



AIMS College Prep High School

Request for Proposal (RFP):

Travel Agency for High School East Coast Educational College Tour

Issued by: AIMS College Prep High School (AIMS HS)

Issue Date: 01\26\2024

Submission Deadline: 02\06\2024

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I. Introduction

AIMS High School is seeking a professional travel agency partner, an institution celebrated for academic excellence and a consistent record of ensuring 100% of our graduating seniors gain acceptance to top-tier colleges and universities. Our school is an award-winning, high-performing educational hub where the aspirations of tomorrow's leaders are nurtured. In alignment with our commitment to providing unparalleled educational opportunities, we are issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) for a comprehensive travel package. This RFP aims to facilitate an enriching East Coast tour for our junior class, exposing them to premier higher education institutions, including top private, public, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). This tour is envisioned as a pivotal step in our students' college selection process, providing them with firsthand insights into potential academic environments and fostering informed decision-making for their future educational paths.

II. Project Overview

Objective

To engage a travel agency that will meticulously plan and execute a 10-day educational tour for our high school juniors, encompassing all aspects of travel, accommodations, and schedule management. The tour should offer a seamless and enriching experience, highlighting the academic and cultural environments of prominent East Coast colleges and universities.

Group Size

The travel package should cater to a group of up to **50 students and 6 chaperones**, ensuring comfort, safety, and personal attention to all participants.

Travel Dates

The proposed travel period is from **June 15 to June 24**, aligning with our academic calendar and allowing for an immersive experience without academic interruptions.

A. Flight Arrangements

Round-trip Airfare: Secure group round-trip airfare from **Oakland, CA, to Washington, D.C.**, considering the most cost-effective and convenient flight options.

Group Check-In Assistance: Provide support for group check-in processes at both the departure and arrival points to ensure a smooth and efficient experience for the students and chaperones.

Cost Reduction Efforts: Actively engage with airlines to negotiate complimentary travel or significant reductions in cost for the group, leveraging potential educational discounts, group travel incentives, or airline partnerships that benefit educational trips.

Group Seating Coordination: Coordinate with airlines to arrange group seating to facilitate student supervision and enhance the group travel experience.

B. Bus Transportation

Charter Buses: Arrange for the provision of comfortable and reliable charter buses to facilitate airport transfers upon arrival at Washington, D.C., and for all scheduled daily excursions throughout the 10-day East Coast tour.

Professional Drivers: Ensure that all drivers provided are professionals with extensive experience in managing group tours, particularly those involving high school students. Their familiarity with the routes, destinations, and unique needs of a student group will be essential.

Background Checks: Confirm that all drivers undergo thorough background checks to ensure the safety and security of the students.

Insurance and Safety Compliance: Provide evidence of up-to-date insurance coverage for all modes of transportation to be used. Additionally, the buses must comply with all federal and state safety regulations. Include details of the safety features available on the buses, such as seat belts for every seat, and any additional safety measures that will be taken.

C. Lodging

Hotel Accommodations: Secure hotel accommodations for a total of 9 nights at establishments that are known for their cleanliness, safety, and student-friendly environment. The hotels should be conveniently located at the educational sites on the itinerary and equipped with the necessary amenities to provide a comfortable stay for students and chaperones.

Amenities: Ensure that each hotel offers amenities suitable for students, including complimentary Wi-Fi, breakfast options, and areas where students can gather for study or socialization.

Room Allocation: Arrange for the students to be accommodated in rooms with an occupancy of 4 students per room. Chaperones should be provided with separate accommodations to ensure proper supervision and privacy.

Safety Measures: Detail any additional safety measures the hotels provide, such as 24-hour security, surveillance systems, and the availability of hotel staff to address any concerns.

III. Itinerary Planning

Daily Itinerary Coordination: Develop a comprehensive and detailed daily itinerary that maximizes the educational value of the tour. The itinerary should include multiple college visits per day, with each visit organized to include a guided tour by a representative or student ambassador from the respective college. This will provide an authentic perspective of each institution's campus life and academic environment.

Educational and Historical Site Visits: Integrate educational and historical site visits into the itinerary to enrich the students' cultural and historical understanding of each city visited. These activities should complement the college tours and provide a broader educational experience.

Recreational Activities: Include recreational and cultural activities to give students a well-rounded experience. This could involve visits to museums, theaters, or local attractions where students can relax and enjoy their surroundings.

Meal Planning: Arrange for reasonable food options throughout the trip. This includes ensuring a complimentary breakfast at the hotels, coordinating visits to college cafeterias where possible to give students a taste of campus dining, and identifying fast food options with a balance of convenience and nutrition.

IV. Budget

Detailed Budget Proposal: Submit a comprehensive budget proposal that outlines all costs associated with the educational tour. This should include itemized pricing for airfare, bus transportation, lodging, meals, admission fees for educational and historical sites, and any other additional services that may be required.

Airfare and Transportation Costs: Provide a breakdown of the costs for round-trip airfare from Oakland, CA, to Washington, D.C., as well as for all charter bus services required for airport transfers and daily excursions.

Lodging Costs: Detail the costs for 9 nights of hotel accommodations, specifying the rate per night and the total cost for the entire group.

Meal and Dining Costs: Outline the costs for providing breakfast at the hotels, as well as the estimated expenses for other meals, including college cafeteria dining and fast food options.

Incidentals and Additional Services: Include a line item for any incidental costs or additional services that may be required throughout the trip. This could encompass tips, emergency funds, or unexpected expenses.

Total Cost Estimate: Present a total cost estimate that is as accurate as possible. It is expected that the proposal will account for all fees and provide a clear understanding of the financial requirements of the trip.

V. Proposal Submission Guidelines

A. Qualifications

Company Profile: Provide a comprehensive company profile, including the number of years in business, specific experience in managing student travel, and any relevant certifications or accreditations that demonstrate expertise in educational tours.

B. References

Past Clients: Submit a list of past clients who have utilized similar travel packages, focusing on educational groups if possible. Include contact information for reference checks.

C. Detailed Proposal

Service Breakdown: Offer a detailed breakdown of all proposed services, explaining how each service will meet the needs outlined in this RFP.

Total Cost Summary: Present a summary of the total costs, including itemized expenses and any additional fees that may apply.

Payment Schedule: Propose a payment schedule that details the timing and amounts of payments due before, during, and after the trip.

Cancellation and Refund Policies: Clearly state the policies regarding cancellation, including any deadlines, penalties, and refund processes.

D. Safety Measures

Safety Protocols: Outline the safety protocols that will be in place during the trip, including measures for travel, lodging, and activities.

Emergency Plans: Provide detailed emergency response plans for various scenarios that might occur during group travel, including medical emergencies, natural disasters, and other critical incidents.

VI. Evaluation Criteria

The selection of the travel agency will be based on a thorough evaluation of the proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The criteria for evaluation will include, but not be limited to, the following:

Cost-effectiveness: Proposals will be assessed on the overall value they provide, taking into account not just the bottom-line price but also the quality and feasibility of the services offered in relation to the cost.

Experience with Similar Projects: We will consider the agency's track record with similar educational travel projects. Agencies that demonstrate a history of successfully managing student travel will be given preferential consideration.

Quality and Comprehensiveness of the Plan: The degree to which the proposed plan addresses all aspects of the RFP, including itinerary, lodging, transportation, and dining, with attention to detail and consideration for the student experience.

Safety Measures and Risk Management: The robustness of safety protocols and emergency plans presented will be a critical factor. Agencies must show a strong commitment to student safety and risk mitigation strategies.

References and Testimonials: The strength of references and testimonials from previous clients, particularly those with similar travel needs, will be a significant factor in our evaluation. Positive feedback from past clients will indicate reliability and quality of service.

VII. Submission Instructions

To ensure a structured and timely review process, please adhere to the following submission guidelines:

Deadline: Proposals must be submitted by 02/06/2024. This deadline is firm, and late proposals will not be eligible for consideration.

Submission Contact: Direct all submissions to Maya.Nicholas@aimsk12.org, who will be the primary point of contact for this RFP. Ensure that all correspondence and inquiries are addressed to their attention.

Contact Information: Proposals should be sent to Maya.Nicholas@aimsk12.org. This must include an email address, phone number, or any other relevant contact details provided for the contact person.

Format: Proposals must be formatted as PDF documents. This ensures consistency in the review process and preserves the integrity of your submission.

Email Submissions: Submission must be via email; send your proposal to Maya.Nicholas@aimsk12.org. Please include the RFP title and your company name in the email's subject line.

VIII. Contact Information

For questions or further information, please email Maya.Nicholas@aimsk12.org

IX. Terms and Conditions

In responding to this RFP, the following terms and conditions should be acknowledged and adhered to by all bidding parties:

Compliance: The selected travel agency must comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations in performing their duties.

Insurance: The agency must carry adequate insurance, including but not limited to general liability, worker's compensation, and professional liability insurance. Proof of insurance will be required upon contract award.

Indemnification: The agency shall indemnify and hold harmless AIMS High School, AIMS K-12 College Prep Charter School District, and its officers, employees, and agents from and against all claims, damages, losses, and expenses, including but not limited to attorneys' fees arising out of or resulting from the services provided.

Cancellation Policy: The agency must provide a clear cancellation policy, which will be evaluated as part of the proposal. Any fees associated with cancellation must be disclosed upfront.

Payment Terms: Payment terms will be negotiated upon selection of the winning proposal but typically will include a deposit upon signing of the contract with additional payments structured around the delivery of services.

Confidentiality: All proprietary information disclosed during the RFP process must be kept confidential by the agency and not used for any other purpose than the submission of a proposal.

Conflict of Interest: The agency must disclose any potential conflicts of interest with AIMS or any parties involved in the trip planning and execution.

Termination Clause: The contract will include a termination clause that allows AIMS to terminate the agreement under certain conditions that will be specified in the contract.

Force Majeure: Neither party shall be held responsible for any delay or failure in the performance of any part of the contract to the extent that such delay or failure is caused by fire, flood, explosion, war, terrorism, embargo, government requirement, civil or military authority, act of God, or other similar causes beyond its control and without the fault or negligence of the delayed or non-performing party.

By submitting a proposal, the agency agrees to these terms and conditions. Any exceptions or additional terms an agency proposes must be clearly stated in the proposal for consideration.