TOURISM INNOVATION CHALLENGES FOR HOTELS AND TRAVEL AGENTS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Submission of proposals

1. **Are productivity issues, i.e. address manpower challenges faced by hotels/ travel agents, the biggest concern faced by the industries and should my proposal be tailored to address this need as such?**
   - Productivity issues are one of the key concerns faced by the industries. Others could include, building brand loyalty through closer consumer engagements and enhanced satisfaction.
   - The problem statements were crafted to reflect these concerns, and should guide the development of solutions in view of enhancing guest experience, build trust, emotional connection and brand loyalty, while increasing job satisfaction and/ or optimising resources by allowing hotel/ travel agents to move towards producing work of higher value.
   - The Challenge is hence seeking creative proposals that addresses the problems statements in the respective areas with outcomes described above, while considering the scalability and ease of implementation of the solutions.

2. **May STB introduce me to a hotel/ travel agent I can work with prior to submission, so that my proposal can be more customised and relevant?**
   - We strongly encourage all Participants to leverage their existing contacts with hotels/ travel agents, to better understand and contextualise the problem statements for prototyping.
   - The clinics and networking sessions organised by STB are additional opportunities to learn more about the industry and to connect with hotels/ travel agents.

Last updated: 31 May 2017

- It is important to keep in mind that we are also looking at the scalability of the solution in order for the larger hotel/ TA industry to adopt these solutions.
- For travel agents, all Participants can gain an overview of their business through reading the on-boarding g uide produced for new travel agent hires. For more information, please refer to the Challenge website (https://www.stb.gov.sg/Pages/Travel-Agent-Innovation-Challenge.aspx).

3. **How many proposals may I submit?**
- Each Participant may submit one (1) proposal per problem statement as the lead applicant (whether as an organisation or as a consortium). This is encouraged to ensure that resources are best optimised towards developing a solution well.
- All Participants may participate in both Hotels and Travel Agent Challenges.

4. **Some problem statements in the hotel Challenge were broken down into several issues (e.g. Problem statement 4a, 4b, 4c). Is this considered 1 problem statement where I have to develop solutions for all 3 issues?**
- No, Participants may address each issue as a problem statement on its own (e.g. proposal submitted only needs to address Problem statement 4b).

5. **May I submit proposals on prototypes which I had previously piloted in another hotel/ travel agent?**
- No, proposals replicating a prototype without a certain degree of customisation and/ or replicating off-the-shelf solutions, will not be accepted. The customisation is required to ensure a holistic address of either the hotels and/ or travel agents' industry needs. The proposal will be disqualified if it is found as a replication of a prototype.
- STB will however, accept proposed solutions used in other industries (such as in hospitals, banks etc.) which have been adapted and/ or customised to the needs of hotels/ travel agents.

6. **Can the Committed Pilot Partner in my proposal be an overseas partner?**
- No, the Committed Pilot Partner must be a Singapore-registered hotel/ travel agent.

Last updated: 31 May 2017

7. Will the IP rights of my idea/ solution remain with me?

- All submissions to the Challenge remain the intellectual property of the Participants who developed them.

- For consortia, the ownership of any intellectual property created for the purposes of and in connection with the participation in this Challenge shall be a matter privately agreed between the collaborating organisations prior to the submission of their solution proposal.

8. What are some constraints inherent within the industry I should be aware of, and how can STB help me get around them to ensure that my proposal is relevant?

- STB would encourage Participants to engage STB and the industry partners during the clinic/ networking sessions, or leverage your contacts with the industry to understand if there are constraints surrounding the problem statements to identify alternative ways which technology, or how your solution may resolve them.

9. If I have a ready hotel/ travel agent pilot user, can I propose to work with them?

- Yes, the Participant should indicate the Committed Pilot Partner in the proposal. The proposal should also include the Committed Pilot Partner's written expression of interest to collaborate.

10. Are submissions of proposal done via GeBiz?

- No, proposals must be submitted via email, using the template found in Annex A, to the following email address: STB_HotelChallenge@stb.gov.sg and STB_TAChallenge@stb.gov.sg respectively by 28th August 2017, 1800hrs SGT.

- For more information, please refer to the Challenge documents on the Challenge website (https://www.stb.gov.sg/trade-events/Pages/Tourism-Innovation-Challenges.aspx).

11. Will STB grant an extension of deadline for submission?

- Proposals received after the stated deadline will not be accepted.

Evaluation of proposals

12. What is the proposal's evaluation criteria?

- All proposals will be assessed based on the creativity of the idea/ solution, its scalability/ interoperability, business viability/ sustainability, productivity outcomes and the experience/ capabilities of the organisation(s).

Clinic/ Networking sessions

13. How may I sign up for the clinic sessions?

- The clinic sessions are open to all Participants that have at least one innovative solution that addresses one or more of the problem statements.

- The objective of the clinics is to help provide the necessary early assistance and guidance to Participants on their solutions, to ensure relevancy to industry needs. Do register early to ensure a spot at these sessions.

- **For the Hotels Challenge:** Participants will need to register their interest via email to STB_HotelChallenge@stb.gov.sg by **2 June 2017**, with the following succinct information included in the email; (1) the problem statement(s) addressed, (2) the proposal concept / approach and (3) company background in the email. Please also indicate a maximum of three (3) preferred appointment slots from the clinic schedule shared on the Challenge website. Following which, STB will contact the Participant to confirm the appointment.

- **For the Travel Agents Challenge:** Participants will need to register their interest via email to STB_TAChallenge@stb.gov.sg by **12 June 2017**, where upon successful registration, a confirmation email and questionnaire will be sent to gather relevant information and questions to ensure an effective and meaningful clinic session.

- For more information on both clinic sessions, please do refer to the Challenge website.

- For avoidance of doubt on participation in the Challenges, applications would be accepted (the applications should still meet the eligibility criteria such as garnering at least one Committed Pilot Partner), should participants choose not to attend the clinics. The clinics are however mandatory as a pre-requisite to attend the networking sessions.

Last updated: 31 May 2017

Grant submission

14. **May I claim for the same cost item (e.g. developmental costs for a solution) which is used for multiple proposal submissions?**
    - The costs in such instance, will only qualify under <u>one</u> proposal. However, if there are degrees of customisation required for each proposal, the incremental difference may qualify. STB will need the details for each proposal to make that assessment.
    - Similarly, the developer's cost taken to develop the solution will only qualify under <u>one</u> proposal, and any incremental man-days required for customisation may qualify.
    - Note that any costs (e.g. developmental, professional services etc.) incurred prior to STB's approval of grant funding will <u>not</u> qualify for reimbursement.

15. **If my organisation's development team is based outside of Singapore, will their costs qualify as part of the grant?**
    - The grant supports internal manpower costs, i.e. salaries of the in-house development team directly related to the proposal submitted. However, the personnel <u>must</u> be working in Singapore for their salaries to qualify (There is no restriction on citizenship however, i.e. non-Singaporeans are supportable).
    - Subject to STB's approval, the qualifying salaries for the project team leader (capped at 1 person) and project team members (no limit) are based on their actual monthly gross salaries or up to S$6,500 (project team leader) and S$3,500 (project team member) per involvement month, whichever is lower. (Note: Actual monthly gross salary includes employee's CPF contribution. It excludes overtime payments, bonus payments, annual wage supplements, any other allowances, etc.)
    - Should internal manpower costs be proposed as a qualifying cost, the Participant shall provide STB with more information on the list of staff to be funded.

16. **Most of my development team are freelance personnel. Will their costs qualify as part of the grant?**
    - Costs to hire freelance personnel qualify as professional services.
    - However to note that these should be costs payable to a third-party company or individual that is not a subsidiary, parent or associate of the Participant(s).

17. **Will funding from the Challenge support 70% of the project qualifying costs?**
    - Funding from the grant will support up to 70% of qualifying costs. For more information on items that qualify under the grant, please refer to the Challenge Documents.
    - As such, Participants should anticipate that the rest of the project costs shall be borne by themselves, or sought from alternative sources of private funding.

18. **What are the deliverables for me in order to receive 100% of the committed level of funding, and when will the reimbursement take place?**
    - STB's funding will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis, based on the project support level and at agreed project milestones, subject to key project deliverables which could include, but not limited to, successful development and completion of the prototype solution, and/ or trialling the solution in the Committed Pilot Partner's actual operating environments.
    - Third-party audited documents on qualifying costs are required for the disbursement of grant. STB does not predetermine the list of eligible auditors, although the auditor engaged should be a certified third-party auditor not related/ affiliated to the Participant.

Prototyping stage

19. **What is the timeframe for the prototyping?**
    - Depending on the complexity of the solution proposed, the development and implementation period could span approximately 4 to 6 months. The exact duration should be proposed by each successful Participant, for STB's consideration.

20. **Can STB share what datasets will be made available for prototyping? And what type of data do hotels/ travel agents have now?**
    - STB will not be providing any hotel/ travel agent data.
    - All Participants may work on the basis that hotels/ travel agents will be able to provide POS and CRM data. This should be validated with the Committed Pilot Partner.

21. **Can STB share what social media channels/ legacy systems do hotels/ travel agents use?**

    - This varies between hotels/ travel agents but the common social media tools are Facebook, Instagram and Google Analytics. Additionally, there is no one standard system being used across the hotel/ travel agent industries besides the dominant Global Distribution Systems (GDS) already existing in the market. This should be validated with the Committed Pilot Partner.

Demo/ showcase

22. **What happens after the prototype showcase?**

    - STB will explore relevant platforms (e.g. articles on industry journals and technology publications, demo days at industry events etc.), where appropriate, in view of inspiring greater take up of the Participant's solutions.

Last updated: 31 May 2017