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**MINISTERO
DEL TURISMO**
REPUBBLICA ITALIANA

Public notice for a partnership with a
Travel Geo Podcast platform provider
under the “Tourism Digital Hub” project



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The Ministry of tourism, based in Via di Villa Ada 55, 00199, Rome, Tax Code 96480590585, acting through Atty. Filomena Bilancio, Director General of the Directorate General for Technology, Remuneration, Digitisation and Statistics (hereinafter also “MiTur”)

WHEREAS

- article 54-bis of Legislative Decree No. 300 of July 30, 1999, introduced by Article 6 of Decree-Law no. 22 of March 1, 2021, in paragraph 1, establishes the Ministry of tourism, which has the functions and tasks granted to the State in the field of tourism, except for those attributed to other ministries or agencies by the same decree and without prejudice in any case to the functions granted to regions and local authorities by current laws;
- with Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers no. 177 of 30 October 2023, the Regulations on the Organization of the Ministry of tourism, the Offices of Direct Collaboration of the Minister and the Independent Performance Evaluation Body were adopted;
- with the EU ECOFIN Council of Ministers Decision of 13 July 2021, the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) was approved, in which investment projects in tourism – Mission 1, Component C3 “Tourism and culture” – were allocated a total of 2 billion and 400 million euros. The main interventions financed by the NRRP are the Tourism Digital Hub, the Integrated Fund for the competitiveness of tourism businesses, the Caput Mundi – New generation EU project for major tourist events and the regulation ordering of the professions of tourist guides;
- on 4 January 2023, Law no. 204 of 16 December 2022 was published in the Official Journal, concerning the *“Conversion into law, with amendments, of Decree-Law no. 173 of 11 November 2022, containing urgent provisions on the reorganisation of the powers of Ministries”*, whose Art. 10-bis introduced a new paragraph 1-bis into Article 54-ter of Legislative Decree no. 300/1999, which provides that the Ministry of tourism owns the *“Italia.it”* portal, the rights connected to the domain itself and the related technological platform, in order to coordinate and strategically direct the structuring of the portal itself and all activities promoting national tourism policies carried out thereon;
- MiTur is responsible for the italia.it portal, which is promoted by ENIT;
- on 13 January 2022, ENIT and MiTur signed the *“Agreement between the Ministry of tourism and ENIT - National Tourism Agency for the 2022/2024 period”* concerning, among other things, the redefinition and implementation - in full collaboration with the Regions and Autonomous Provinces, as and when determined by MiTur itself - of a new promotion strategy, highly digitalised and effectively contributing to the definition of the content of the Tourism Digital Hub covered by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP);

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- with Decree Law no. 44 of 22 April 2023 (converted, with amendments, by Law no. 74 of 21 June 2023), the Ministry of tourism was authorised to establish, by Ministerial Decree, the in-house company called “ENIT S.p.A.” with the simultaneous closing of the public body ENIT – National Tourism Agency and the transfer of its functions to the company “ENIT S.p.A.”;
- following the Decree of the Minister of tourism of 30 November 2023, ENIT S.p.A. was established on 27 February 2024 pursuant to deed registered as no. 88218 and certified as deed no. 25899 by Notary Paolo Castellini;
- on 20 March 2024, the Interim Agreement between MiTur and ENIT S.p.A. was signed, which provides that ENIT S.p.A. will continue to temporarily manage the activities and relationships covered by the 2024 Business Plan, approved by note prot. 4399 of 16 February, 2024, including the increase in the renown of the Digital Tourism Hub and of website traffic;
- MiTur has launched an articulated and complex project, aimed at profitably matching the tourist demand for Italy with the corresponding Italian supply, according to the objectives and purposes detailed below;
- MiTur has initiated the public consultation procedure concerning the “Technical interoperability guidelines and API management” (hereinafter also “TDH022 Guidelines”);
- Through a different partnership procedure, MiTur has also involved the Regions, Autonomous Provinces and other local public bodies and Central Public Administrations, to collaborate and cooperate in relation to the Tourism Digital Hub;
- MiTur adopted the TDH022 Ecosystem Guidelines of the Ministry of tourism, standards and technologies to interface and integrate with Italia.it, registered by the Court of Auditors under Decree no. 52/23;
- In the exercise of its institutional powers, MiTur does not act as an economic operator and/or intermediary and acts exclusively for public interest purposes falling within its remit;
- MiTur promotes opportunities for collaboration and cooperation with public and private entities interested in the same objectives and purposes, through the signing of partnership agreements;
- In particular, MiTur intends to offer Travel Geo Podcasts to the users of the www.italia.it portal on the portal itself; in order to enhance user experience, the Partnership Agreement will be signed with only one operator who will be selected after this notice;
- This procedure does not entitle the Partner to receive any fees, refunds, indemnities or amounts, since joining the initiative is exclusively aimed at promoting Italian tourism as a whole;
- Data collected as part of the procedure referred to in this Notice shall be processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) as amended.

NOTIFIES THAT

This notice is intended to collect applications for the selection of **a single economic operator** with whom to enter into a partnership agreement for participation in the “Tourism Digital Hub” project in the field of Travel Geo Podcasts, under the conditions better described below.

1 Definitions

For the purposes of this Agreement, the following definitions shall apply:

- a) Partner: the entity that will be selected, pursuant to this notice, to join the Interoperability Infrastructure with TDH for the provision of Travel Geo Podcasts through the accreditation process.
- b) Partners: all public and private entities who have joined and/or will join the TDH Interoperability Infrastructure in the future through the accreditation process and the signing of a partnership and interoperability agreement with TDH.
- c) Iframe: HTML element used to display the content of a web page, or any resource, within a box on a second main page.
- d) APPs: digital applications published on the TDH portal and/or italia.it.
- e) End Users: end recipients of the APPs or APIs or of the website italia.it/ TDH.
- f) E-service: any digital service provided in connection with the Tourism Digital Hub (also “TDH”) created and made available by the Ministry through the implementation of the necessary APIs complying with the AgID Guidelines, to ensure access to its data and/or the integration of its processes to Partners, as regulated by this Agreement.
- g) TDH Infrastructure: the technological infrastructure that ensures the interoperability of the information systems and databases of the entities referred to in Article 2, paragraph 2, of the CAD [Italian Digital Administration Code], through the accreditation, identification and management of the authorization levels of the entities authorised to operate on it, as well as the collection and storage of information relating to accesses and transactions carried out through it pursuant to Art. 50-ter, paragraph 2, of the CAD.
- h) Italia.it: the website created by the Ministry of tourism to promote the entire tourism ecosystem of Italy in order to enhance, integrate and promote its offer, to be enriched with new content produced by the TDH ecosystem.
- i) AgID Guidelines: the AgID guidelines on the technological infrastructure for the interoperability of the information systems and databases referred to in Art. 50-ter, paragraph 2, of the CAD.
- j) Interoperability Guidelines (TDH022): the guidelines on the technical interoperability and management of APIs issued by MiTur that serve as a reference basis for the Interoperability that the Ministry of tourism intends to adopt with Institutional and Private Operators, for the exchange of information, data and services with the TDH.

- k) TDH: the Tourism Digital Hub is a platform of content and services that is designed to profitably match the tourist demand for Italy with the corresponding Italian supply (provided by both national and international entities), creating a connection between the interests of tourists, destinations and supply before, during and after the tourist experience, creating added value for all the parties involved.
- l) TDH022: standardized communication protocol that ensures the interoperability between the Tourism Digital Hub (TDH) and its partners.
- m) User(s): any natural person having access to the TDH Infrastructure for the Interoperability and who is authorised by the Partner to act on its behalf on the Infrastructure itself. According to the AgID Guidelines, Users may be API Operators, Security Operators, Administrative Operators, whose details must be communicated to MiTur through an electronic accreditation procedure on the platform.

2 Subject of the notice

This notice is aimed at selecting an economic operator producing Travel Geo Podcasts for the italia.it portal and the upcoming mobile APP.

The TDH interoperability application platform is owned, managed and developed by MiTur. The TDH application platform has its own technological infrastructure (API Gateway, CMS, DAM, DMS, etc.) with which the partner operators shall interconnect, with the latter being expected to have, in turn, a technological infrastructure that allows them to exchange/receive information and content in an encrypted, authenticated and authorised manner, in accordance with the TDH022 Guidelines.

Therefore, in order to implement interoperability with the TDH, the Partner is required to have a platform that is interoperable with the aforementioned infrastructure, as further detailed in Article 3.2 below.

3 Admission requirements

3.1 Subjective requirements

The economic operators interested in submitting an application for admission to this selection must meet the following subjective requirements, to be attested in the partnership application attached to this notice (Annex 1) by their legal representative pursuant to Presidential Decree no. 445/2000, which shall be digitally signed:

- a) Registration in the Business Register or in other equivalent registers in the countries they come from, for the activities covered by this Notice;
- b) Registered office in a Member State of the European Union;
- c) Fulfilment of the general requirements referred to in Art. 94 of Legislative Decree no. 36/2023.

Entities established in a EU Member State other than Italy can prove they meet the aforementioned requirements by producing equivalent documents, where available, issued by the competent judicial and/or administrative authorities of the country they come from, or, where not available, they may produce a statement proving they meet the aforementioned requirements and/or certifying the impossibility of producing such documents.

The aforementioned requirements must be met at the time of signing the partnership application and declared therein and must be met by the Partner for the entire duration of the partnership contract. The Ministry of tourism may verify the fulfilment of the aforementioned requirements at any time. Non-fulfilment of even only one of the aforementioned requirements may be a cause for non-admission of the Partner or, following the signing of the Partnership Agreement, for termination thereof.

The Partner shall also ensure compliance with the “do no significant harm” principle in accordance with the “Sustainable Finance Taxonomy” (EU Regulation 2020/852).

3.2 Mandatory technical requirements

The economic operators interested in submitting an application for admission to this selection must offer a solution that has the following technical requirements:

3.2.1 Architecture and Integration

a) Fast and Scalable Integration Solution

The solution must consist of an iframe that can be integrated into the Italia.it portal, without requiring backend changes, and that ensures dynamic content loading based on geographical parameters.

b) Scaling and Safety Skills

The solution must be equipped with a backend that:

- offers horizontal and vertical scaling to handle traffic peaks;
- ensures maximum safety;
- ensures fast loading (with a maximum 3-second latency) and uses lazy loading techniques;
- does not process user's personal data.

3.2.2 Content

c) Widespread Distribution of Geolocated Content and duration

The solution must be able to:

- offer a range of geolocated podcasts throughout Italy;
- offer content not lasting more than 5 minutes;
- identify content within a 30 km radius from the indicated latitude and longitude.

3.2.3 Languages

d) Multilingual support

The solution offered by the partner must provide content in at least the following languages: Italian, English, Spanish.

3.2.4 Audio Functionality

e) Audio Quality

The solution must be equipped with widgets supporting HD audio reproduction via HLS audio streaming.

3.2.5 Geolocation and Contextualization

f) Filtering Based on Geographical Coordinates

The solution must be able to filter and present content according to geographical coordinates.

4 Contents, Methods and Deadlines for submitting applications

The economic operators interested in submitting an application for admission to this selection must submit the documents listed below:

- a) their **partnership application**, based on Annex 1 to this notice, created in PDF, bearing the digital signature of their legal representative or another person having signing authority, to be sent to the following certified email address: dg.trds@pec.ministeroturismo.gov. Operators not established in Italy and without a certified email address may submit their partnership application, created in PDF and bearing the digital signature of their legal representative or another person having signing authority, to the following email address: supportTDH@ministeroturismo.gov.it.

If the application is signed by a person other than the operator’s legal representative entered in the Business Register (or a similar Register in the foreign country where the operator resides), the operator must attach a power of attorney.

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The partnership application must also indicate the names of the operator’s legal representative and technical/operational contact person.

The following personal data must be given for each of the aforesaid persons: their name; surname; tax code; e-mail.

Either Party may replace its Contact Person at any time, notifying the other Party in writing.

The partnership application must contain a self-declaration relating to fulfilment of the subjective requirements referred to in Article 3.1 of this Notice, pursuant to Articles 46 and 47 of Presidential Decree no. 445/2000, and of the mandatory technical requirements for the solution referred to in Art. 3.2.

In the event of lack or irregularity of the application for admission or self-declaration, MiTur may apply a special procedure that allows operators to remedy deficiencies, as and when set out in Article 101 of Legislative Decree no. 36/2023.

- b) An **illustrative report** discussing and describing the elements relating to the evaluation criteria and sub-criteria indicated in the table referred to in Article 6 below.

The illustrative report shall not be longer than a total of 10 (ten) A4 sheets – one sheet corresponding to one front-only side of a page. Sheets must be numbered.

Only one application may be sent by each operator; if an operator needs to rectify an application that has already been submitted, the operator may send a new application by certified email after cancelling the previous one by certified email. Operators not established in Italy and not having a certified email address may send it to the following email address: supportTDH@ministeroturismo.gov.it.

MiTur may request further documents supplementing previously submitted documents.

Applications must be submitted only in Italian or in English.

Applications must be submitted no later than one month from the date of publication of this Notice.

5 Admission procedure

All partnership applications will first be verified, so as to ensure fulfilment of the subjective requirements referred to in Art. 3.1 above and the mandatory technical requirements referred to in Art. 3.2 above declared in the partnership application, by the competent MiTur structures responsible for administrative controls and for defining strategies and/or the technical/functional implementation of the TDH ecosystem.

The latter may ask for clarifications and/or documentary additions, using a special procedure that allows operators to remedy deficiencies, and then verify the truthfulness of the data indicated and the statements made thereby in their application, and ask at any time for supporting documents within the meaning of Article 71 of Presidential Decree no. 445/2000.

The right to verify, control and inspect the truthfulness of the data indicated and the statements made by

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operators in their application and to ask for supporting documents within the meaning of Article 71 of Presidential Decree no. 445/2000, also taking into account Legislative Decree no. 82 of 7 March 1995 – Digital Administration Code, may be exercised, even on a sample basis, throughout the partnership.

Upon acceptance or refusal of admission, an email/certified email message will be sent to the parties and/or economic operators who have submitted an application within the applicable deadlines.

The refusal will be communicated, giving reasons, by email/certified email to the parties concerned. The latter, within ten days from receipt of such communication, may submit their observations in writing, possibly accompanied by documents, by certified email. Operators not established in Italy and not having a certified email address may send them to the following email address: supportTDH@ministeroturismo.gov.it. Once the observations have been examined, MiTur may decide to accept or reject them; in the latter case, it will confirm the operator’s non-admission.

6 How applications are evaluated - Evaluation criteria

If, following the admission phase, more than one economic operator is admitted, MiTur will comparatively evaluate the solutions offered by the admitted economic operators, so as to choose the content of a single operator and thus ensure a better user experience, on the basis of the illustrative reports and applying the following evaluation criteria:

EVALUATION CRITERIA	SUB-EVALUATION CRITERIA	MAXIMUM SUB-SCORE	MAXIMUM SCORE	D/T
1. Catalogue size				
Number of contents proposed by the platform	50,000 to 80,000 pieces of content	10	20	T
	More than 80,000 pieces of content	20		T
2. Additional languages				
Languages of the content in addition to the minimum languages (Italian, English and Spanish) that are technically required	French	4	20	T
	German	4		T
	Portuguese	4		T
	Chinese	4		T
	Arabic	4		T
3. Advanced interface experience				
Possibility of podcast consultation on a map			20	T
4. Audio quality and Customization				
			10	T

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Presence of the audio normalization function to maintain a consistent acoustic level when switching from one track to another				
5. Content customization				
The solution is able to customise the proposed content	The platform is equipped with a content selection algorithm based on the user's preferences	5	10	T
	The platform is equipped with filters related to specific categories or tags	5		T
6. Manner of solution/TDH interaction				
Manner of solution interaction with the TDH application platform		5	5	D
7. Content accessibility				
Characteristics of the proposed solution in terms of multimedia content accessibility and usability for end users		5	5	D
8. Promotion of less popular sites and seasonal adjustment				
Description of the solutions proposed to advertise less popular sites and to promote the seasonal adjustment of tourism		10	10	D
TOTAL			100	

The “D/T” column shows, under letter “D,” the “Discretionary Scores”, i.e. the scores attributed on a discretionary basis and, under letter “T”, the “Table Scores”, i.e. the fixed and predefined scores that will be attributed exclusively because of the presence, or absence, of the required conditions.

The technical score (Pt) will be awarded by a 3-member evaluation committee, of whom one member will act as Chair, to the platforms described in the illustrative reports, using the following formula:

$$P_t(a) = \sum_{i=1}^n (W_i * V(a)_i)$$

where:

Pt(a) = technical evaluation score for platform “a”

Wi = maximum score attributable to criterion “i”

V(a)i = performance coefficient of platform (a) relating to criterion “i” varying between 0 and 1

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n = total number of criteria

Σ = sum

With regard to discretionary criteria, each member of the evaluation committee will attribute, at his unquestionable discretion and based on his examination of the platform described in the economic operator’s illustrative report, a coefficient varying between 0 (zero) and 1 (one), using the following evaluation scale:

Rating	Excellent	Good	Fair	Sufficient	Inadequate
Preliminary V(a) _i value assigned	1.00	0.75	0.50	0.25	0.00

The average of the coefficients assigned by committee members is then determined and multiplied by the relative score (W_i), thus determining the technical score assigned to each discretionary criterion.

For Table criteria and sub-criteria, the maximum score indicated in the Table above will be attributed automatically and in absolute value, based on whether or not the competing economic operator meets the required criterion.

Subsequently, for criteria divided into sub-criteria only, the scores achieved by each operator in relation to each sub-criterion will be added up, obtaining the score to be attributed to the operator for the evaluation criterion in question.

When calculating the average of the coefficients, decimal digits up to the second digit (e.g. 0.xx) will be used without rounding.

The economic operator that obtains the highest overall score will be invited by email/certified email to sign the Partnership Agreement, which will be made available in the manner to be notified after the preliminary phase.

The final ranking will be published on the website: <https://www.ministeroturismo.gov.it/tourism-digital-hub/>.

The actual implementation of the E-services and their publication on the TDH ecosystem will also undergo joint testing which, if unsuccessful, shall not entail any charges on the part of MiTur.

MiTur may extend the terms of this notice or, in the event of new operating conditions or the need to update the TDH itself, it may issue a new notice under different conditions, following any changes involving the TDH and the related Guidelines in the early stages of implementation.

7 Partnership Agreement Template

In order to be able to interoperate with the TDH, the selected partner shall sign a Partnership Agreement according to the template set out in Annex 2.

The Agreement template is attached to this Notice for the sole purpose of making it known to each party and/or economic operator as early as at this stage and contains the general provisions governing the relationship with the Partner, including its voluntary participation in the TDH, which does not give rise to any direct remuneration for the Parties involved, and the exemption from liability of MiTur for any loss or damage to the Partner and/or other Partners or Third Parties regarding the nature and quantity of the content provided with the solution. It is understood that the Partnership Agreement may be implemented based on the solution provided by the Partner, as identified at the end of this Notice.

The Partnership Agreement will be filled in and signed as indicated to the first-ranked economic operator.

8 Duration of partnership

The TDH partnership will last 36 months from the date of signing the Partnership Agreement, without prejudice to the Partner’s obligation to accept any mandatory changes introduced by MiTur during the partnership, as better specified in the Partnership Agreement template referred to in Article 7 above.

If the Partner believes that it should not/cannot implement the mandatory changes introduced by MiTur during the partnership, the Partner may withdraw from the Agreement, as better specified in the Partnership Agreement template referred to in Article 7 above.

9 Partnership cancellation

If the documents certifying fulfilment of the partnership requirements contain inaccurate information or if the Partner ceases to meet the subjective and mandatory technical requirements during the partnership, MiTur shall cancel the partnership and report the irregularities (if the conditions are met) to the competent Authorities for the assessment of any criminal, civil and administrative-accounting liability. Such cancellation shall be promptly communicated by email/certified email and will take effect immediately upon receipt of the notification.

In addition to the cases referred to above, partnership cancellation is governed by the Partnership Agreement template referred to in Article 7 above and may therefore occur at any time under the conditions and in the manner specified therein.

10 Obligations and responsibilities of the parties

The obligations and responsibilities of the parties are listed in the Agreement referred to in Article 7 above. Such obligations shall apply as from the signing of the Partnership Agreement, according to the procedure outlined in Art. 7 above.

11 Checks and inspections

MiTur may carry out unannounced checks and inspections at any time, even on a sample basis, with regard to the Partner’s compliance with its obligations. MiTur may also use advanced technological tools (e.g. social media monitoring) to identify situations compromising the reputation of the Ministry itself or of the TDH project. In these cases, MiTur may withdraw from the agreement as set out in the Template referred to in Article 7 and take any ensuing action to obtain compensation for damages caused thereto, even if only to its image.

12 Project Manager

The Project Manager is Benedetta Rizzo, who may be contacted for information regarding this Notice at the following email address:

supportTDH@ministeroturismo.gov.it.

13 Information and contacts

This Notice and all related documentation are available on the dedicated page of the website <https://www.ministeroturismo.gov.it/tourism-digital-hub/>. Their publication amounts to a notification to the parties concerned.

MiTur may supplement or modify this Notice in case of changes or modifications to the TDH22 Guidelines or the regulatory applicable framework. In this case, MiTur will publish such changes and communicate how applications are to be supplemented, as the case may be, using the same method adopted for this Notice.

Any requests for clarification and information relating to this Notice should be addressed to the following email address: supportTDH@ministeroturismo.gov.it. The Ministry provides clarifications and answers to requests in the “FAQ” section of the Ministry’s website.

Requests for clarification received by voice, over the telephone and/or other means will not be considered. Likewise, requests for general clarifications, or irrelevant requests, or requests characterised by absolute uncertainty as to their origin, will not be considered.

The clarifications regulated by this Article shall be an integral and substantial part of this Notice.

14 Privacy protection

Data collected as part of the procedure referred to in this Notice shall be processed in accordance with current laws under Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) as amended.

Personal data will be processed solely for the purpose of carrying out the procedure referred to in this Notice in accordance with Art. 22 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241.

Data supply is required and the refusal to provide the same will prevent the complete submittal of an application.

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The personal data in question will be processed, in compliance with the law, by adopting security measures to ensure the confidentiality of the data subject to whom the data refer.

The Data Controller is the Ministry of tourism, acting through its *pro tempore* Minister.

15 Jurisdiction and appeals

All parties and/or economic operators may submit an appeal to the competent Regional Administrative Court within 60 days from receipt, by certified email, of the partnership rejection notice.

16 Final provisions

With the exception of the references to Articles 94 and 101 of Legislative Decree No. 36/2023, contained, respectively, in Articles 3.1 and 4 of this Notice, the same does not introduce procedures or refer to transactions that can be attributed or are otherwise similar to the negotiation procedures governed by Legislative Decree no. 36/2023.

DIRECTOR GENERAL

Atty. Filomena Bilancio

(signed digitally pursuant to the eIDAS regulation, via SPID or with Qualified Electronic Signature)