

TERMS OF REFERENCE

DEVELOPMENT OF A TOURISM STRATEGY FOR MONTSERRAT

Introduction

The Government of Montserrat (GoM) intends to develop a Tourism Strategy following the finalisation of a Tourism Master Plan to aid in attracting financial assistance to implement a series of projects. It will also be used to guide the Tourism Masterplan in achieving its aims and objectives.

1. Background

- Tourism has traditionally been a significant contributor to the economy of Montserrat. However in 1995 and in subsequent years following, the Soufriere Hills Volcano dealt a severe blow to Montserrat which severely impacted the tourism industry, resulting in the loss of many major attractions and amenities - villas, golf course, Galways Soufriere, Great Alps Waterfall, the airport and the former capital, Plymouth. Many of its inhabitants and regular/resident visitors left the island during that period resulting in a loss of more than 7,000 inhabitants. The population has since stabilised at around 5,000 people.
- The Government of Montserrat (GoM) is committed to re-launching Montserrat as a sought after tourism destination, following the volcanic eruptions and thereby approved a National Tourism Master Plan (TMP) 2015 – 2025, and a National Tourism Policy in 2016. A Tourism Brand was also completed in 2016, resulting in a new logo and tag line for the island which states: “**Come. We have time for you.**” Also completed was a Capacity Building and Organisation Development Report.
- The Master Plan focuses on three growth scenarios to propel tourism development. The Medium Growth Scenario has been looked at, as the most favourable, given the current circumstances, as it focuses on re-establishing Tourism as the ‘driver’ of the economy, therefore fulfilling the role it once had until the volcanic eruptions more than twenty years ago. The emphasis is therefore based on the twin attractions of a volcano and the quiet, unspoiled Caribbean lifestyle that can still be experienced in Montserrat, alongside its other attributes:
 - ‘greenness’...natural unspoilt environment;
 - Peace and tranquillity – get away from it all;
 - Breath-taking views

- Nature trails and adventurous walks
 - Marine life
 - Safety and security;
 - warm, welcoming, friendly people;
 - affordable luxury;
 - intimacy – a private hideaway – no mass tourism, and
 - authenticity - a distinctive, cultural heritage.
- The successful Bidder will be responsible for developing the Tourism Strategy including a well thought out Action Plan for a number of projects.

Montserrat Tourism Division

- Following the closure of the Montserrat Development Corporation, the Tourism Division has been subsumed under the Office of the Premier and is responsible for developing and undertaking national and international initiatives in the field of marketing tourism, promotion, research, product development and training and for setting standards. The mandate of the Tourism Division is to be a major catalyst of socio-economic recovery, growth and redevelopment of Montserrat.

Purpose and Objectives

- The purpose of this ITT is to develop an effective, practical and feasible community-oriented strategy that is uniquely tailored to suit the island.
- The Primary goal of this project is to assist the island in the preparation of a detailed Tourism Strategy with suitable actions for several key projects in keeping with the cultural, social and economic aspirations thereby charting a way for the tourism sector in Montserrat. This will contribute to improving tourism sustainability in general and economic benefits for the population in particular, with focus on gender sensitivity.
- The objectives in developing a Three Year Strategic Plan are:
 - i. To consult and work closely with tourism stakeholders, community organisations, tourism staff and government ministries in the decision-making
 - ii. To ensure all stakeholders' needs, industry gaps and feasible opportunities are outlined

- iii. To provide up-to-date market information, marketing, social media and communications strategies
 - iv. To develop a comprehensive Strategy to encompass the future development of the Tourism industry
 - v. To capture environmental concerns between tourism, land-use and biodiversity
 - vi. To incorporate and strategically evaluate/include eco-friendly principles in strategic choices.
- 3.4. In realising the above objectives, the following vision statement and guiding principles for Montserrat to 2025 has been elaborated:
- An exclusive private hideaway – authentic, peaceful, safe, unhurried. Affordable luxury accommodation would be provided in villas, small to medium-sized resorts and guesthouses/inns, with culinary excellence available in a variety of eateries. The backdrop is unspoilt nature with a range of things to-see-and-do...exploring the Plymouth Volcano Reserve and GeoPark, walking/hiking and bird watching in the Centre and Silver Hills, scuba diving and fishing in the Marine Reserve, yachting, golf and joining in the fun of the many festivals. Through imaginative and synthetic reconstruction, Little Bay and Salem Heritage Village have become focal points – providing a sense of 'place' where visitors and locals congregate to mingle, dine and relax...*

4 Scope of Work

Translate the Tourism Master Plan into a prioritised Strategy and Action Plan that demonstrates a practical, realistic and achievable path to a self-sustaining, economic development model which will focus on a time bound plan of activities which will span over three (3) years, which can be realistically implemented with appropriate staff and available skill set.

In meeting the objectives, the consultancy should take a number of factors into account. These include but are not limited to:

- 4.1. Review and analyse the current Tourism Master Plan and Tourism Policy, together with any other tourism-related documents with a view to preparing a detailed medium-term Tourism Strategy and Action Plan.

Conservation of the Natural Environment

The natural environment is fundamental to Montserrat's appeal, it must therefore be protected and enhanced.

- 4.2. Provide technical advice related to ecotourism with links to eco-friendly projects as identified in the Tourism Master Plan and the opportunities to be derived from these projects. Focus should be placed on a pilot Mixed Use Marine Reserve; Plymouth as a Volcano Reserve/Geopark and a 21st Century Pompeii.
- 4.3. In an effort to increase environmental awareness, propose an Environmental Awareness Strategy and Campaign to include but not limited to, the media, publications, promotions, institutions, the public. Additionally, propose ways to encourage stakeholders to adopt environmentally friendly practises which can enhance visitor experiences.

Visitor Attractions and Amenities

In order for Montserrat to re-enforce its position as an 'unspoilt, authentic and breath-taking destination, the economy needs support through a number of initiatives:

- 4.4 Provide a comprehensive Action Plan which outlines the benefits of, as well as provide guidance in developing and or enhancing key visitor attractions and amenities including: A Volcano Interpretive Centre (VIC); Key Volcano Viewing Sites and Attractions – Richmond Hill, Garibaldi Hill, Jack Boy Hill, Little Bay Water Front and other key beaches, Geopark, Biopark, Arrow's Heritage House, Hot Water Pond, Sugar Mills. Create visibility through sign posting.

Expand and diversify the Tourism Product

Montserrat has the potential to improve its niche products but much is yet to be done to realise this.

- 4.5. Define the benefits of residential villa tourism and determine strategic options to optimise on this specific market.
- 4.6. Suggest unique and innovative ways to improve, expand and diversify the tourism offers to include inter alia yachting, hiking, bird watching, sports tourism, mountain biking, Volcano Half Marathon and other activities, day-visitor activities/options, cruise tourism and health and wellness.

Focused and Cost Effective Destination Marketing

Montserrat is considered off the beaten track and with limited resources, and access constraints, marketing efforts have been challenging.

- 4.7. In consulting the Tourism Master Plan, elaborate a comprehensive strategic approach to Destination Marketing to include target markets, marketing opportunities, trends, competitors, Marketing and Promotion methods (including digital or direct) all of which should fit into Montserrat's unique offer.
- 4.8. Propose best practices in digital marketing.
- 4.9. Identify opportunities for marketing, investment and development of eco- tourism experiences to raise the profile of Montserrat.
- 4.10. Provide evidence-based review of the 'low volume – high-end' tourism market. The review should refine current and future growth trends and clearly define Montserrat's potential to attract investment and compete favourably in this market place.

Upgrade Quality and service standards

Providing high quality products and services are at the core of the island's vision.

- 1.13 Highlight the importance of industry regulations and provide a clear picture of skills training requirements for the sector. Focus should not only be placed on the training interventions identified in the Master Plan but a more unique approach to training and retaining staff should be demonstrated. Additionally, recommend ways to educate the locals and residents of their individual roles in tourism which should aid at improving visitor experience.
- 4.14. Recommend ways to monitor and evaluate the suggested strategies

5. Competencies and skills required

Post Graduate Degree in at least one of the following fields: tourism, economics, finance, business administration.

Minimum of 5 years' project management and product development experience, preferably in tourism development or

Minimum of 5 years' tourism marketing experience working with national tourism organisations and the public and private sectors in the tourism industry and counterpart organisations.

Knowledge of donor agencies and their systems and processes together with experience of working with funding agencies both in the private and public sectors.

Experience or knowledge of the Caribbean preferably in the field of tourism development.

Terms of Engagement

6. The Consultancy should commence on the **28th January, 2019**, with an Inception Report due on **1st February, 2019**.

First draft of the Strategy is due on the **20th February, 2019**.

Final Strategy and Action plan due by the **8th March, 2019**.

Reporting and Deliverables

7. The Permanent Secretary, Office of the Premier is in charge of Tourism and will coordinate the project on behalf of the GoM. Support will be provided by the Ministry of Finance and the Tourism Division.