

Virginia Tourism Corporation

Non-Competitive Award Justification

Revision May 2025

NOTE: This form shall be used for all purchases of goods and non-professional services \$15,001 or more that are not being competed or do not fit under one of the other procurement methods outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual. It is also required for Non-Competitive Award Marketing Exception Awards for goods and non-professional services when the dollar amount is \$200,000 or more, and professional services or non-transportational related construction is \$80,000 or more.

To: Procurement Office

Date Request Submitted: **August 8, 2025**

Name of Person Submitting Request: **Heidi Johannesen**

OVERVIEW

VTC's Policies and Procedures Manual recognizes several procurement methods, one of which is a Non-Competitive Award. (See Section 4.8 of VTC's Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual.) A purchase of goods or services may be considered for a Non-Competitive Award if there is one source more feasible to meet VTC's immediate needs, even if there are multiple sources available. Authorization of a Non-Competitive Award indicates that in management's judgment, the chosen vendor best meets VTC's needs to supply the required good or service and in a timely manner.

A non-competitive award procurement is based on the need to procure a unique good or service and that unique good or service is not widely available, or has limited availability, or is essential to meet VTC's requirements. As a result, a non-competitive award procurement represents a unique exception to the requirements for competition. Completion of this form is intended to document, affirm, and justify the need for this product or service to be provided by a specific vendor in order to meet VTC's essential requirements.

Please note:

- Non-competitive awards are subject to VTC policy, audit, FOIA, and public review.
- Vendors are **not** permitted to complete this form on behalf of VTC.
- Price and delivery are **not** factors determining if a product/service is a non-competitive award.
- The final determination of non-competitive award justification validity will be made by the VP of Operations and Finance.
- Submission of this form constitutes acknowledgement the requester, or any VTC staff, has no personal, financial, or fiduciary relationship with the recommended vendor.

Pursuant to Section 4.8 of the VTC Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual, this is a request to award the goods and services listed below to the vendor listed below without competition as justified below.

DOCUMENTATION

Proposed Vendor to Receive Award: **Ink Global**

Vendor Point of Contact (name and email): **Elias Manneh, elias.manneh@ink-global.com**

Detailed Description of Product/Services: **Ink Global is a strategic media partner supporting the Virginia Tourism Corporation's efforts to reach international travelers through print, digital and social media platforms. In collaborating, VTC and Ink Global provide greater opportunities for Virginia partners and businesses to expand their global footprint while targeting potential customers through first-party airline audience data. Leveraging Ink's exclusive access to this first-party data, including traveler profiles, booking behavior, and destination preferences, partners can deliver more targeted and effective messaging.**

Expected/Approximate date of Award. If services, duration/period of performance: **Upon execution through June 30, 2026, with four one-year options to renew**

Anticipated Value of Award. Note: If it is for a one-year period with optional one-year renewal periods, provide details on the anticipated initial dollar amount along with costs for renewals and how many. The initial period is not to exceed one year with no more than 4 one-year renewal options, unless otherwise approved by the VP of Operations and Finance. Automatic renewals are not allowed:

Estimated value of award is expected to be over \$200,000, but the exact figure will depend on the level of partner participation.

1. Please provide a brief background summary for why you need the product/services. Why is the requested product/services the only one that can satisfy your requirements? Provide specific details on any unique features of the product/services that are not available in any other product/services and are essential to your required minimum performance.

Ink Global is uniquely positioned to elevate awareness of Virginia as a premier travel destination while driving measurable results in consideration and bookings. Ink uses data, traveler insights, and behavioral trends to create personalized and effective media placements, improving ROI and audience relevance. While they operate on a global scale, Ink tailors content and campaigns to regional markets and languages, offering partners cultural authenticity and strategic localization. These features, particularly the exclusive airline data access and multi-market content localization, are essential to achieving our international marketing goals and are not replicable by any other provider. Ink's deep understanding of the VA product, travel

mindset and access to global travelers make them the only partner delivering the personalized, performance-driven initiatives we require.

2. Why is this vendor the most feasible available source from which to obtain this product/service? Provide specific details on the expertise, experience and/or capabilities that support why the requested vendor is the most feasible, unique, and best choice without seeking competition to provide the required product/service that best meets VTC's needs. Note that if this product/service is available through multiple distributors, then provide specific details on why this product/service should not be competed.

Virginia Tourism Corporation and Ink Global have been working together for over three years. Ink is the world's leading travel media company with exclusive media partnerships with over 30 airlines, including U.S. and international carriers. This gives them direct access to a highly engaged, affluent, and global audience in a travel mindset. By partnering with Ink, Virginia gains access to a trusted, award-winning media company with deep expertise in aviation and travel marketing, proven success in storytelling, and a strong global distribution network. This partnership provides measurable value through extended reach, brand alignment with premium travel audiences, and data-driven marketing strategies designed to inspire visitation and boost economic impact.

3. Alternative vendors and products/services should be researched to substantiate why this is the most feasible source. What are the names of the vendors and products/services that were researched? What were the specific performance requirements that could not be met to make conducting a formal solicitation unnecessary or not in the best interest of VTC.

Other vendors were not researched due to Ink Global's exclusive access to this first-party airline audience data, it's extensive network of airline partnerships and deep knowledge of Virginia.

4. If no other vendors were considered, please denote **at least** one of the following:

- Exclusive distribution
- Integral part or accessory compatible with existing equipment
- Maintenance service for existing equipment
- Renewal License to existing software/services
- Upgrade or maintenance for existing software
- Used in research and is required to provide continuity of results
- Copyrighted or patented and only available from the recommended source
- Considerable re-orientation and training would be required
- Vendor specifically named in a grant and/or grant proposal
- Other [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

5. Will this purchase obligate the VTC to this vendor for future purchases (e.g., annual support/maintenance and/or future upgrade requirements)? If yes, provide details regarding the duration of any potential commitments as well as the estimated costs for such commitments.

No

6. Based on my professional experience and knowledge of the marketplace, submission of this document constitutes acknowledgment that the price offered is considered to be fair and reasonable based on **at least** one of the following:

- Prices charged for similar items
- Prices paid by other customers
- A Public price list or public catalog
- Historical/past pricing
- Other/stakeholder justification: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

7. In certain circumstances negotiations may have already taken place. Has the department already negotiated with the vendor or secured discounts? If so, please provide additional details.

No

8. Additional Information not already provided above.

N/A

If purchase request above is for goods or non-professional services under \$200,000 or professional services or non-transportational related construction under \$80,000, skip to approval section below.

If purchase request above is for goods or non-professional services of \$200,000 or more or for professional services or non-transportation-related construction of \$80,000 or more, and not already addressed elsewhere in the policies and procedures, then in addition to completing the requested information above, please provide the information requested below in items 9., 10., and 11., along with the approval section.

Pursuant to Section 4.15 of the VTC Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual, for purchases of goods or nonprofessional services of \$200,000 or more or for professional services or non-transportation-related construction of \$80,000 or more, not already addressed elsewhere in these policies and procedures, VTC shall not be required to seek competition or competitive negotiations if VTC determines in writing that such purchase contributes to the public purpose and mission of the VTC as described in §2.2-2315. VTC shall state in such writing (a) an explanation of such determination, (b) that which is being purchased, (c) the contractor selected for such purchase, (d) the date of the award of such contract and (e) the relationship of such

purchase to the public purpose and mission of the Authority. The determination and justification shall be approved by the VP of Operations and Finance prior to any such purchase taking place. Such notice shall be posted for a period of one year on VTC's website (vatc.org) on the day the VTC awards or announces its decision to award such contract, whichever occurs first.

9. Please provide an explanation of the determination that such purchase contributes to the public purpose and mission of the VTC as described in §2.2-2315.

The partnership with Ink Global advances the VTC public mission to expand international inbound travel and generate economic benefits for the Commonwealth by increasing Virginia's visibility in key overseas markets through targeted, audience outreach that drives awareness, interest, and visitation. By customizing content to regional audiences, Ink ensures that Virginia's tourism messaging connects effectively with international travelers with the goal of attracting more visitors and generating economic growth across Virginia.

10. Please provide the relationship of such purchase to the public purpose and mission of the VTC.

The services provided by Ink Global directly support the Virginia Tourism Corporation's mission to promote increased inbound travel and generate economic impact across the Commonwealth. As a global travel media leader with exclusive access to airline audiences and first-party traveler data, Ink Global enables VTC to elevate its international strategy by targeting high-intent travelers in key overseas markets. This strategic partnership allows VTC to promote the state's diverse tourism offerings such as attractions, hotels, restaurants, and experiences to international audiences actively planning travel. Ink's multi-media approach ensures that Virginia's message reaches travelers throughout their journey, enhancing awareness, engagement, and ultimately visitation.

11. Additional Information not already provided above.

N/A

Department Approval:

I am the authorized approver of my department and on behalf of my department, I certify that the information submitted is accurate and complete. I understand that this document is subject to VTC policy, audit, foia, and public review.

Department: **Global Marketing**

Name: **Heidi Johannessen**

Signature: *Heidi Johannessen*

Date: August 8, 2025

Appropriate VP Approval: *Catherine Marshburn*

Final Approval of VP of Operations and Finance is required below in order to proceed.

VP of Operations and Finance

Approved: _____

Not Approved: _____

Comments: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)