



ITALIAN TRADE AGENCY

Toronto

### PUBLIC NOTICE INVITING TO EXPRESS INTEREST

in the execution of a negotiated procedure without prior publication of a tender notice (art 7 com. 2 lett. b) del Dlg. n.32/2024 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for

### “TRAVEL ORGANIZATION SERVICES FOR THE ITALIAN TRADE COMMISSION (ITC) OFFICES IN TORONTO, MONTREAL AND VANCOUVER”.

#### Summary

- This public notice is directed to travel Agencies capable of providing national and international travel reservation services, all across Canada and abroad.
- The total estimated amount for services rendered during the life of the framework contract by the awarded bidder will not exceed **CAD 300,000.00**.
- The services required include end to end booking and reservation of flights, other forms of transportation and hotel rooms.
- The award will be decided based on the booking fees for each of the main service categories
- This notice is an invitation to express interest in the selection process. The next steps include a registration on an Italian government's website, in English language, the inclusion in the bidders' list and the submission of an offer compliant with the bidding documents, which will be provided to validated prospective bidders.
- To express interest, prospective bidders need to apply through the Traspare website (<https://ice.traspare.com>) no later than **November 9, 2024**.
- The framework contract will last for 9 (nine) months, or until the date when the estimated amount for the service is reached, whichever comes first, will end automatically, without any notification between the parties, and will be effective starting after signature from both parties.

#### Notice inviting prospective bidders to express interest

ITC (Italian Trade Commission) is a governmental organization dedicated to promoting the international presence of Italian businesses, aligning with the strategies of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. With its headquarters situated in Rome, ITC extends its reach globally through an extensive network of trade promotion offices connected to Italian embassies and consulates. For more details, please visit our website at <https://www.ice.it/en/>.

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The ITC Toronto Office is initiating a negotiated procedure for **travel organization services**. This process is conducted in strict accordance with principles of non discrimination, equal treatment, fair competition, rotation and transparency. We are commencing this by preliminarily identifying economic operators interested in bidding and who possess the requisite technical and professional qualifications.

This procedure is in accordance with Legislative Decree No. 32 of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation dated 17 January 2024, titled "Regulation containing amendments to Ministerial Decree No. 192 of 2 November 2017 on the selection procedures and execution of contracts to be carried out abroad, following the entry into force of the new Public Contracts Code (Legislative Decree 31 March 2023,n. 36)".

The notice is accessible on the contracting Traspare website . The portal has an English version. In order to participate in the tender, registration to the Traspare portal is required. Please click on the URL [https://ice.traspare.com/employees/sign\\_in](https://ice.traspare.com/employees/sign_in) and follow the steps to register and, after registration, to access the portal. A user manual is available at this URL [https://ice.traspare.com/public\\_tutorial\\_and\\_manual](https://ice.traspare.com/public_tutorial_and_manual) (pdf document on the right side).

After registration please sign into the portal and refer to the ***How to access the tender procedure Manual***, available on our website [ice.it/manual](https://ice.it/manual).

## CONTRACTING AUTHORITY

The contracting authority is the Italian Trade Commission, located at 480 University avenue, suite 800, Toronto, M5G 1V2 ON. The person responsible for this procedure is Mr. Marco Saladini, Italian Trade Commissioner.

## REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

The Agency will need to demonstrate the possession of the following requirements.

1. Provision of the services listed above for a minimum of 2 years prior to applying
2. Availability of a phone number that passengers can call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in case of need
3. Ability to appoint one or more contact persons dedicated to dealing with passengers and ITA
4. Capability to operate in Canada
5. Authorization and license to operate in all provinces

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SERVICES REQUESTED

The Italian Trade Commission (ITC) will invite interested and qualified Travel Agencies located in Canada (the "Agency") which have successfully expressed their interest in being invited to bid, to submit their bid for the agency fee for Travel organization services. The characteristics and

requirements pertaining to the provision by a Travel Agency (the "Agency") of booking, ticketing and other travel services within a framework agreement for passengers who have accepted to travel at the ITC's expenses are described in what follows. Further details, terms and conditions will be found in the request for bids.

*Required services.*

- Domestic and international air travel reservation and ticketing for individual passengers and groups, be they based in Canada or elsewhere, 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 transportation
  - 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.
- Invoicing.

## **HOW A SERVICE IS ACTIVATED**

A sample, step by step procedure is detailed below for flights, which is the most common case.

1. The ITC sends a request via email to the agency detailing dates, departure and arrival cities and minimum travel days, number of travelers, asking for 3 hypotheses with a

spending limit per each itinerary.

2. The Agency provides 3 options.
3. The ITC chooses among them and informs the Agency.
4. The Agency deals with the passengers about travel details, informing the ITC if any issue arises.
5. The Agency sends to the ITC a final choice of itineraries.
6. The ITC issues the purchase order signed by the Director and sends it via email.
7. Tickets are issued.

The ITC will provide a contact person for each group of passengers.

The Agency will pay all the costs relating to the issuance of tickets and hotel bookings and all expenses for any and all bookings and the ITC will refund the costs within 30 days, based on the invoice provided by the Agency.

#### **BUDGET ALLOCATED AND AWARD CRITERION**

The total estimated amount for services rendered during the life of the framework contract by the awarded bidder will not exceed **CAD 300,000.00**. **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. Thus, there will be no monetary adjustments if the expenditure for services is below the amount set forth herein.

**Each compliant bid will be evaluated based on the Agency fees.** The lowest evaluated bidder will be awarded the contract. The award will take place even in the presence of a single bid, as long as it is deemed valid.

#### **LIFE OF THE CONTRACT**

The framework contract, to be signed by the ITC and the Agency, will last for 9 (nine) months, or until the date when the estimated amount for the service is reached, whichever comes first, will end automatically, without any notification between the parties, and will be effective starting

after signature from both parties.

### SECURITY DEPOSIT

The awarded company will be required to provide a security deposit, equal to 10% of the contract value, before signing the contract which can be paid in the form of a bank guarantee or insurance policy. Any costs for obtaining the guarantee will be borne by the company. The security deposit will be released and returned at the end of the contract.

### EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

To express interest, please reply through the Traspare website (<https://ice.traspare.com>) no later than **24:00 (EST) on November 9, 2024**. Include a company profile detailing your company's experience in the provision of travel organization service and the possession of all requirements listed above as well as a short note on how you envision to provide the requested services outlined in this request for Expressions of Interest (EOI). The individual overseeing this process will review your submission.

Expressions of interest received after the deadline will not be considered. This EOI does not imply any commitment on the part of ITC, whether financial or otherwise. ITC reserves the right to accept or reject all or part of the EOI without any obligation to inform the concerned applicant(s) of the reasons.

The submission of an expression of interest does not automatically warrant an invitation to bid. This notice serves as a market survey and does not constitute a contractual proposal. The ITC Toronto Office will invite all compliant respondents to bid. The contract will be awarded even if only one bidder replies satisfactorily.

The invitation letter, tender information and participation instructions will be dispatched to interested and compliant prospective bidders by **November 12, 2024**, via the Traspare website (<https://ice.traspare.com>), after the verification of eligibility requirements.

For any information and technical issues with the platform, please contact the Italian Trade Commission at [montreal@ice.it](mailto:montreal@ice.it)

Marco Saladini  
Italian Trade Commissioner