



New Business Opportunity Open Call

Title	Cultural Guided Tours Partner
Deadline for submissions	9am, Monday 25 th February 2019
Contact details	Rebecca Davies, Destination Management Co-ordinator, TDA. rebecca.davies@tda.uk.net

1. Introduction

Torbay's Destination Management Group, including Torbay Culture, TDA and the English Riviera BID Company, is working to drive and develop the local visitor economy. A key focus is on attracting new cultural tourists to the English Riviera, as an all year-round destination.

Through a programme of joint-working and research across the tourism sector led by Wonder Associates and Canny Marshall as part of Torbay's Great Place Scheme, we've identified the opportunity to introduce a new guided tour offer.

2. The Opportunity

An immediate partner is sought to deliver guided tours across the English Riviera (Brixham, Paignton and Torquay). This is an opportunity that we (Torbay Culture, TDA, English Riviera BID Company) would support in-kind and which the partner would wholly own as a commercial enterprise.

We are interested to hear from established businesses, emerging start-up businesses and freelance individuals from South Devon.

In response to our research findings and vision (see https://www.torbayculture.org/s/OPEN_CT_VISION_FINDINGS_10DEC-ybf9.pdf), we're seeking a guided tours partner to help us develop and trial the following during summer 2019:

- Offer visitors new, interesting and unconventional tours. We are inspired by brands like Museum Hack - <https://museumhack.com/> - and tours that seek to uncover hidden stories in new ways.
- Deliver high quality tours on a consistent basis, and on a variety of topics. The key here is guaranteed availability throughout the year. We look to brands like the Exeter Red Coat Guides: <https://exeter.gov.uk/guidedtours/>
- Work with us to ensure all the individual guides go through training and development and have the right insurance. Ultimately, we'd like the new tour guides to reach for award-winning status.

- Develop an accessible and scaling pricing structure for tours targeted at customers/audiences from families to independent adults. This should be competitive and even seek to drive loyalty.
- All tours must be book-able online. We will support you in finding the right online solution for this.

You would be an important partner in achieving our vision for the English Riviera, and as such we will support you by offering significant benefits in-kind, including:

- Access to senior stakeholders in the sector
- Branding with graphic design support
- Collated itineraries and storytelling across certain topics
- Audience testing with real people
- Promotional marketing materials
- Leverage and distribution network both offline and online
- Access to TDA Business Advisor
- Signposting in the physical TIC and online through the ERBID website

3. Submission and Selection Process

Applications to be received by 9am, Monday 25th February 2019 to tenders@tda.uk.net

Please provide your CV and a statement of no more than 1,000 words telling us:

- Your current and/or suggested business set-up and business experience
- Your concept for an approach to offer guided tours in the English Riviera
- A summary of how you will work with partners and the wider sector
- Your capacity to work on and deliver trial tours by summer 2019
- Your full contact details: name, company name (if relevant), postal address, email, phone number and website or social media (if relevant)
- Contact details for two references

For any advance questions or request for an informal conversation before the deadline, please email tenders@tda.uk.net quoting 'Cultural Guided Tours Partner – open call'.

4. Selection Process and Timetable

Activity	Description	Dates
Business Opportunity launched		w/c 4 th Feb
Closing date for applications	Applications to be sent by email to tenders@tda.uk.net	9am, 25 th Feb
Interviews	Shortlisted applicants are invited to interview	w/c 25 th Feb – potentially 27 th /28 th
Work begins		w/c 11 th March

Note: These dates are given as a guide only and may be subject to change.

5. Additional Background

Torbay adopted a new ten year [Cultural Strategy](#) in 2015 and partners across the destination are working with [Torbay Culture](#) to transform cultural provision and engagement in the region. With support from Arts Council England and a recent grant of £1.2m from the new [Great Place Scheme](#), we are investing heavily in our cultural infrastructure and heritage assets to ensure that everyone living, working and visiting the English Riviera has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by arts and culture, and that culture is shaping the local area by placing it at the heart of local vision.

We believe that arts, culture and heritage has the power to transform communities and change lives. This is the vision of the Great Place Scheme, that Torbay has a thriving, sustainable, valued and high quality cultural offer that is embedded in all parts of life. 'Shaping Place' is one of the four strands of Torbay's Great Place Scheme, delivering work that is designed to animate, improve, re-imagine and re-generate different spaces and places across the destination. Destination Management is one of four projects within the 'Shaping Place' strand.

In 2017, Torbay adopted a new, [English Riviera Destination Management Plan 2017-2022](#). The DMP adopts a shared approach between key stakeholders to effectively manage tourism for the whole destination and sets the framework for the ongoing development of the English Riviera visitor economy. The Plan aligns collaborative effort by setting out a series of agreed actions, to be delivered in partnership with local stakeholders through the (new) Destination Management Group.

The DMG has the shared vision to develop the English Riviera's visitor economy by achieving the Plan's outcomes:

- Increasing visitor numbers and spend
- Extending the season beyond the school holiday periods
- Attracting new visitors (UK and International)
- Attracting investment and reinvestment

- Ensuring sustainable delivery of marketing activity for the destination
- Improved quality of accommodation offer
- Improved infrastructure, parking and retail offer
- Improved hotel occupancy throughout the year
- Improved visitor satisfaction results and recommendation rates across all areas
- Increased number of businesses taking up training opportunities
- Better connection with education providers and take up of apprenticeships
- Improving the perception of tourism of a career choice, retaining skills and local talent

Our tourism industry is worth £450m and provides 21% of our jobs. Yet the DMP highlights an over-reliance on repeat visitors (87%) and a sharp drop off in visits outside of peak season. The Plan identifies the need to expand our visitor base (UK and International), with cultural tourists as a key new market. To do this, we must address the gap between what people *want* and what they *expect* to find in the English Riviera. We know that two thirds of non-visitors seek heritage, history and culture, but only half think they will find it here (South West Research Company 2016). As a coastal destination, we need to grow and widen audiences for arts, culture and heritage, sharing with visitors what makes the destination unique.

This piece of work will support Torbay Culture, TDA and the English Riviera BID Company in delivering actions of responsibility within the Destination Management Plan.