIS IFB.

SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE SUBMISSION, FEEL FREE TO CONTACT THE ITALIAN TRADE COMMISSION MONTRÉAL AT THE EMAIL INDICATED BELOW.

The Italian Trade Commission in Canada is searching for a provider for the above services. If you are interested, you are invited to submit an offer taking the following into account:

1. AWARDING ENTITY

The Italian Trade Commission (ITC) - Montreal Office
1000, rue Sherbrooke ouest, bureau 1720
Montreal (Quebec) H3A 3G4

Mr. Marco Saladini
Trade Commissioner - ITC Canada
Official Representative of the Contracting Authority (Responsabile Unico del Procedimento)
Tel.: 514 284 0265 Fax: 514 284 0362
montreal@ice.it

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2. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES REQUESTED

This document describes the characteristics and requirements pertaining to the provision by a **Travel Agency** (hereinafter "Agency") of booking, ticketing and other travel services, **within a framework agreement for both ITC personnel and individuals who have accepted to travel at the ITC's expenses.**

The required services include the following ones.

- Domestic and international air travel reservation and ticketing for individual passengers and groups according to specific requests made by the ITC
- Interaction with the ITC and the travellers to find the best solution to their needs before finalizing the purchase of the needed travel solution
- Modification of reservations and issuance of new bookings and/or tickets when necessary, without any penalty charged to ITC by the Agency;
- Planning, organization and supply of:
 - Hotel stays
 - Land transportations
 - Travel packages
- 100% refund to ITC of air ticket and hotel reservation costs in case of cancellation or no-show on the part of the delegate(s), where allowed by ticket or airline rules; in this regard, the Agency will be allowed to ask the delegate(s) to provide their credit cards to guarantee the ticket(s) issued, informing them that they will be directly responsible for any unjustified cancellations
- Assistance to solve unexpected problems without any penalty, in case, for instance, of strikes, flight delays due to bad weather conditions, and cancellations or postponements by the traveller due to documented and compelling reasons,
- Provision at no extra charge to travellers of Information about their trip, such as for instance about passports, visas, required travel documents, and flight delays or cancellations
- Provision of after travel services such as for instance travel certificates
- Brokerage of travel insurance policies.

3. SERVICE TIME FRAME

Start Date: **Signature of contract by both parties**

End Date: **9 months after signature of contract** or when the ceiling amount available for this contract is met, whichever comes earlier. The contract will automatically terminate on its expiration date or upon reaching the amounts specified above **(CAD 300,000.00)** without any notification between the parties. There will be no tacit renewal of the contract.

The ITC reserves the right to ask the awarded bidder to extend the duration of the contract for the time necessary to finalize a new one.

4. ESTIMATED BUDGET

ITC is a tax exempt organization and as a governmental Agency must follow strict public procurement requirements in terms of assembling this IFB and awarding contracts.

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With reference to the services of the IFB, the **overall estimated budget** available during the life of the contract (9 months from the effective date) is **CAD 300,000.00 (Three hundred thousand dollars)**.

The above indicated amount (CAD 300,000.00) includes all tickets and other services, commissions and agency fees.

The ITC is not bound to guarantee the level of expenditure indicated herein, which is a mere estimate which might change over time.

Therefore, the actual level of expenditure may be higher or lower than the above amount, based on needs and available budget.

5. MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

In order to participate in the call for bids, your company shall meet the following requirements:

- a) be eligible and possess the necessary qualifications, in full compliance with local laws
- b) be authorized and licensed to do business in the company's province or state of operation.

6. CONDITIONS FOR THE EXECUTION OF SERVICES

The awarded bidder will adhere to the following service standards.

- Timely turnaround of purchase orders
- Timely, efficient and transparent handling of cancellations, refunds and penalties
- Designating **one or more agents** with at least three years of work experience in the travel business to be the contact person for ITC's employees. The contact person shall ensure the proper execution of services, acting promptly to solve any problem that may arise and answering in a timely manner to any request made by the Italian Trade Commission. The contact person shall not change during the life of the contract, barring justified hindrances duly explained by the supplier
- Operating from Monday through Friday, with in person attendance by a travel agent within the following hours, at least: from 7:00am to 7:00pm EST
- Always apply the most advantageous rates available on the market by submitting at least 3 alternatives from different providers for each requested service (flight, train, bus, hotel). More in particular, the Agency will guarantee **the best tariffs on the market** and/or those resulting from special agreements between the Agency and other travel services providers, if any. The Agency's only reward shall be the fee, while the cost of the service provided will be a mere reimbursement to the Agency for what it pays to the provider on behalf of the ITC but will not bear any further revenue or profit to the Agency. The ITC reserves the right to review, ask for explanations and reject proposed services or cancel a purchase order altogether at any time and for any reason, without owing the Agency any penalty but paying in full for services already confirmed and satisfactorily provided by the Agency
- Supply travellers with a **toll-free number accessible from Canada and also from the USA and Italy** to handle after hours emergencies or special and/or urgent requests;

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- Provide the ITC with monthly reports on services performed and release analytical data as requested to allow the Agency to monitor and evaluate the contract's effectiveness
- Detect and take care of any issues that might arise during the execution of services

The Agency will provide all the services set forth herein using its own technical equipment and without charging the ITC for any additional costs.

The ITC reserves the right to further specify terms and conditions for providing such services in the framework contract to be stipulated with the awarded bidder.

7. HOW A SERVICE IS ACTIVATED

A service is activated in two stages.

1. Request to provide a quotation. This stage implies that the Agency talks to delegates and establishes their itinerary, i.e. origin, destination and dates. The Agency will then provide 3 quotes from different providers for each service to be procured, unless more than one delegate follows the same itinerary and the same quote can be applied to a group. If for any reason a service already fully and successfully negotiated by the Agency with a delegate is not followed by a purchase order, the Agency will be entitled to request 50% of the fee.

2. Ticketing. The ITC will review the quote and then issue a written purchase order duly signed by ITC's Director, dispatched by the ITC to the Agency via e-mail and containing all the relevant data necessary to identify the essential conditions of each service.

Except for urgent requests, the Agency shall guarantee the delivery of travel documents by 10:00 am on the next day for confirmed bookings made no later than 5:00pm on the previous day and by 3:00pm for confirmed bookings made after 5:00pm on the previous day.

The Agency will pay all the costs relating to the issuance of tickets and hotel bookings and all expenses for any and all bookings.

The delivery of paper tickets, if any, paid by the Agency, will be made on the same day of the booking, and sent to the ITC office in Toronto or Montreal, or to a different address if indicated, as requested at the time of booking.

The Agency must always provide the ITC with an evidence of the payment made to the third party provider on behalf of the ITC and, in the case of airfare, with e-tickets carrying the cost of the ticket and of other items included in the price. For airfare, each electronic ticket must be accompanied by a dated and numbered delivery coupon, including passenger's name, itinerary, class of the ticket if airfare, tariff applied by the provider, tariff code if airfare, cost of the service and Agency's fees. Exclusions or modifications to these rules need to be approved in writing by the parties.

The delivery of the travel documents will entitle the Agency to request the payment of the full fee amount.

Tickets issued without a formal purchase order will not be honored by the ITC should the delegate's travel not be confirmed.

8. ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT BY THE ITC

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Handwritten initials in cursive script, appearing to be 'Cey', written over a horizontal line.



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The ITC agrees to provide the Agency with a list of its employees authorized to request the services set forth herein.

The ITC commits to dealing with any issues related to the provision of services in a timely and efficient manner, with a preference given to communication via e-mail.

9. SUBMISSION DEADLINES & REQUIREMENTS

The envelope containing the offers, in English or French, must include all the documentation indicated below and must be received by ITC, under penalty of exclusion from the tender, **no later than Thursday, February 23, 2023 12:00 pm (EST)** at the address indicated in Art. 1. The submission of bids implies unconditional acceptance of the provisions contained herein.

Bids received after the deadline will not be considered. Incomplete offers, even if mailed within the stated deadline, shall be excluded. An offer is deemed to be incomplete if a bidder does not accept all the terms of this IFB. Bids, under penalty of exclusion, must be received in **one single, sealed envelope**, which must be signed on the flap closure and bear on the outside the sender's address (**legible address and telephone and/or fax number**) and the following caption.

CONFIDENTIAL - DO NOT OPEN - BIDS DEPARTMENT OF THE ITC OFFICE IN MONTREAL

"BID FOR THE AWARD OF A CONTRACT FOR BOOKING AND TICKETING SERVICES, PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION OF TRAVEL SERVICES AND ANCILLARY ASSISTANCE FOR THE ITALIAN TRADE COMMISSION TORONTO/MONTREAL OFFICES".

Receipt of these bid documents does not imply satisfaction of the bidding requirements. All efforts will be made to correct errors and omissions by the bidders which may happen to be discovered during the evaluation process. The ITC takes no responsibility for the success of such efforts and may reject malformed bids at its own discretion.

The envelope, under penalty of exclusion, must contain two sealed envelopes that must be signed on the flap closures, bearing the sender's address and, respectively, the following captions:

"ENVELOPE A - ADMINISTRATIVE DOCUMENTATION + NAME of the COMPANY"

This envelope **must** contain each and every one of the following documents.

1. This IFB initialed on each page, duly signed as acceptance of the tender requirements
2. Annex 1 - Acknowledgement of the IFB which states that you are eligible and possess the necessary qualifications, completed and duly signed
3. Annex 3 - Supplier registration package duly completed, dated and signed in at least all mandatory fields; by filling out this form you will be entered in ITC's suppliers database and may be considered for certain restricted procurement procedures
4. Annex 4 - Declaration Statement duly completed, dated and signed by the legal representative or its delegate with power of attorney accompanied by a **photocopy of a valid ID**, stating that the bidder is in compliance with

- General requirements

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- Requirements for professional competence in the sector of reference for the service to be rendered
- Technical and professional skills (pursuant to Article 83, paragraph 1, letter c) of Legislative Decree 50/2016).

Failure to include all of the above items will disqualify your bid.

“ENVELOPE B - ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL OFFER + NAME of the COMPANY”

The envelope will include the Economic and Financial Offer which shall be made in accordance with the terms indicated in this IFB and using the form included in Annex 2. It shall be expressed clearly in numbers and letters and signed by a legal or authorized representative of the bidding Agency. Multiple offers will not be considered.

The failure to include in your submission all the items requested by this IFB may render your tender void.

Please fill the Economic Offer as per Annex 2

Please indicate price information ONLY in your ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL OFFER and not in your administrative documents as that will invalidate your proposal.

10. EVALUATION PROCESS

If you have any questions regarding this tender, please send an email to: montreal@ice.it – Ref. **CIG: 9646224BDB** **no later than Thursday, February 16, 2023**. Replies will be published, without mentioning who asked each question, on the ITC’s website, Canada page, English version. No information can be provided to bidders over the phone or via email.

The ITC has the authority to award the contract even if only one bid has been submitted, provided it is deemed valid and worth accepting. Moreover, the ITC has the authority not to award the contract, if it deems it appropriate to exercise the right of self-protection and if ITC finds that the bids received do not comply with the contents set forth herein.

The contract will be awarded to the Agency that will offer the most economical agency fee (lowest price), calculated using the following formula.

$$weighted\ average = \frac{x_1 * w_1 \pm x_2 * w_2 + x_3 * w_3 + \dots + x_n * w_n}{w_1 + w_2 + w_3 + \dots + w_n}$$

where

Type of fee	Weight
Agency fees per person for flight booking and ticketing (domestic and international)	90%
Agency fees per reservation for hotel accommodation	5%
Agency fees per transaction for rentals (e.g. car, van, bus)	2%
Agency fees per transaction for ancillary services	

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(e.g. insurance)	3%
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Bids' opening will take place during an open public session. Only one (1) legal representative, or his/her delegate, for each participating bidder, can participate in the public session. The session will take place on **Thursday, February 23, 2023 12:00 pm (EST)** . at the ITC office in Montréal.

The awarded bidder will then be called to execute a framework contract which may include additional terms to what is specified in this IFB.

Should the awarded entity fail to execute the contract or provide the stipulated services within a reasonable amount of time, the award will be revoked and the contract awarded to the next economic operator in the ranking list.

11. PAYMENT TERMS

Italian law does not allow advance payments for public contracts.

Payments **shall be made only upon delivery of all services as stipulated in the single PO. and after submission of an original invoice** issued by the awarded service provider, in Canadian currency, made out to:

Consulate General of Italy – Italian Trade Commission
1000 rue Sherbrooke ouest, suite 1720
Montreal, QC H3A 3G4
Tel 514/284-0265 ext 2217
invoice.itacanada@ice.it
or

Consulate General of Italy - Italian Trade Commission
480 University, Suite 800
Toronto, ON - M5G 1V2
Tel. 416/598-1566
invoice.itacanada@ice.it

as indicated in the purchase order.

Payment will be issued by EFT-Direct Deposit in CAD within 15-30 days of receipt of original invoice addressed to the ITC office indicated in the Purchase Order (PO).

The following documents must be attached to the invoice.

- A statement of account, including services rendered, specifying for each service: name, itinerary, amount, and fee applied;
- Purchase Order (PO) number indicated in the invoice;

12. PENALTIES

For each one-day delay as regards delivery terms of requested services, which are agreed for each single service, a 2% (two percent) penalty of the agreed upon cost of the service to be provided may apply, calculated on the value of the delayed service rendered, not including claims for larger damages, if any. Please note that the ceiling for such a penalty is set at 10% of the value of purchased services.

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For any breach of obligations under the contract, if considered serious, ITC will have the option to terminate it with no penalties and with full payment of services already rendered, minus any penalty to be applied per the contract and without any prejudice of its rights.

13. NO SUBCONTRACTS OR TRANSFER OF SERVICES

It is expressly forbidden to resort to subcontracts, in consideration of the particular nature of the services, which require a trustworthy interlocutor capable of ensuring a fast execution of services.

14. OBLIGATION OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

The winning Agency agrees to consider all information, concepts, ideas, procedures, methods and/or technical data that the employees will learn during the execution of the services herein as confidential and covered by the obligation of professional secrecy. In this regard, the winning Agency, together with its employees and consultants, agrees to adopt the necessary caution to protect the confidentiality of said information and/or documentation.

The winning Agency must adopt all measures that ensure the safe processing of personal data, as well as the protection of the rights of natural and legal persons.

The winning Agency will not disclose, communicate or disseminate the data acquired on account of its contractual work nor will it use said data to promote or market its own services. The only permissible use is the one provided and governed by the Call for Bids and the contractual documents.

At the same time, ITC, too, guarantees the confidentiality and secrecy of the data, information and commercial know-how contained in the documentation furnished by all bidding agencies.

15. ADDITIONAL CLAUSES

As required by the applicable Italian Law, by submitting its offer the Agency agrees to the following provisions.

- Anti-pantouflage
- Code of Conduct
- Transparency and anti-corruption clause
- Whistleblowing

These are standard clauses required by Italian laws and ITC's internal regulations and cannot be waived or modified. Please feel free to ask for the text of such clauses by writing to the ITC.

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16. BACKGROUND

The Italian Trade Commission is the government entity which promotes the internationalization of Italian companies, in line with the Italian Government's policies. ITC provides support to Italian and foreign companies. ITC is headquartered in Rome and operates with a network of offices worldwide linked to Italian Embassies and Consulates and works closely with local authorities and businesses.

ITC provides a wide range of services among which:

- The selection of business partners;
- Bilateral trade meetings with Italian companies;
- Trade visits to Italy;
- Participation to local fairs;
- Seminars conducted by Italian advisers.

In Canada, ITC is present in Toronto and in Montreal.

For more information on the ITC and its presence in Italy and the world, please visit our website www.ice.it (Italian/English).

17. NO EXCLUSIVITY

The ITC recognizes the awarded Supplier as the regular but not exclusive service provider: therefore, it reserves the right to contract other suppliers for services similar to those described herein, during the life of the awarded contract.

Sincerely,

Marco Saladini
Italian Trade Commissioner - ITC Canada

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