



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)**

### **International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) Preferred Hotel List-New York City, Calendar Year 2024**

**RFP TITLE:** IVLP Preferred Hotel List-NYC

**RFP NO. IVLP-2023-2**

**RFP RELEASE DATE:** Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup>

**PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Wednesday, August 30<sup>th</sup>

**QUESTION SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Friday August 25<sup>th</sup>

#### **Statement of Purpose**

Meridian International Center and Global Ties U.S. invites submission of proposals from hotels in New York City interested in providing accommodations for international visitors traveling under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State, as well as U.S. Department of State assigned liaisons/interpreters, for the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP).

The IVLP is the U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange program. Launched in 1940, the IVLP seeks to build mutual understanding between the U.S. and other nations through short-term exchanges to the U.S. for current and emerging foreign leaders. These programs reflect the international visitors' professional interests and support the foreign policy goals of the United States.

Global Ties U.S., a partner in the administration of this prestigious program, is a nonprofit membership association with 60 years of service to the international exchange community. Our membership includes a nationwide network of Community-Based Member organizations, National Program Agencies (NPAs), and International Member organizations. Global Ties U.S. members design and implement professional programs, provide cultural activities, and offer home hospitality for established leaders, emerging voices, specialists, and scholars participating in the IVLP and other international exchanges.

This RFP does not obligate Meridian and Global Ties U.S. to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services, nor does it obligate the Hotel to accept or contract for any expressed or implied services. Meridian and Global Ties U.S. reserves the right to reject any or all quotes and to waive irregularities and informalities in the submission process.

#### **Purpose and Process**

Meridian and Global Ties U.S. are seeking to create a select Preferred Hotel List (PHL) for the Calendar Year (CY) 2024, consisting of quality New York City properties that meet or exceed the requirements and criteria included in this RFP. Services provided under this RFP would be provided during the period January 1 – December 31, 2024.

*Note: Should Meridian and Global Ties U.S. determine that the requirements and criteria for inclusion stated in this RFP do not require major procedural changes from CY2024 to CY2025, in addition to*



*successful performance by individual properties, the Preferred Hotel List-NYC may remain in place for two calendar years, to include the period January 1 – December 31, 2025.*

With this RFP, and in compliance with federal procurement guidelines, we invite you to submit a proposal to join the IVLP Preferred Hotel List for New York City. The RFP is for ongoing services for hotel accommodations during CY2024. The IVLP welcomes up to 5,000 visitors per year. In a typical year, up to 40% of visitors travel to New York City, with an average of 2-3 nights per stay, year-round. Group sizes may vary from 2 to 30 adults.

Participants on the IVLP are entitled to the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) negotiated government hotel rate.

Once a property has been added to the Preferred Hotel List–NYC, they will receive requests for accommodations throughout the Calendar Year from the eight Washington, DC-based National Program Agencies (NPAs), as well as from Global Ties U.S.

Currently, the National Programming Agencies (NPAs) seeking hotel accommodations for IVLP groups include:

- American Council for International Education
- CRDF Global
- Cultural Vistas
- FHI 360
- Institute of International Education (IIE)
- MCID
- Meridian International Center (MIC)
- World Learning

Global Ties U.S. will provide NPA contact information to each hotel that is selected and approved for the PHL-NYC.

## **Requests for Services**

In order to qualify for consideration on the Preferred Hotel List-NYC, the following services are required:

1. Guaranteed U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) seasonal Nightly Room Rate for Single Accommodations (according to corresponding fiscal year's rates), year round. (Note: hotels with NPA's reported history of frequent "no vacancies" for IVLP bookings may be removed from "Tier 1" and placed on the "Tier 2" list – resulting in fewer IVLP bookings.)
2. Each International Visitor and Interpreter/English Language Officer will be accommodated in a single room.
3. Complimentary upgrade will be provided to Interpreter/Liaison (I/L), based on availability.



4. No contracts will be required for any IVLP accommodations. Exceptions will be allowed for Special Initiatives: generally speaking, these are groups of 50 or more participants.
5. The preferred method of payment for rooms is Direct Bill. Invoices should be sent to the NPA administering the project, within two weeks of the visitors' departure.
6. *Incidentals will not be covered by the Department of State, Global Ties U.S. or any NPA.* If deposits on incidentals are necessary, the hotel agrees to a flat deposit of no more than \$100 per visitor (preferably less) for the entire stay. Deposits will not be required at check-in, and will often be made in cash, but may be made with a credit, debit, or prepaid money card.
7. Rooming lists will be provided by the NPA after the U.S. Department of State has released this information to the NPA. The rooming list usually will not be available until less than 30 days prior to arrival. Flexibility is expected with regard to changes in the participant rooming lists, up until the day before arrival.
8. In rare cases of a request for extension on check-out date, the IVLP rate will apply.
9. There will be no charges for cancellations or "no shows". The NPA managing the project will make a good-faith effort to keep the hotel abreast of any known cancellations or arrival delays. In the event of an unexpected post-check-in shortening of stay for individuals or a full group, fees and charges will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
10. The hotel must have a designated booking agent for the IVLP.
11. Complimentary internet access must be provided in guestrooms for all participants. Hotel should indicate availability of free internet access in lobby/public areas, and/or in hotel business center.
12. The front desk staff must be fully aware of and trained on special procedures for checking-in International Visitors.
13. Adequate meeting space on property to seat up to 30 people, a hollow-square is a plus.
14. Complimentary or reduced-rate meeting space for IVLP groups should be provided when requested, based on availability.

### **Additional Criteria**

Evaluation of the proposals will be based on Hotel's ability to abide by RFP required services, criteria, and the Hotel's ability to meet or exceed the needs of the IVLP.

*Successful prior experience as an IVLP Preferred Hotel is not required but will be taken into consideration and may strengthen your proposal. Reminder: documented issues as reported to Global Ties U.S. by various stakeholders, may affect the final decision.*

- Central location within Midtown Manhattan preferred, with convenient access to public transportation.
- Check-in area can efficiently accommodate large group arrivals and attractive lobby that can comfortably accommodate large IVLP groups.
- Hotels with smaller lobby will provide additional check-in staff, waiting area, and/or advance check-in for large groups to expedite check-in and avoid confusion.
- Comfortable, clean, attractive guest rooms, well suited to IVLP visitors' needs.



- Kitchenettes or in-room refrigerators (*or ability to provide complimentary refrigerator*) is important.
- In-room microwaves are a plus.
- Access to outside space for hotel guests is a plus.
- Key personnel (sales and event managers) have prior experience and expertise working with the IVLP, international clients, and/or similar government-funded programs.
- Hotel can provide access to copier as needed on-site, for NPA staff to make photocopies, i.e. visitors' passports and travel documents, or miscellaneous program documents (not exceeding 30 pages).
- Hotel confirms that procedures are/will be in place for safe storage of program documents that will be delivered in advance of visitors' arrival.
- Hotel has on-site restaurant with prices falling within GSA breakfast rate for simple meal and/or is within short walking distance of at least two cafes with prices falling within GSA breakfast rate.
- Minimal number of black-out dates, if any.
- Hotel is fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide details of ADA facilities in RFP response.
- Additional fees or charges that a guest may incur will be clearly stated in RFP response, i.e. Porterage, luggage storage fee, charge for use of business center, etc.
- Hotel has been certified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and will provide FEMA number.

## Airport Hotels

The IVLP seeks to add up to three properties at JFK that can abide by the Requirements and Criteria listed in this RFP as closely as possible. The need for a hotel at JFK may only arise last minute. RFP responses should clearly indicate "Airport Hotel".

## Provisions Included in All Agreements

All vendors must agree to comply with the following provisions in their operations:

1. **Equal Employment Opportunity:** All agreements shall contain a provision requiring compliance with E.O. 11246, "Equal Employment Opportunity," as amended by E.O. 11375, "Amending Executive Order 11246 Relating to Equal Employment Opportunity," and as supplemented by regulations at 41 CFR part 60, "Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Equal Employment Opportunity, Department of Labor."
2. **Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.), as amended:** Agreements and sub-grants of amounts in excess of \$250,000 shall contain a provision that requires the recipient to agree to comply with all applicable standards, orders or regulations issued pursuant to the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, as amended (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.). Violations shall be reported to the Federal awarding agency and the Regional Office of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).



3. **Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352):** For all contracts or sub-grants of \$250,000 or more, Global Ties U.S. shall obtain from the vendor a certification that it will not and has not used Federal appropriated funds to pay any person or organization for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with obtaining any Federal contract, grant or any other award covered by 31 U.S.C. 1352. Likewise, since each tier provides such certifications to the tier above it, Global Ties U.S. shall provide such certifications in all situations in which it acts as a sub-recipient of a sub-grant of \$250,000 or more.
4. **Debarment and Suspension (E.O.s 12549 and 12689):** For all agreements in excess of the small purchase threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. 403(11) (currently \$250,000), Global Ties U.S. shall obtain from the vendor a certification that neither the vendor nor any of its principal employees are listed on the General Services Administration's List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement or Non-procurement Programs.

### Proposal Submission Instructions

**The completed "RFP Response Survey" for the International Visitor Leadership Program CY2024 Preferred Hotel List (PHL)–NYC should be submitted online by Close of Business on Wednesday August 30th 2023.** Submissions should demonstrate the capability and willingness to meet the Requirements and Criteria. Please address each point using the RFP Response Survey:

<https://forms.office.com/r/V6w4w0L73X>

Questions regarding this RFP may be directed to Judy Donner at [jdonner@globaltiesus.org](mailto:jdonner@globaltiesus.org), 240-472-2737, or Nicole Alzapiedi [nalzapiedi@meridian.org](mailto:nalzapiedi@meridian.org).

**Successful bidders will be notified by Global Ties U.S. no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>** and will be included on the CY2024 IVLP Preferred Hotel List for New York City. The NPAs and Global Ties U.S. will utilize this list exclusively when booking IVLP projects in New York City in CY2024.

### Evaluation and Award Process

Meridian will evaluate proposals based on a best-value determination; offerors should submit their most competitive price proposal. Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Technical proposal (40) points
- Past performance (30) points
- Cost (30) points

The evaluation committee will review the technical proposals based upon the technical criteria listed above. They will determine whether the proposal reflects a clear understanding of IVLP Preferred Hotel requirements. Upon inclusion on the Preferred Hotel List or Alternate Preferred Hotel List–NYC, Hotels will be given immediate consideration for business when NPA bookings for CY2024 commence. Global Ties U.S. reserves the right to utilize multiple hotels for this RFP.



Hotels not selected for the primary Preferred Hotel List–NYC (“Tier 1”), may be eligible for placement on the *Alternate* Preferred Hotel List–NYC (“Tier 2”). This list will be comprised of a limited number of properties that cannot meet 100% of the Required Services and Criteria for Inclusion due to such factors as location, numerous blackout dates, or meeting space limitations. Alternate Preferred Hotel List (“Tier 2”) properties will be used only in cases when Preferred Hotel List–NYC (“Tier 1”) properties have no availability. The Airport Hotel List as well as the Alternate Preferred Hotel List–NYC (“Tier 2”) will be created simultaneously with the primary Preferred List (“Tier 1”) and inclusion will require the written consent of the Hotel.