



VisitEngland™

*Escape the Everyday: Destination Management
Organisations' Recovery Marketing Fund (Round 2)*

Local Marketing Activation: March – June 2022

Guidance Notes for Applicants

January 2022

Introduction

VisitEngland is launching the next phase of the domestic marketing campaign, *Escape the Everyday* (“the campaign”) in early 2022. The campaign will continue to support the recovery of the English tourism industry by encouraging a pre-nester audience to increase their consideration for an England short city break this spring and early summer, by showcasing the breadth of experiences available.

Cities will remain a focus for this next phase of the domestic campaign, as they continue to be impacted by lower levels of international visitors. Cities will also play host to some of 2022’s unmissable events including the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee, UNBOXED and UEFA Women’s EURO 2022, which the campaign will highlight.

The *Escape the Everyday* Destination Management Organisations’ Recovery Marketing Fund (“the Fund”) provides the opportunity for DMOs in England to apply for grant funding to deliver local marketing activities aligned to, and following on from, this national campaign, taking this message forward at a local level for bookings in the spring and early summer period.

DMOs will need to work with local tourism businesses to create *Escape the Everyday* guides and content which must include bookable product ‘experiences’ available for the consumer to purchase on their own destination websites. This will enhance DMO sustainability and support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic by providing opportunities to support businesses and increased choice and information for the consumer in planning and booking domestic breaks and experiences.

The Fund will operate from mid-March to 30 June 2022 with a total budget allocation of up to £1,000,000. DMOs in England that meet the eligibility criteria can apply for a grant of £80,000 to £100,000. A limited number of awards will be made and competition for funds is expected to be high. With this in mind, we would encourage applications that demonstrate partnership working between DMOs to create a stronger product offer and campaign proposition. The Awards Panel will also be looking for alignment with the cities focus of the *Escape the Everyday* campaign and the need states outlined later in this guidance.

Key aims and objectives

The Fund will support the recovery of England’s tourism industry by:

- Amplifying and extending the reach of the domestic *Escape the Everyday* Campaign to England’s destinations through paid local marketing activity. Focusing on city destinations and the priority audiences of:
 - Primary: ABC1 25-34 year-olds, based in the UK with no children in household
 - Secondary: ABC1 35-44-year olds, based in the UK with no children in household
- Generating bookings from the sale of product ‘experiences’ that align with one or more of the campaign need states (outlined later in the guidance) and which can be directly attributed to the Fund activity.

The Fund offers DMOs the following opportunities:

- Ability to feature their destination, messages and products as part of the *Escape the Everyday* campaign and bolster the national campaign with distinctive local content and ideas for a short break or day trip.
- Drive bookings and conversion through consumer-facing DMO websites, aided by a dedicated marketing budget driving traffic to a campaign landing webpage.
- Ability for DMOs to run paid local digital and social media activity raising awareness of their product and driving traffic to their website with the aim of increasing sales revenues for local tourism businesses.
- Track actual consumer booking data and help to understand better the consumer profile of those people booking.
- Provide consumers with example content guides or itineraries that showcase the range of experiences available and encourage them to explore the destination more deeply.
- Ability to generate additional earned value by promoting the featured itineraries through Press and PR channels.

Eligibility criteria

To apply DMOs in England must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Be legally incorporated as either a company limited by shares or guarantee, a community interest company, a local authority tourism services department or a tourism business improvement district (TBID).
- Have a destination consumer-facing website with booking functionality. This means that the consumer can purchase bookable product 'experiences' directly, staying on the DMO website to fulfil their transaction i.e. through their own booking functionality or TXGB¹ or equivalent.
- Have in-house expertise and skilled staff-members in post who will be responsible for the activation and delivery of this local campaign opportunity.
- Have campaign creative for social and digital channels which can easily integrate the *Escape the Everyday* brand look and feel, and messaging. For the sake of clarity, print and 'out of home' (OOH) are media channels that should not be considered because the campaign needs to be agile and responsive if local COVID-19 restrictions quickly change e.g. paid media needs to pause. All local campaign activities will need to be fully delivered between the commencement date stated in your Grant Funding Agreement and the completion date of 30 June 2022.
- By submitting an application you are declaring that if awarded a grant you are complying with and will not exceed the relevant permitted domestic subsidy allowance threshold. If you have any doubt as to your position you must seek appropriate advice before applying as the responsibility lies with your organisation. See 'Subsidy Control' section for detailed information.

¹ See www.txgb.co.uk

The following types of companies and organisations cannot apply:

- Unincorporated DMOs, namely those without any form of legal status;
- Online travel agents;
- Travel agents;
- Destination management companies and inbound tour operators;²
- Industry bodies, and;
- Membership organisations representing solely a sectional interest-group within the tourism and hospitality industries e.g. hotelier associations, attractions groupings.

Guidance for application

Activities to be delivered by DMOs

DMOs must demonstrate that they can deliver the following:

- Feature a minimum target of 10 bookable product ‘experiences’ as the lead experiences for their campaign, from local businesses that will be open during the spring and early summer period. If DMOs submit joint applications the combined product list would be considered. The product selection should show consideration for those with accessibility needs and sustainability.³ For the sake of clarity, these lead experiences need to be bookable online directly on the DMO’s own consumer-facing website.
- Demonstrate alignment with the key *Escape the Everyday* campaign objective of driving the recovery of city destinations.
- Production of content guides or example itineraries⁴ covering the local area that features the participating tourism businesses and signposts consumers to experiences that align with the city-focused *Escape the Everyday* campaign and at least one of the three need-states (see below).
- Create a dedicated *Escape the Everyday* campaign landing page on the DMO website. This must reflect the relevant branding and feature relevant content and bookable product ‘experiences’, with a clear customer journey to fulfil the booking on the website. TXGB (where applicable) can provide a templated landing page if required.
- Develop a channel marketing plan detailing how the DMO intends to promote their *Escape the Everyday* campaign example itinerary or content guide aimed at generating traffic to the website in order to encourage bookings.
- Plan and deliver a paid marketing campaign with *Escape the Everyday* branded assets, to be approved by VisitEngland, across appropriate digital and social media channels to drive traffic to their campaign landing page.
- Commit to using the *Escape the Everyday* toolkit and branding.
- All campaign imagery must have rights cleared for usage across paid, owned and earned channels with the relevant paperwork in place, including model and location releases.
- Submission of a post-campaign report outlining key successes and achievements, including total reach, engagement, social media shares and the value and number of bookable product ‘experiences’ sold.

² There was a separate grant scheme for DMCs/Inbound Tour Operators launched in December 2021

³ An accessible experience must be able to demonstrate that they had considered the needs of their disabled customers in their information, facilities and customer service. The minimum requirement would be to have an Accessibility Guide and/or accessibility information available on the website.

⁴ The example itinerary can be delivered and produced in a number of ways. To assist this, VE will provide a specimen template for producing an example itinerary for different media channels.

Bookable product 'experiences' and need-state segmentation

- Please note that DMOs need to follow the need-state segmentation below when identifying bookable product 'experiences' to include in example itineraries or content guides.
- Bookable product 'experiences' can include attractions, events and tours that available to pre-book. Accommodation could be included up to a maximum of 20% of the campaign lead bookable product 'experiences'. However, you must demonstrate that it contains an experiential element that aligns to the need-states (e.g. sustainability elements, spas, offering workshops, tastings).
- Bookable product 'experiences' should have sufficient forward availability for the campaign period.
- Product selection must focus on priority audiences for the *Escape the Everyday* campaign (as outlined in "Key aims and objectives").
- Proposals must include bookable product 'experiences' that align with at least one (1) of the need-states; *Feel Excited, Feel Good and/or Feel Connected*:
 - **Feel Excited:** *We want to feel excited about the unmissable events taking place in cities across England. We want to make up for lost time and what better way to do it than by experiencing the buzz and excitement of The Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games, The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and The UEFA Women's EURO 2022. These are just some of the major events and festivals in the 2022 calendar and they can only be found here in England.*
 - **Feel Good:** *We want to feel good about the choices we make when taking a city break in England. We want to be more sustainable on our breaks, whether that's staying at places that have a green ethos, eating at zero-waste restaurants, visiting attractions that go the extra mile to conserve energy or taking part in festivals and events that promote sustainable living.*
 - **Feel Connected:** *We want to feel connected and make up for lost time with the family and friends we haven't be able to see. We are looking for fun and engaging experiences that will reignite friendships and create new memories that last. Think paddle boarding or cycling tours in historic cities, bottomless brunches on rooftops with iconic views and experiential theatre productions.*

For more detail on the need-states and examples of product 'experiences' please see the accompanying Toolkit Cover Note. (Note that the *Escape the Everyday* campaign toolkit itself will be updated with the revised need-states only from mid-February)

Support from VisitEngland

Alongside national *Escape the Everyday* Campaign activities, VisitEngland will undertake the following to support the delivery of each successful DMO's local campaign:

- Establish a link from www.visitengland.com to the DMO's *Escape the Everyday* landing webpage.
- Instagram takeover day for each DMO during the campaign period - as many story posts as you want. 2 x static posts. Support from our social team to determine dates.
- Other social support via Facebook and Twitter.
- Provision of the need-states experience grid providing direction for the bookable product experiences which will be featured in the example itinerary.

- Provision of a toolkit, including *Escape the Everyday* branding, for the DMO to use when creating their campaign landing webpage and all other marketing materials promoting the example itinerary.⁵ VE will require sign off approval on all assets.
- Inclusion of DMOs' example itineraries in relevant press and influencer activity.

In addition to the above support from VisitEngland's marketing channels, VisitEngland will also offer each successful DMO the following marketing support and expertise:

Set up phase:

- One-on-one kick-off call with the VisitEngland marketing team – including an introduction to the team and guidance on applying the campaign creative
- Successful DMOs may also be eligible to buy the media through the Government framework agreement with OMD. More information can be found [HERE](#)

Development phase:

- Opportunity for advice from VisitEngland channel experts on media conversion and sales including a workshop on optimising conversion of bookable product
- Approval of media plans

Campaign live phase:

- Amplifying your ETE campaign on VisitEngland's channels
- The opportunity to join performance calls to look at campaign performance and optimise where necessary

COVID-19 implications and contingency planning

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is receding and restrictions have been eased, it will be necessary to remain flexible and should new restrictions be put in place campaigns and media plans may need to be adapted, paused or cancelled.

You will need to ensure that an element of contingency planning is in place for your campaign, including with your chosen media partner to prepare for any possible future changes in restrictions.

Identifying and measuring outcomes and impacts

You will be required to consider the evaluation of your funded activities, and in your application you should specify how the activities that you are proposing will deliver outputs, outcomes and impacts, against the provided KPI framework – **see Annex B**.

You will also be required to submit a post-campaign report outlining key successes and achievements, including total reach, engagement, social media shares and the value and number of bookable product experiences sold.

⁵ VisitEngland will not be able to supply the *Escape the Everyday* fonts due to legal reasons. The DMO will need to purchase the font license themselves from the production portion of their budget.

Funding and eligible activities

DMOs may apply for a grant of £80,000 and £100,000 to cover the cost of local campaign activity delivered between mid-March and the completion date of 30 June 2022.

Any awarded grant may only be spent on the following types of activities and in line with the stated percentages:

- A minimum of 80% of the total grant must be spent on the cost of paid media with third parties in order to reach the largest possible target consumer audience. For the sake of clarity, the grant recipient is directly responsible for buying this media competitively with relevant suppliers and ensuring that value for money is secured with the use of public funds.
- A maximum of 10% of the total grant may be spent on the cost of producing new creative and/or content to support the delivery of your campaign, e.g. imagery, fonts, design work etc. This can also include costs to create a new local campaign landing webpage on your DMO consumer-facing website.
- Up to a maximum of 10% of the total grant may be used as a contribution towards staff-related project management costs, including project post-completion evaluation.

Please be aware that you will need to include in your budget plan any irrecoverable VAT charges, if applicable, as a direct project cost.

Given the challenges facing many DMOs in raising commercial income from tourism businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is no requirement to source cash co-financing contributions to augment the buying-power of the VisitEngland grant. However, we would look favourably on any cash or in-kind investment that you are able to secure.

If you have any queries about the potential eligibility of items you would like to include within your budget, then please email destination@visitengland.org or attend one of the scheduled drop-in clinics (details later in document).

Activity delivery dates

You will be required to deliver the following activity and outputs in line with the below dates:

By 31 March 2022:

- Production of at least one example itinerary or content guide showcasing some of the bookable product 'experiences' for your campaign
- Your campaign creative brief, outlining your campaign idea and creative approach
- Your channel marketing plan and media brief detailing how you intend to promote your example itinerary or content guide aimed at generating traffic to the website in order to encourage bookings (including audiences and channels)
- Your project plan including staffing costs / hourly rates etc

By 15 April 2022:

- Your paid media plan submitted for sign off by the VisitEngland marketing team

By 30 June 2022:

- Your paid media activity will have been delivered and your local aligned campaign ends

By 29 July 2022:

- Submission of your post-campaign report

Corresponding dates for the submission of Grant Claim Forms will be provided at contracting stage in the Grant Funding Agreement.

Prioritisation criteria

The below prioritisation criteria will be applied only to eligible DMO applicants. Applications will be assessed using a standardised points-based system.

Prioritisation Criteria	Weighting (1-3 points)
<p>Product offering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breadth of product experiences available aligns with one or more of the <i>Escape the Everyday</i> domestic campaign need-states and the target audience of pre-nesters. Note that as the campaign objective is the recovery of cities we would expect the core product for these local activations should be primarily city-focused.• Product relevant to the season, has good availability for the campaign period and can show a broad range of different suppliers.• Accessible and sustainable product included, and evidence of how your campaign/product contributes to sustainable tourism objectives.• Evidence of local commitment to <i>We're Good To Go</i> industry standard and consumer mark and number of businesses signed-up. (subject to scheme continuation)	3
<p>Bookability of relevant product:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing website bookability is fulfilled with an effective and flexible mechanism, which has the ability for consumers to book product direct on site and not directed onto third party sites to book.• Minimum target of 10 products aligning to <i>Escape The Everyday</i> campaign and need states, lead products should already be bookable within the DMO website. If DMOs submit joint applications the combined product list will be considered.• Clear plan to surface the bookable product experiences as part of the campaign landing page. There needs to be a robust customer user journey on the website with as minimal number of clicks as possible to be able to book a product and clear pricing.	2
<p>Content and creative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality assets and strong mix of existing marketing materials provided (social, website, editorial, design).	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 relevant content available e.g. imagery available of people in masks or socially distancing or included in planned spend • Diversity of people and places. • Reference to provision of asset release forms. 	2
Media: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of a high level owned, earned and paid plan detailing what type of formats you'd look to run on digital and/or social media. • Evidence of reach on owned and social channels to target audience of pre-nesters. • Contingency media plan for new restrictions. 	1
Partnership working: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrable commitment to partnership working with another DMO/DMOs in order to strengthen the consumer proposition and campaign. <i>VE recognises, due to the tight timeframes, that this is highly likely to be an already established partnership.</i> • Demonstrate wider stakeholder support, i.e. product partners, that will support campaign delivery and success. 	1

Subsidy Control

What is a subsidy?

A subsidy (formerly known as State Aid) is an advantage granted by public authorities through state resources on a selective basis to any organisations that could potentially distort competition and trade in the European Union (EU) and Northern Ireland. The definition is very broad because 'an advantage' can take many forms. It is anything which an organisation (an organisation engaged in economic activity) could not get on the open market. Under the Trade and Co-operation Agreement (TCA) with the EU, a 'subsidy' is broadly similar to what was previously referred to as 'State Aid'.

The EU State aid rules no longer apply to subsidies granted in the UK following the end of the transition period which ended on 31 December 2020. This does not impact the limited circumstances in which State aid rules apply under the Withdrawal Agreement, specifically Article 10 of the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The United Kingdom remains bound by its international commitments, including subsidy obligations set out in the TCA with the EU. Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) guidance for public authorities explaining the subsidies chapter of the TCA, World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules on subsidies and other international commitments.

Subsidy control mechanism

A new domestic subsidy allowance for COVID-19 business support grants took effect on Thursday 4 March 2021, based on the principles set out in Article 3.4 of the TCA. These new rules are the replacement for State aid but do not apply retrospectively, the UK Government has advised that previous state aid rules including limits on the amount of aid granted are to be applied up to 4 March 2021.

Under the new domestic subsidy allowance rules for COVID-19 business grants, the maximum level of subsidy that an economic actor (which is defined as an entity or a group of entities constituting a single economic entity regardless of its legal status, that is engaged in an economic

activity by offering goods or services on market) may receive under each level of allowance is set out below. **DMOs applying will need to seek advice about which option is the most appropriate for their organisation and complete and submit the required declaration on letter headed paper with their application. A template is attached.**

Option A - Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance – grants may be paid in accordance with Article 3.2(4) of the TCA, which enables an applicant to receive up to a maximum level of subsidy without engaging Chapter 3 of the TCA. This allowance is the equivalent of 325,000 Special Drawing Rights (SRD), to a single economic actor over any period of three fiscal years and includes any subsidy previously received as *de minimis* aid or as Small Amounts of Financial Assistance under Article 3.2(4) of the TCA from any subsidy awarding body. As at 27 January 2022, this was the equivalent of £337,955⁶.

Option B - COVID-19 Business Grant Allowance – if limits are reached under the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance, the grant may be paid in compliance with the Principles set out in Article 3.4 of the TCA and in compliance with Article 3.2(3) of the TCA under the COVID-19 Business Grant Allowance (subsidies granted on a temporary basis to respond to a national or global economic emergency). For the purposes of these scheme rules, this allowance is £1,600,000 per single economic actor. This allowance includes any grants previously received under the COVID-19 business grant schemes and any State aid previously received under Section 3.1 of the European Commission’s Temporary Framework⁷. This, should the economic wish, be combined with the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance to equal to £1,935,000 (subject to the exact amount applicable under the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance, dependent on the SRD:GBP exchange rate).

Grants provided under Option A that are in excess of the Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance may not be granted to organisations that were defined as an ‘undertaking in difficulty’ (as defined below) on 31 December 2019. In derogation to the above, grants can be granted to micro or small enterprises that were already in difficulty on 31 December 2019 provided that they are not subject to collective insolvency proceedings.

When completing your declaration template, please refer to previous grant funding agreements received from either the British Tourist Authority (BTA) operating as either VisitBritain (VB) or VisitEngland (VE), or any other grant awarding public body for details of the state aid or subsidy that you may have received in the current three-year fiscal period. All VB/VE grant funding agreements state the value of aid received in Pound Sterling (GBP) but also the Euro equivalent for ease of reference and reproduction.

Any financial support received from HMRC’s Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) as a contribution towards the costs of furloughed employees between March 2020 and September 2021 need **not** be declared. This is because CJRS was a general measure applicable to all businesses and did not constitute state aid.

Undertaking in Difficulty

Undertaking in difficulty means an undertaking in respect of which at least one of the following circumstances occurs:

⁶ See <https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/convert/?Amount=1&From=XDR&To=GBP>

⁷ The European Commission’s Temporary Framework was the State aid mechanism used to operate the following VisitEngland grant schemes in 2020/21: Destination Management Resilience Scheme, Destination Management Organisations’ Emergency Financial Assistance Fund and Destination Management Organisations’ Recovery Marketing Fund (Round 1).

- In the case of a limited liability company (other than a SME that has been in existence for less than three years) where more than half of its subscribed share capital has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses. This is the case when deduction of accumulated losses from reserves (and all other elements generally considered as part of the own funds of the company) leads to a negative cumulative amount that exceeds half of the subscribed share capital. For the purposes of this provision, 'share capital' includes, where relevant, any share premium.
- In the case of a company where at least some members have unlimited liability for the debt of the company (other than a SME that has been in existence for less than three years) where more than half of its capital as shown in the company accounts has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses.
- Where an undertaking is subject to collective insolvency proceedings or fulfils the criteria for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors.
- Where the undertaking has received restructuring aid and has not yet reimbursed the loan or terminated the guarantee or has received restructuring aid and is still subject to a restructuring plan.
- In the case of an undertaking that is not a SME, where, for the past two years: the undertaking's book debt to equity ratio has been greater than 7.5; and, the undertaking's EBITDA interest coverage ratio has been below 1.0.

Package Travel Regulations

You should consider whether you will be selling a 'package' as defined by the regulations. If you put together and sell a product that includes a combination of at least two components, such as transport, accommodation, car hire, meals, attraction tickets etc. you should consider whether you will be creating and become the 'organiser' of a 'package' as defined by the Regulations. These have been extended (1 July 2018) to include dynamic packaging when a single company sells two or more elements and a new form of package called a Linked Travel Arrangement whereby a targeted offer is made to the consumer when they make a purchase. This means you will need to understand what legal liability you have for the quality of all those products and services you are offering, and may have to provide insurance or similar protection for money customers pay in advance. Further details can be found [here](#)

How to apply

If you are interested in applying you should also request an application form ASAP by emailing destination@visitengland.org

Please complete the full application form and all supporting materials and return to destination@visitengland.org no later than **11.59am on Tuesday 15 February 2022 (UK time)**

Please ensure you carefully check the eligibility criteria before applying to avoid your application being rejected. If you are eligible your application will be assessed against the prioritisation criteria stated in this guidance document.

If you have any questions regarding your eligibility or the application itself please note that we will be holding drop-in clinic sessions, via the DMO Webex space, on:

- Thursday, 3 February 2022
- Monday, 7 February 2022

Decisions on which applications to fund will be made by an Awards Panel including VisitEngland Advisory Board members. These decisions will be ratified by the BTA Board and all awards will be conditional on the outcome of appropriate due diligence checks on the recipient organisations.

You will be notified of the outcome of your application by **14 March 2022**.

Further Information and Queries

If you require further information or have any queries about this grant-funding opportunity, please send an email to destination@visitengland.org and a member of the VisitEngland Team will contact you.

Annex B: DMO Recovery Marketing Fund Evaluation KPI Framework

SECTION B) PROJECT INPUTS, OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Table 1 – Inputs

Agreed metric	Target (<i>Where appropriate</i>)	Total achieved up until 30/06/2022	Any additional inputs expected beyond target	Comments (<i>if applicable</i>)
Q1. Total spend to date	£80,000 to £100,000			
Q2. How much money has been spent on paid media?	80% of total budget			
Q3: How much has been spent on content creation and production?	10% of total budget			
Q4: Any other costs not highlighted?	10% of total budget			
Q5: MIK Value including owned and earned channels				

Table 2 – Outputs achieved

Agreed metric	Target (<i>Where appropriate</i>)	Total achieved up until 30/06/2022	Any additional outputs expected beyond target	Comments (<i>if applicable</i>)
Q1: Number of bookable products featured				
Q2: Owned channel impressions - campaign landing page				
Q3: Paid media total reach				

Table 3 – Outcomes achieved

Agreed metric	Target (<i>Where appropriate</i>)	Total achieved up until 30/06/2022	Any additional outcomes expected beyond target	Comments (<i>if applicable</i>)
Q1: Paid media Total CTR				
Q2: Total number of bookable products sold				
Q3: Total value of bookable products sold				