



*Escape the Everyday:* Destination Management  
Organisations' Recovery Marketing Fund

Local Marketing Activation January – March 2021

Guidance Notes for Applicants

19 November 2020

## Introduction

VisitEngland, as the tourism delivery partner for the GREAT Campaign, launched in September 2020 the UK-wide domestic marketing campaign, *Escape the Everyday*. The campaign aims to support the UK tourism industry to recovery by encouraging consumers to explore, discover and treat themselves on a UK short break as and when COVID-19 related restrictions allow and when they are ready to travel. To download the campaign toolkit, see <https://www.visitbritain.org/download-escape-everyday-campaign-toolkit>

The *Escape the Everyday* Destination Management Organisations' Recovery Marketing Fund ("the Fund") provides the opportunity for DMOs to apply for grant funding to deliver local marketing activities aligned to the national campaign.

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 support DMO sustainability and recovery during the pandemic, creating opportunities to directly support their businesses and provide increased choice and information for the consumer in planning and booking domestic breaks and experiences.

The Fund will operate from 1 January to 31 March 2021 with a total budget allocation of up to £600,000. DMOs in England that meet the eligibility criteria can apply for grant awards of between £75,000 and £100,000. A limited number of awards will be made and competition for funds is expected to be high. The Awards Panel is keen to ensure an appropriate balance of DMOs representing coastal, countryside and city destinations across England.

## Key aims and objectives

The key aims and objectives of the Fund are to support England's tourism industry through recovery by:

- Amplifying and extending the reach of the UK-wide *Escape the Everyday* Campaign to England's destinations (focusing on the priority audiences of pre-school families and pre-nesters) through paid local marketing activity.
- Generating bookings from the sale of product experiences which can be directly attributed to the campaign activity.

Participation in this new Fund offers DMOs the following opportunities:

- Ability to feature their destination, messages and products in 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 TXGB<sup>1</sup> 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 ready to go, which can easily integrate the *Escape the Everyday* message. For the sake of clarity, print and 'out of home' (OOH) are media channels that are not being considered because the campaign needs to be agile and responsive if local COVID-19 restrictions quickly change and media has to cease. All local campaign activities will need to be fully delivered between 1 January and 31 March 2021 as the budget resource must be spent in this financial year.
- The DMO must comply with the COVID-19 State Aid Temporary Framework for UK Authorities. As part of your application, you will need to complete a template to evidence how much State aid financial assistance the DMO has been granted from **all** public sector bodies and local authorities to date. If a DMO has received in total more than €800,000 in aid received under the Temporary Framework, then it cannot claim any further financial assistance by applying to this Fund. As we intend to contract with successful applicants before 31 December 2020, current EU State Aid rules will apply even though delivery will occur after the EU/UK Withdrawal Agreement has expired. See *section on State aid*.

The following types of companies and organisations cannot apply:

- DMOs without any form of legal status;
- Online travel agents;
- Travel agents;
- Tour operators;

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<sup>1</sup> See [www.txgb.co.uk](http://www.txgb.co.uk)

- Industry bodies;
- 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:

- Source and feature a minimum of 10 bookable product experiences from local businesses that will be open during the winter and early spring period of this recovery campaign. A minimum of 2 of these bookable product experiences should be suitable for those with accessibility needs.<sup>2</sup> For the sake of clarity, the experiences need to be bookable online directly on the DMO's own website.
- Production of content guides or example itineraries<sup>3</sup> covering the local area that features the participating tourism businesses and signposts consumers to experiences that align with the *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 experiences, with a clear customer journey to fulfil the booking on the website.
- 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.

### Bookable experiences and need-state segmentation

- Please note that DMOs need to follow the need-state segmentation below when identifying 'experiences' to include in example itineraries or content guides.
- Bookable product 'experiences' can include attractions, events and tours. Experiences can be paid or free so long as they are available to pre-book.
- Priority audiences for the *Escape the Everyday* campaign are pre-school families and pre-nesters (18-34).

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

- Proposals must include ‘experiences’ that align with at least one (1) of the need-states; *Discovery, Freedom to Explore and/or Treat Yourself.*

Discovery	City	Culture without the queues	Hidden gems	Alternative ways to see the city	Foodie experiences
	Country/Coastal	Off the beaten path experiences	Seaside myths and legends	Wildlife spotting	Foraging
Freedom to explore	City	City waterways	Crowd-free bucket list experiences	Urban walking and cycling routes	Green city spaces
	Country/Coastal	Road trip routes	Off-grid accommodation	Walking and cycling routes	Off-grid accommodation
Treat yourself	City	Spa breaks	Gourmet getaways	Family memories/days out	Shop till you drop
	Country / Coastal	Bucket list dining	Cosy pubs	Quirky accommodation	Cookery experiences

### Support from VisitEngland

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

- Establish a link from [www.visitengland.com](http://www.visitengland.com) to the DMO’s *Escape the Everyday* landing webpage.
- Write one (1) social media post on either Facebook, Twitter or Instagram during the campaign period from January to March 2021 promoting the destination itinerary.
- Provide specimen example itinerary templates covering Instagram stories, print and website for use by the DMO.
- 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.<sup>4</sup> VE will require sign off approval on all assets.
- Inclusion of DMOs’ example itineraries in relevant press and influencer activity.

### Local COVID-19 Alert Levels

This local activation of the national *Escape the Everyday* campaign will work differently in different areas of England, dictated by the Tier system and local level restrictions during both the application and delivery periods. DMOs will need to ensure a degree of flexibility in their plans as areas potentially move into different Tiers. Tier 3 DMOs would be required to focus on local travel only, including day trips or overnight stays within region, whereas Tier 2 and Tier 1 could promote overnight breaks to those living outside their regions.<sup>5</sup> Both the targeting and messaging will need to flex to different restrictions. An example of what this might look like:

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> Based on the England Tiers pre-lockdown. We will need to review this post-lockdown and adapt if necessary.

Tier 1 and Tier 2: *Escape the Everyday* – promote a short break message to those living outside the region. Exclude any Tier 3 destinations from targeting.

Tier 3: *Escape the Everyday* on your doorstep – promote day trip or local short breaks to those living within your region. Exclude targeting those outside your region.

## **Identifying and measuring outcomes and impacts**

You will be required to consider evaluation 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 A.

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.

## **Funding and eligible activities**

DMOs may apply for grants between £75,000 and £100,000 to cover the cost of local campaign activity delivered between 1 January and 31 March 2021.

The value of any grant award may only be spent on the following types of activities and in line with the stated percentages:

- A minimum of 80% of the grant must be spent on the cost of campaign media, such as digital and social 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 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 and new local campaign landing webpage on your DMO consumer-facing website.
- Up to a maximum of 10% of the grant may be used to contribute towards staff-related project management costs, including evaluation.

Please be aware that you will need to include within your budget-planning any irrecoverable VAT charges as a direct project cost.

Please note that all expenditures must be annualised in this financial year 2020/21 and your local marketing must conclude by 31 March 2021. No unspent funds may be carried forward to the new financial year starting on 1 April 2021.

Given the challenges facing many DMOs in raising commercial income from tourism businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is no requirement for DMOs 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 within your budget when completing your application form, then please email [destination@visitengland.org](mailto:destination@visitengland.org)

## Prioritisation criteria

The below prioritisation criteria will be applied only to eligible applicants, to identify those that are awarded funding. The successful DMOs will be chosen via a standardised points-based system.

Prioritisation Criteria	Weighting (1-3 points)
<b>Product offering:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Breadth of product experiences available aligns with <i>Escape the Everyday</i> and at least one of the three relevant need states and target audience of families and pre-nesters.</li> <li>Product relevant to the season.</li> <li>Accessible product included.</li> <li>Evidence of local commitment to <i>We're Good To Go</i> industry standard and consumer mark and number of businesses signed-up.</li> </ul>	3
<b>Bookability of relevant product:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear plan to surface the bookable product experiences as part of the campaign landing page, outlining the user journey to fulfil the booking within the DMO website.</li> </ul>	2
<b>Content and creative:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality assets and strong mix of previous marketing materials provided (social, website, editorial, design).</li> <li>COVID-19 relevant content available e.g. imagery available of people in masks or socially distancing or included in planned spend</li> <li>Diversity of people and places.</li> <li>Reference to provision of asset release forms.</li> </ul>	2
<b>Media:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>Evidence of reach on owned and social channels to target audience of pre-nesters and families.</li> <li>Contingency media plan for new restrictions.</li> </ul>	1

## State Aid

The Emergency Financial Assistance Fund has been designed and is being made available pursuant to the terms and conditions of the approved UK-wide State aid notification, 'COVID-19 Temporary Framework<sup>67</sup> for UK Authorities' dated 6 April 2020<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state\\_aid/what\\_is\\_new/sa\\_covid19\\_temporary-framework.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/what_is_new/sa_covid19_temporary-framework.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> See

[https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state\\_aid/what\\_is\\_new/sa\\_covid19\\_1st\\_amendment\\_temporary\\_framework\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/what_is_new/sa_covid19_1st_amendment_temporary_framework_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP\\_20\\_603](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_20_603)

The maximum level of aid that an economic undertaking may receive is €800,000 (€120,000 per undertaking active in the fishery and aquaculture sector or €100,000 per undertaking active in the primary production of agricultural products). This is across all UK measures under the terms of the European Commission's Temporary Framework.

The Euro equivalent of the Sterling aid amount is calculated using the European Commission exchange rate<sup>9</sup> applicable on the date that aid offered.

Any aid provided under this measure will be relevant if you wish to apply, or have applied, for any other aid granted based on the European Commission's Temporary Framework. You will need to declare this amount to any other aid awarding body which requests information from you on how much aid you have received. You must retain all records for **four years**, until 2024, after the conclusion of the UK's transition from the European Union and produce it on any request from the UK public authorities or the European Commission.

Aid may be granted to undertakings that were not in difficulty (within the meaning of Article 2(18) of the General Block Exemption Regulation<sup>10</sup>) on 31 December 2019, but that faced difficulties or entered in difficulty (see Annex B) thereafter as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

This aid is in addition to any aid that you may have received under the De Minimis Regulation allowing aid of up to €200,000 to any one organisation over a three-year fiscal period (i.e. your current fiscal year and previous two fiscal years), any other approved aid that you have received under other State aid rules, such as aid granted under the General Block Exemption Regulation.

Applicants to the Scheme must complete, sign and return the template letter contained in the application form confirming:

- a. How much State aid you have already been awarded, if any, under the COVID-19 Temporary Framework for UK Authorities. You will need to list all individual awards granted to date and also ensure that the value of this new grant application does not mean that you exceed the allowable €800,000 support ceiling; and,
- b. Your undertaking (i.e. destination management organisation) was not in difficulty (within the meaning of Article 2(18) of the General Block Exemption Regulation) on 31 December 2019.

See Annexes B and C at the end of this document.

## 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 recently (1 July 2018) been extended 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.

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<sup>9</sup> See [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-inforeuro\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-inforeuro_en)

<sup>10</sup> See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:02014R0651-20170710>

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

Competition for funds is expected to be high and your application will be assessed against the criteria stated in this guidance document.

If you are interested in applying then please register your interest by email to [destinations@visitengland.org](mailto:destinations@visitengland.org) no later than 11:59hrs **on Wednesday, 25th November 2020**.

Please can you provide the following information in your email:

- A short description of your recovery campaign idea/activity (linked to the need-states as referenced above).
- A brief explanation of the booking functionality on your DMO website.

We may request further information or turn down your application at this stage if it does not meet the eligibility criteria, or, you will be asked to complete an application form as soon as possible and return to [destination@visitengland.org](mailto:destination@visitengland.org) Applications will close at 11.59hrs **on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020**.

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 **end-December 2020**.

## Further Information and Queries

If you have any queries about this grant-funding opportunity, please send an email to [destination@visitengland.org](mailto:destination@visitengland.org) and a member of the VisitEngland Team will contact you.

## Annex A: DMO Recovery Marketing Fund Evaluation KPI Framework

### SECTION B) PROJECT INPUTS, OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

**Table 1 – Inputs**

Agreed metric	Target (Where appropriate)	Total achieved up until 31/03/2021	Any additional inputs expected beyond target	Comments (if applicable)
Q1. Total spend to date	£100k			
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 (Where appropriate)	Total achieved up until 31/03/2021	Any additional outputs expected beyond target	Comments (if applicable)
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 (Where appropriate)	Total achieved up until 31/03/2021	Any additional outcomes expected beyond target	Comments (if applicable)
Q1: Paid media Total CTR				
Q2: Total number of bookable products sold				
Q3: Total value of bookable products sold				

## Annex B: Wording of State Aid Confirmation Statement

Please complete, sign and submit the following State Aid confirmation statement on your organisation's headed notepaper with your application form to the COVID-19 Destination Management Resilience Scheme.

Please refer to your grant funding agreements for the Euro value of any previous grants received, including VisitEngland's Destination Management Resilience Scheme,

To convert the value of an applicable GBP Sterling grant into Euros, please use the EC's official monthly exchange rate calculator. See [https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro_en)

There is no need to give the value of any financial support received for furloughed staff-members under HMRC's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme as this is a general measure which was accessible to all businesses in the United Kingdom.

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#### **Confirmation of State aid received under the COVID-19 Temporary Framework for UK Authorities and Undertaking in Difficulty status**

I confirm that I have received the following aid under measures approved within the European Commission's Temporary Framework between March 2020 and December 2020.

I confirm that my undertaking was not in difficulty (within the meaning of Article 2(18) of the General Block Exemption Regulation) on 31 December 2019.

<b>Body providing the assistance / aid</b>	<b>Value of assistance € (in euros)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date of assistance</b>

#### **DECLARATION**

Company	
CEO or other director	
Signature	
Date	

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## Annex C: Undertakings in Difficulty Assessment

Source: Section 2(18) General Block Exemption Regulations<sup>11</sup>22

(18) 'undertaking in difficulty' means an undertaking in respect of which at least one of the following circumstances occurs:

- a) In the case of a limited liability company (other than an SME that has been in existence for less than three years or, for the purposes of eligibility for risk finance aid, an SME within 7 years from its first commercial sale that qualifies for risk finance investments following due diligence by the selected financial intermediary), 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, 'limited liability company' refers in particular to the types of company mentioned in Annex I of Directive 2013/34/EU (1) and 'share capital' includes, where relevant, any share premium.
- b) In the case of a company where at least some members have unlimited liability for the debt of the company (other than an SME that has been in existence for less than three years or, for the purposes of eligibility for risk finance aid, an SME within 7 (seven) years from its first commercial sale that qualifies for risk finance investments following due diligence by the selected financial intermediary), where more than half of its capital as shown in the company accounts has disappeared as a result of accumulated losses. For the purposes of this provision, 'a company where at least some members have unlimited liability for the debt of the company' refers in particular to the types of company mentioned in Annex II of Directive 2013/34/EU.
- c) Where the undertaking is subject to collective insolvency proceedings or fulfils the criteria under its domestic law for being placed in collective insolvency proceedings at the request of its creditors.
- d) Where the undertaking has received rescue 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.
- e) In the case of an undertaking that is not an SME, where, for the past two years:
  - i. the undertaking's book debt to equity ratio has been greater than 7.5 and
  - ii. the undertaking's EBITDA interest coverage ratio has been below 1.0.

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<sup>11</sup> See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0651&from=EN>