



Request for Proposal – Consultant Support – Bookable Visitor Economy Products & Experiences

Background

Destination North East England (DNEE) is a core partner in the Destination Development Partnership (DDP) Pilot, a national programme funded by VisitEngland and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to test new models of regional tourism development. Through this pilot, we are working to strengthen the North East's visitor economy by developing high-quality, authentic and innovative products & experiences that appeal to both domestic and international audiences.

As part of this work, DNEE has appointed sector specialists in food & drink and outdoor/active pursuits. These specialists are supporting businesses to generate ideas, design new visitor experiences, and build confidence in areas such as pricing, packaging, and market positioning.

However, one of the consistent challenges we encounter is ensuring that these experiences are online bookable on the appropriate platforms to ensure they are visible and accessible to domestic and international audiences. This is the missing piece that turns a great idea into a product that can be easily accessed by consumers and distributed to the travel trade.

For many of our region's operators – often micro-businesses or sole traders – the barriers are significant:

- **Limited digital expertise** – little or no prior experience of setting up listings, managing booking systems, or navigating digital tools.
- **Small teams/sole traders** – limited capacity, balancing delivery with little time left for digital development.
- **Time consuming availability management** – managing live calendars across multiple platforms feels overwhelming.
- **Lack of marketing assets** – many businesses don't have access to quality photography, strong copywriting, or the ability to promote themselves effectively.
- **Complex commission structures** – uncertainty around how different OTAs and booking platforms take commission, and how this affects profitability.
- **Fragmented guidance** – no single, trusted 'playbook' for deciding which platforms are right for their business.
- **Perception of risk vs reward** – reluctance to 'hand over control' to booking platforms without clear examples of ROI.

The appointed consultant will therefore act as a bookability specialist, working alongside our sector specialists to take a pipeline of 'ready- to- go' experiences and support businesses in making them live, online bookable, and consumer- ready.

Objectives

The consultant will:

- Collaborate with sector specialists (food & drink & active pursuits) to convert pipeline experiences into bookable products.
- Understand and, where appropriate, package visitor products and experiences to meet OTA and platform standards.
- Provide targeted support to overcome barriers around digital literacy, time/resource constraints, commission structures, and marketing assets.
- Build operator capability in pricing, packaging, and digital readiness.
- Facilitate the onboarding of products to appropriate online booking platforms and distribution channels.

Scope of Work

The consultant will be required to:

- Audit & assess current and emerging products for market readiness.
- Work closely with food & drink and active pursuits specialists to ensure pipeline experiences are progressed into bookable products.
- Provide practical, hands- on guidance to get experiences live on appropriate platforms, while building operator capability to manage them sustainably.
- Deliver tailored business mentoring to overcome common barriers (digital skills, asset creation, commission models, time/resource).
- Facilitate distribution via appropriate OTAs, booking systems, and channels.

Deliverables

- Market readiness assessment of existing product and business roadmap.
- A minimum of 20 new or improved bookable products listed on digital booking platforms.
- Final report summaries support provided and project outputs.

Timeline

- Proposal submissions close: 30/09/2025
- Consultant appointed: 05/10/2025
- Project completion: 01/03/2025

Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include:

- Company/consultant profile and relevant experience.
- Proposed methodology and approach.
- Examples of similar projects delivered.
- Project timeline and milestones.
- Fee proposal (including daily rates, expenses, etc.)
- References from at least two recent clients.

Budget

£10,000+VAT.

Please provide a suggested breakdown of the budget spend.

If your proposal exceeds the budget, please provide an explanation of why and how the budget will spent.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be assessed against:

- Demonstrated experience in tourism product development and distribution (30%).
- Proposed methodology and ability to meet objectives (30%).
- Value for money (20%).
- Experience working with regional tourism operators and stakeholders (20%).

Submission

Please submit proposals by 30/09/2025 to:

David Bowe

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