San Luis Obispo Tourism Business Improvement District
Committee Recommendation Staff Report

June 4, 2021

TO:	TBID Board
FROM:	Molly Cano, Tourism Manager via TBID Marketing Committee
PREPARED BY:	Chantal Stewart, Tourism Coordinator
SUBJECT:	Visit SLO CAL Co-ops

RECOMMENDATION

As recommended by the TBID Marketing Committee (attachment A), approve the TBID's participation in the following two cooperative marketing (co-op) opportunities:

- Visit SLO CAL Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) Study co-op for $5,000;
- Visit SLO CAL Photo & Video Asset Project (Option 1) co-op for $10,000

DISCUSSION

Background

In the June 10, 2020 TBID Board Meeting, the San Luis Obispo TBID Board approved the 2020-21 program budget. This action was forwarded as a recommendation to City Council which was subsequently approved for final approval at the July 7, 2020 City Council meeting. The approved 2020-21 budget included a line items of $30,000 for co-op program funding.

The TBID has seen great benefit from participating in co-op programs to increase marketing reach while using less dollars to do so. In addition to expanding overall reach, it helps the TBID align their messaging with other organization like Visit SLO CAL who has the same goal of increased visitation and awareness to the destination to make a bigger impact. Due to the severe impacts of COVID-19, the TBID has experienced an overall decrease in lodging occupancy leading to a significant drop in projected revenues. To fulfill the need for additional marketing and assets while on a decreased budget, the TBID Marketing Committee sees co-op opportunities as an essential program.

Marketing Committee Action

Visit SLO CAL EDI Audience and Asset Alignment Study Co-op

At the June 2, 2021 Marketing Committee meeting, staff reviewed the Visit SLO CAL (VSC) co-op project for the EDI Audience and Asset Alignment Study. The EDI study is designed to address what visitors and potential visitors are looking for regarding travel in the diversity space. The study will develop an understanding of what the destination can authentically market to the diverse visitors we want to attract, and what diverse assets exist throughout the destination.

The base study will provide a solid foundation for destination partners to build upon and take advantage of the scope and sample size that is funded through Visit SLO CAL's efforts. Each partner may add five

questions to the questionnaire at the cost of $2,500. These questions will be analyzed with the information collected in the base study and each partner will receive a companion report(s) focused on their specific data. The first part of the study will compare the "ideal" vacation with ratings of the destination among past visitors and by familiarization based on what the destination has to offer. This will provide a baseline of insights for San Luis Obispo and other participating destinations. The survey will include products such as wineries, beaches, unique restaurants, independent shops, and other specific activities, and attributes such as fun, welcoming, safe, accepting. The findings will provide insight into what products drive interest for diverse visitors.

A second option is to probe further using video interviews. This qualitative tool is an affordable alternative to focus groups and offer several key advantages. Survey participants are recruited at the end of the quantitative survey and invited to take a follow-up video survey. They are selected based on criteria established by Visit SLO CAL and the participating destination partner(s). They receive a survey link via email and video record their responses, at a time convenient to them, using a custom survey platform. The findings will provide a gap analysis specific to participating destinations. The cost for destination partners for 10 video interviews is $2,500.

The Marketing Committee in particular finds great benefit in this part of the presented EDI co-op because of its low financial risk and high benefits in the long term. Marketing committee members made a unanimous vote to participate in the EDI Study through Visit SLO CAL at the $5,000 investment level VSC will be conducting the EDI Study in June with work completed in early August 2021.

Visit SLO CAL Visitor Profile Study Co-op

Additionally, the Marketing Committee considered the Visitor Profile study that will provide market segmentation and identify motivations for current and potential visitors. Committee members felt this study is duplicative to the TBID's current efforts and declined a recommendation to participate in the presented Visitor Profile Research Study.

Visit SLO CAL Assets Co-op

For the third opportunity, the Marketing Committee reviewed a new brand campaign consisting of Hero Brand assets and House of Brands assets which is a photo and videography asset co-op with Visit SLO CAL (VSC) (attachment C). Five different asset options were presented for committee consideration.

Within the presented co-op options, Option 1 includes creation of destination video assets within the new SLO CAL brand campaign to augment display, native and social assets. Additionally, Option 1 includes Visit SLO CAL distribution of video assets within the paid media campaign (retargeting people who viewed SLO CAL brand video). The cost of Option 1 to capture video assets is $10,000.

Option 2 is a co-op for video assets expanded distribution for $10,000. This includes a leveraged media buy-in for expanded distribution of destination video assets within the VSC campaign. Additionally, it includes three months of activity across Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, SpotX, etc. based on investment level (actual media channels TBD).

Out of the presented options, the Marketing Committee only recommends participating in Option 1 this fiscal year (2020-21) for $10,000 which fits well within the current co-op line item of the 2020-21 budget and has great benefit for the TBID. The Marketing Committee finds this package valuable especially during a time when a travel is increasing and the importance of having relevant and quality assets that represent San Luis Obispo. The Marketing Committee made a unanimous vote to participate in the Visit SLO CAL

Assets Co-op Option 1 for $10,000 and to earmark $10,000 out of the co-op line item for fiscal year 2021-22 budget for Option 2 expanded distribution based on performance of Option 1.

FISCAL IMPACT

The TBID has allocated $30,000 of the 2020-2021 budget for co-op program funding. The total commitment to participate in the Visit SLO CAL EDI Study co-op through Visit SLO CAL ($5,000) and the Visit SLO CAL Assets Co-op Option 1 is $10,000. Due to previous co-op commitments, there is $27,500 currently available in the co-op program budget allocation. Following the commitment of $15,000 to these programs, remaining co-op program funding line item within the 2020-2021 budget to $2,500 for future co-op commitments.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Marketing Committee Minutes June 2, 2021
2. Visit SLO CAL EDI + Visitor Profile Research Co-op
3. Visit SLO CAL Assets Co-op

Tourism Business Improvement District
Marketing Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 2, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.
Teleconference via Zoom

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: LeBren Harris, Natalie Ward *(departed at 11:12 a.m.).* and Matthew Wilkins

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: none

STAFF PRESENT: Molly Cano, Tourism Manager and Chantal Stewart, Tourism Coordinator

Call to order time: 10:43 a.m.

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. FY 21-22 Draft Marketing and Business Plan Objectives

Shyla Lindner of Noble Studios presented the high-level overview of the marketing and business plan objectives. Tourism Manager Cano added information around program elements outside of the agency scope of work and line items that used to be part of the annual marketing plan but are not included in this draft plan. Committee members provided feedback and discussed the need for photos assets to use in the proposed marketing plan objectives.

ACTION: Member Harris made a recommendation for TBID Board for consideration to use up to $50k from the FY 20-21 contingency budget for photography and videography based on agency request and marketing plan needs. Member Wilkins was in consensus (Ward was absent).

2. Brand Equity Research

Marketing committee members further discussed the brand equity research study and asked agency representatives specific questions for clarification and direction. The marketing committee directed Noble Studios to finalize the specific dollar amount instead of a range to present to the full TBID Board for re-consideration. The committee was in support of this research project pending the final project proposal and amount.

3. Visit SLO CAL EDI + Visitor Profile Research Co-op

Staff and agency members reviewed the opportunities to participate in Visit SLO CAL co-op programs. The programs included participation in the EDI Audience and Asset Alignment Study, Visitor Profile Study and the Asset Production Project. Staff and Noble Studios recommended that the committee consider the participation below while using the available FY 20-21 co-op program budget for funding:

- Participate in the EDI Study for $5,000
- Participate in the Asset (photo & video project) but only for option 1 for $10,000; earmark $10,000 for option 2 out of FY 21-22 co-op program budget based on performance
- Decline participation in the Visitor Profile research due to duplication of efforts

ACTION: By consensus, the committee members recommend co-op participation with Visit SLO CAL based on the recommendation from staff and the agency (Ward was absent).

4. New Business Items

a. Committee Discussion - none
b. Future Agenda Items- none
c. Next Regular Meeting Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

EDI Audience and Asset Alignment Study Co-op
Visitor Profile Study Co-op

Visit SLO CAL will be conducting an EDI Study, in conjunction with a Visitor Profile Study, beginning in June with work completed in early August. We are in final negotiations with the research vendor. As part of this work, we would like to offer you the opportunity to supplement the findings of the EDI study and separately the Visitor Profile Study with issues specific to your area and interests.

The base study will provide a solid foundation for destination partners to build upon and take advantage of the scope and sample size that is funded through Visit SLO CAL's efforts. Each partner may add five questions to each questionnaire. These questions will be analyzed with the information collected in the base study and each partner will receive a companion report(s) focused on their specific data.

The cost for partners to add five questions is $2,500 per study.

A second option is to probe further using video interviews. This qualitative tool is an affordable alternative to focus groups and offer several key advantages. The participants are recruited at the end of the quantitative survey and invited to take a follow-up video survey. They are selected based on criteria established by Visit SLO CAL and the destination partner(s). They receive a survey link via email and video record their responses, at a time convenient to them, using a custom survey platform.

The cost for destination partners for 10 video interviews is $2,500 per study.

The EDI study will address what visitors and potential visitors are looking for in regards to travel in the diversity space. The first part of the study will compare the "ideal" vacation with ratings of the destination among past visitors and by familiarization based on what the destination has to offer. This will provide a baseline of insights for each community. The survey will include products such as wineries, beaches, unique restaurants, independent shops, and other specific activities, and attributes such as fun, welcoming, safe, accepting. The findings will provide insight into what products drive interest for diverse visitors.

The second part of the research study will be done through facilitated discussions with destinations themselves on what they have to offer in regards to current product. The finds will provide a gap analysis specific to participating destinations.

The Visitor Profile study will provide market segmentation and identify motivations for current and potential visitors. The work will provide visitor profiles and personas as well as inform marketing priorities.

All contracts/LOAs will be issued through Visit SLO CAL and funds will be billed through Visit SLO CAL.

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: 5/21/21 **CLIENT:** VSC **JOB #:** NA
TITLE: FY22 Shoot/Asset Co-op Scenarios
REV: 0 **CC:** Cathy Tull, Chuck Davison

OVERVIEW

Visit SLO CAL is in development of a new brand campaign consisting of Hero Brand assets and House of Brands assets.

Hero Brand assets will tell the overarching SLO CAL brand story and bring the Living Vividly messaging strategy to life, with House of Brands assets presenting distinct experiences in Arroyo Grande, Atascadero, Morro Bay, Paso Robles, Pismo Beach, San Luis Obispo and along the Highway 1 Discovery Route.

This work will include a 5-day photography and video shoot throughout the region the first week of August.

SLO CAL Campaign Assets

- :60 / :30 / :15 / :06 Video Assets
- Display Banners / Social Media / Native
  - SLO CAL Hero Brand assets
  - SLO CAL House of Brands assets
- Custom Digital
  - SLO CAL Hero Brand assets

Asset Development & Distribution Co-op

Based on the recent survey and marketing retreat discussion, there is interest from the individual DMOs in an asset development co-op with an indicated budget range from $5K-10K. In some cases, higher budgets may be available.

Following are options for consideration. A partner may wish to pursue one or more of these based on individual budgets/needs. All funds will bill through VSC.

OPTION 1: VIDEO ASSETS — $10,000

- Creation of destination video assets within the new SLO CAL brand campaign to augment display, native and social assets.
- Includes Visit SLO CAL distribution of video assets within the paid media campaign (retargeting people who viewed SLO CAL brand video).

SLO CAL **Hero Brand assets**	SLO CAL **House of Brands assets**	SLO CAL **House of Brands co-op assets**
• A suite of assets including **video, display, native and social** that tells the overarching SLO CAL brand story	• A suite of **display, native and social assets** that promotes individual destination experiences	• (1) :15 video asset • (3) :06 video assets

OPTION 2: VIDEO ASSETS EXPANDED DISTRIBUTION — $10,000 (and up based on partner interest)

- Leveraged media buy-in for expanded distribution of destination video assets within VSC campaign.
- Three (3) months of activity across Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, SpotX, etc. based on investment level (actual media channels TBD)

OPTION 3: ADD-ON HERO SHOOT DAY (A CREW) — $50,000

- Visit SLO CAL is investing in a full scale shoot with a production company working under the direction of Mering.
- This team will be focused on capturing footage and still imagery to be used in the new SLO CAL brand campaign. Set-ups with talent will be captured around the region.
- Partners have the option of adding one (1) day to the SLO CAL hero shoot to focus on their destination.
- Includes full crew, agency and talent for 3-4 set-ups (to be developed in collaboration with partner).
- Timing:
    - Visit SLO CAL to share approved campaign direction with partners — week of 6/14
    - Co-op partner commitment due — 6/25
    - Co-op partner participation form due — 7/6
    - Pre-production — 7/7-7/30
    - Travel/tech — 7/31-8/2
    - Hero shoot — 8/3-8/8
    - Partner add-on day(s) — week of 8/9

OPTION 4: B-ROLL VIDEO SHOOT DAY (B CREW) — $15,000

- One day location shoot to capture b-roll footage within individual destination.
- Includes videographer, equipment and usage rights.
- Participating partner will be responsible for orchestration including location selection, permitting (if required) and talent (if required).

OPTION 5: B-ROLL VIDEO & PHOTOGRAPHY SHOOT DAY (B CREW) — $20,000

- One day location shoot to capture b-roll footage and still imagery within individual destination.
- Includes videographer/photographer, equipment and usage rights.
- Participating partner will be responsible for orchestration including location selection, permitting (if required) and talent (if required).