



# SOUTHEAST TOURISM SOCIETY

## DOMESTIC SHOWCASE 2021-2023 Invitation to Negotiate Hosting

### I. BACKGROUND

Cities and/or member States bid for the privilege of hosting this prestigious event. After considering bids from Host Cities/States, the STS staff makes recommendations to the STS Board of Directors. Only bids supported by the state tourism office will be considered. Recommendations by the staff are made with the following in mind: availability of preferred dates; transportation/air accessibility; host hotel availability; compatibility of the Convention Center with the space requirements. It is preferred that the host hotel and convention center be contained in the same complex or adjacent. In addition, STS prioritizes cities that are actively marketing themselves as a leisure tourism destination and are interested in increasing tourism business.

### II. DATES

The preferred meeting pattern is Sunday arrival through Wednesday departure with pre and post rooms offered at the same rate. Preferred time frame is mid-February through mid-March, as specified below in Section IV – Housing and in the Meeting Space Requirements outlined in Section VI – Exhibit and Event Facilities. Dates must be selected to avoid conflict with other travel industry organizations and holidays.

Cities/States that have hosted Domestic Showcase are:

<b>1983</b> Tampa, FL	<b>1995</b> Atlanta, GA	<b>2007</b> Myrtle Beach, SC
<b>1984</b> Little Rock, AR	<b>1996</b> Myrtle Beach, SC	<b>2008</b> Biloxi/Gulfport, MS
<b>1985</b> Louisville, KY	<b>1997</b> Louisville, KY	<b>2009</b> Kissimmee, FL
<b>1986</b> Virginia Beach, VA	<b>1998</b> Gulfport/Biloxi, MS	<b>2010</b> Birmingham, AL
<b>1987</b> Orlando, FL	<b>1999</b> Greensboro, NC	<b>2011</b> Atlanta, GA
<b>1988</b> Memphis, TN	<b>2000</b> Charleston, SC	<b>2012</b> Louisville, KY
<b>1989</b> New Orleans, LA	<b>2001</b> New Orleans, LA	<b>2013</b> Little Rock, AR
<b>1990</b> Atlanta, GA	<b>2002</b> Hot Springs, AR	<b>2014</b> Charleston, WV
<b>1991</b> Winston-Salem, NC	<b>2003</b> Savannah, GA	<b>2015</b> Shreveport-Bossier, LA
<b>1992</b> Birmingham, AL	<b>2004</b> Mobile, AL	<b>2016</b> Winston-Salem, NC
<b>1993</b> Little Rock, AR	<b>2005</b> Memphis, TN	<b>2017</b> Branson, MO
<b>1994</b> Nashville, TN	<b>2006</b> Richmond, VA	<b>2018</b> Mississippi Gulf Coast
		<b>2019</b> Myrtle Beach, SC
		<b>2020</b> Baton Rouge, LA

### III. SCHEDULE FORMAT

Sat	Sun		Mon	Tues	Wed - Sat
Move – in Exhibit Hall	Registration		Continental Breakfast	Continental Breakfast	<b>Post-Conference Product Development Tours</b> Up to 3 niche tours offered in southern region. Air or land transportation must be included back to Host City
	Optional City Tours		Marketplace #1	Marketplace #3	
	Educational Session #1 Suppliers	Educational Session #1 Buyers	Lunch	Lunch	
	Educational Session #2 Suppliers	Educational Session #2 Buyers			
Volunteer Meeting	Educational Session #3 Suppliers	Educational Session #3 Buyers	Marketplace #2	Marketplace #4	
	<b>Opening Celebration 7:00</b>		<b>Journalist Dinner 7:00pm</b>	<b>Final Night Reception 7:00</b>	

### IV. HOST REQUIREMENTS

The official hosts for Showcase are the City and the State in which the event is held. Individual hotels submitting bids will not be considered unless accompanied by an endorsement from the Host City **and** the State Office of Tourism or its equivalent. The economic impact of the 4-day/3-night program to the Host City varies from \$650,000 to \$800,000 depending on the market and delegates. Host responsibilities include:

1. The closing night dinner / reception at Showcase the year prior to hosting. In addition, the Hosts have the option of providing an in-room gift on the evening of the closing night reception. *(Cost of gifts and delivery charges are additional)*
2. City tours on Sunday to encourage delegates to arrive early, filling hotel rooms and showcasing local attractions.
3. Staffing the City Tour Desk and Local Restaurants Concierge throughout the program and during registration hours.
4. An Opening Celebration reception and dinner function, either stand-up or sit-down meal, on Sunday evening. The Hosts also have the option of providing an in-room gift on opening night. *(Cost of gifts and delivery charges are additional)*
5. Complimentary motor coach transfers for all delegates must be provided by the Host City for off-site venues and tours. Transportation management oversight assistance is provided by STS at no charge to the Hosts.

## **HOST REQUIREMENTS continued...**

6. Complimentary airport transfers are considered customary in second-tier cities without existing exceptional public transportation. STS strongly recommends transportation from the airport, although it does not have to be complimentary.
7. The Host City must provide up to 8 dedicated volunteers to STS during Showcase registration hours on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. *Additional volunteers will be necessary to execute hosted events (airport welcome, city tours, transportation, etc.)*
8. Arranging a Local Restaurants Concierge where delegates dine at their own expense in city restaurants.
9. The State may host FAM tours for the approximately 150 - 200 tour operator and journalist delegates attending. The tours should begin on Wednesday morning and return to the Host City before noon on Saturday. Complimentary accommodations should be provided for the tour operators during the familiarization tours. *A 2016 Showcase economic impact study conducted by Southeastern Institute of Research reports that 86% of tour operators are more likely to feature a destination or attraction in future programs after participating in a FAM or City tour.*
10. Assistance communicating with the local media and staffing the press room during Showcase. In addition, journalists attending Showcase may have specific requests regarding tours, story ideas, etc.
11. We strongly recommend and prioritize bids that include buyer recruitment marketing and incentive programs. *(incentive mailings, travel assistance, etc.)*

## **STS is prepared to provide:**

1. A hosted journalist program to compliment the tour operator/buyer program. STS will work with a Public Relations (PR) vendor, and PR staff of the Host State and City, to recruit, vet and credential journalists in North America.
2. Complimentary registration for the Host City to include one appointment book and two delegates.
3. An unlimited number of badges for functions sponsored by the Host City/State.
4. Complimentary full-page ad in the Delegate Directory to promote the opening-night event or recognize sponsors.
5. Host City/State featured in Showcase electronic marketing and mailings to STS's database of North American travel buyers and journalists.
6. Access to STS travel buyer and journalist mailing list/labels prior to Showcase.
7. Year-long promotion at trade-shows and mailings of the Showcase Host City/State.

## V. EXHIBIT AND EVENT FACILITIES

The bidding City and State organizations must guarantee, at no cost to STS, the exclusive 24-hour use of a climate-controlled exhibit and meeting space in a hotel or convention center and equipment to meet the following requirements:

### A. EXHIBIT AND EVENT SPACE

Exclusive use of the meeting space described below following the pattern in Section II, and the meeting space outline on page 8.

**NOTE:** The amount of space (area) listed below is considered ideal. However, some exceptions will be considered. Examples of such exceptions include exhibit space in two adjacent or connected areas, slightly smaller space in second tier cities (possibly resulting in slightly lower overall attendance) if adequate space for registration exists in the lobby or foyer, etc.

1. Exhibit space – Approximately 70,000 - 80,000 square feet of exhibit space to accommodate (275) 8' X 10' booths plus a 3,000 sq. feet exhibitor lounge for breaks/refreshment areas and registration. Space should be available for set up no later than 8:00 am the Saturday prior to the Showcase starting date and be available until noon the day after Showcase closes. STS will carpet (wall-to-wall) the exhibit hall area at its own expense. However, the availability of carpeted space would be an advantage.
2. Meal Space - The meal function room requires 18,000 - 22,000 square feet of space. The Showcase meeting facility must have adequate food preparation and service facilities to prepare and serve quality meals for up to 700 within the time periods prescribed by STS. Meal function rooms must be carpeted and must not have significant visual obstructions such as multiple support columns. Meal function rooms must be able to accommodate hanging trusses for lights and audio and must have at least two 100 amp, 3-phase electrical circuits to support the equipment.
3. Showcase breakfasts and luncheons must be held “on site” at the exhibit facility. STS permits dinner sponsors to select unique sites for their functions, with final approval from the organization. STS will not accept penalties from the host site, facilities or vendors for this policy.
4. A lockable storage area for meal function sponsors must be available on a 24-hour basis beginning at 8:00 am on the move-in day of Showcase. In the event the exhibit hall is located away from the host hotel(s), complimentary motorcoach transportation must be provided by the Host City in case of inclement weather or physical distance.
5. Exhibit space, ballroom and seminar rooms in the meeting facility must be provided complimentary. No portion of the exhibit space, ballroom or seminar rooms can be paid for with hotel rebates attached to the room rate quoted to STS.
6. Convention center and/or exhibit space must be in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and in full compliance with all city, state and federal fire safety regulations.
7. A staffed business center with copying and shipping capabilities for delegate use is recommended. (*Shipping services primarily on the final day of Marketplace.*)
8. Please indicate the facility smoking policy. Non-smoking facilities are preferred.

## **B. EQUIPMENT AND LABOR**

1. Chairs and 60" or 72" round tables of 8 or 10 respectively for up to 700 delegates in the meal function room must be provided.
2. Adequate equipment including risers, tables, steps, skirting and related items for the stage in the meal function area.
3. In-house public address system in the exhibit hall, basic audio-visual services, janitorial services, room set-up and other standard equipment and services as required must be available.
4. Facility must be compatible with the use of cellular telephones.

## **C. CATERING AND EXHIBIT/DECORATOR SERVICE**

1. STS retains the right to select the food service caterer, AV production company and the general services contractor unless exclusive written contracts exist between the meeting facility and preferred vendors.
2. STS works exclusively with southern-based vendors and attempts to work with in-state vendors where possible.
3. Showcase travels with its preferred decorator and production company. Any exclusive contracts beyond catering could prevent selection of a city. Please indicate all exclusive contractual obligations in the written bid.
4. Any preferred local vendors will be considered in the RFP process.

## VI. HOUSING

1. It is preferable that all accommodations for delegates be located in the same hotel. However, if more than one property is required, the hotels or Host City / State are responsible for providing shuttles to and from the host hotel / convention center for all official Showcase functions, as well as shuttles between the hotels. If two hotels are used, they should be within two blocks of each other. If more than one hotel is needed, assistance may be required by the Host City's housing bureau. Requested block for Showcase:

Requested Showcase Room Block							
Day	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES	
Supplier	0	0	40	238	238	238	10% commissionable
Buyer	0	4	25	120	120	120	
Journalist	0	0	10	30	30	30	Comp wi-fi
Staff	5	12	12	12	12	12	
<i>Total</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>87</i>	<i>400</i>	<i>400</i>	<i>400</i>	

2. Rooms should be offered on a two-tiered rate structure: one rate for Suppliers and a substantially lower rate for Buyers. STS is responsible for payment of 3 nights' (Sunday – Tuesday) room and tax for Buyer accommodations.
3. STS will not agree to pay sleeping room attrition charges, nor agree to food and beverage attrition clauses.
4. Conference rates should be made available to delegates 3 days prior and 3 days post conference.
5. If more than one hotel is used, the Host may make arrangements for Suppliers to use a housing bureau or online reservation system. Reservations for Buyer delegates will be made at the host hotel from a rooming list provided by STS.
6. Complimentary rooms will be provided by the host hotel to journalists (30 rooms for 3 nights). These rooms should include complimentary Wi-Fi internet.
7. Complimentary rooms will be provided by the host hotel to STS staff (12 for the duration of the Marketplace) regardless of room nights sold. In addition, a comp, two-bedroom suite (or comparable) should also be provided for STS.
8. In recognition of these concessions, STS waives the standard complimentary policy of one room per a specified number of nights sold. Any additional journalists and/or staff shall be assigned the buyer rate.
9. The host hotel(s) are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990.
10. We request 10% commission on all supplier room nights to be paid directly to STS.

**VII. AIR SERVICE**

The Host City must be easily accessible by major air carriers offering jet service throughout the U.S. and Canada. It is preferred that the airport is less than one-half hour commute from the host accommodations. Approximately 45% of the delegates fly to the Host City.

**VIII. DEADLINE and PROCEDURE**

Bids are due May 24, 2019. Bids should include a signed copy of this RFP and address the various items mentioned in this document, including sponsorships, available dates, etc. Bids should be sent (e-mail is acceptable) to [Wendy Thomas](mailto:Wendy.Thomas@SoutheastTourism.org) at Southeast Tourism Society.

Wendy Thomas, TMP  
Southeast Tourism Society  
555 Sun Valley Dr, Suite E-5  
Roswell, GA 30076-5624  
Wendy@SoutheastTourism.org

Upon acceptance of this agreement proposal, this document will serve as a contract between the Host State and City and STS. The undersigned has the authority to bind the organization to this contract.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Host State)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Host City)

**MEETING AND EXHIBIT SPACE REQUIREMENTS**  
(Subject to change. Square footages are approximate.)

**Day One (Friday)**

Mid-day Showcase Pre-Con meeting

**Day Two (Saturday)**

8:00 am (24 hour basis) Exhibit hall for set-up (70,000 to 80,000 sq. ft.)  
8:00 am (24 hour basis) 500 sq. feet for Staff Office  
1,000 sq. feet for Storage Room  
Additional space for Business Center/Coat Check if necessary

**Day Three (Sunday)**

8:00 am (24 hour basis) Exhibit hall for set-up and for Registration unless registration is outside the exhibit hall (see section VI A)  
8:00 am (24 hour basis) 500 sq. feet for Staff Office  
1,000 sq. feet for Storage Room  
(2) 1000 sq. feet Rooms for (2) Educational Sessions/Theatre Set-Up for 100  
Board Room –15 people, conference-style  
Coat Check options  
8:00 am (24 hour basis) Ballroom for staging, rigging, AV set-up. 18,000 - 22,000 sq. ft.  
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm \* Opening Reception for 500-600 (possibly held off-site)

**Day Four (Monday)**

8:00 am (24 hour basis) Exhibit hall for Marketplace and Registration  
8:00 am (24 hour basis) 500 sq. feet for Staff Office  
1,000 sq. feet for Storage Room  
Coat Check if necessary  
8:00 am (24 hour basis) Ballroom for meals  
8:00 am – 9:00 am Breakfast  
12:30 pm – 2:00 pm Lunch  
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm Free Night

**Day Five (Tuesday)**

8:00 am (24 hour basis) Exhibit hall for Marketplace and Registration  
8:00 am (24 hour basis) 500 sq. feet for Staff Office  
1,000 sq. feet for Storage Room  
Coat Check if necessary  
8:00 am (24 hour basis) Ballroom  
8:00 am – 9:00 am Breakfast  
12:30 pm – 2:00 pm Lunch  
12:30 pm – 5:00 pm Exhibit hall move out  
2:00 pm – 6:00 pm Ballroom move-out  
6:30 pm Final Night Reception/Dinner  
6:00 pm (until Noon Wed) General Service Contractor (decorator) tear down and move out