



June 30, 2023  
*Via email*

Mr. Douglass Adams, Director  
Department of Research and Development  
COUNTY OF HAWAII  
25 Aupuni Street, Suite 1301  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Aloha e Director Adams,

The Island of Hawaii Visitors Bureau (IHVB) is interested in providing professional services for the County during the fiscal year 2023-24.

In accordance with HRS 103D-304, Notice to Providers of Professional Services, we are submitting with this letter our Statement of Qualifications for Professional Services in the category of General Education and Training.

If you have any questions, please contact us at [islandofhawaii@hvcb.org](mailto:islandofhawaii@hvcb.org) or call 808-885-1655.  
Mahalo nui for considering IHVB.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Mullen".

Tom Mullen  
Senior Vice President  
Chief Operating Officer  
Hawaii Visitors & Conventions Bureau



**Statement of Qualifications for  
General Education and Training**  
June 30, 2023

The Island of Hawai'i Visitors Bureau (IHVB) has the capacity to offer services in the Category of General Education and Training, Research and Development. These services include the design, development, and implementation of messaging/communication programs that include a wide range of media as well as the production/coordination of events and programs. All programs developed are in line with the County of Hawai'i Tourism Strategic Plan.

IHVB's office is located on the Kohala Coast, Hawai'i. We are an island chapter of the Hawai'i Visitors & Convention Bureau (HVCB), with a focus on the island of Hawai'i's community and industry needs. The services provided may require travel throughout the island, the State, the continental US, and internationally.

**Primary place of business and office location:**

ISLAND OF HAWAII VISITORS BUREAU  
62-3595 'Āmaui Drive, Kohala Coast, HI 96743 (*physical address*)  
67-1185 Māmalahoa Highway, Unit D104 PMB 324, Kamuela, HI 96743 (*mailing/USPS address*)  
Tel: 808-885-1655 | Fax: 808-885-1755 | email: [islandofhawaii@hvcb.org](mailto:islandofhawaii@hvcb.org)

**Current on-site contacts:**

Donna Kimura  
Director of Marketing  
[dkimura@hvcb.org](mailto:dkimura@hvcb.org)

(808) 365-5613 (landline)  
(808) 333-7581 (mobile)

Deanna Isbister  
Director of Sales  
[disbister@hvcb.org](mailto:disbister@hvcb.org)

(808) 365-5612 (landline)  
(808) 238-8432 (mobile)

**Primary contact at Hawai'i Visitors & Convention Bureau (corporate):**

Tom Mullen  
Senior Vice President, Chief Operating Officer  
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[tmullen@hvcb.org](mailto:tmullen@hvcb.org)  
(808) 371-6379 (mobile)

HVCB is a private non-profit, member-based organization. Island Chapter offices can be found in every county. Collectively, we provide industry knowledge, resources, connections, and insight. We are stewards of the Hawai'i Island brand, not just as one of the world's greatest travel destination brands, but as one of the world's most precious resources and our home.

IHVB also supports the Hawai'i Tourism Authority's international marketing/messaging contractors based in Canada, China, Japan, South Korea, and Oceania.

**Company History**

The Hawai'i Visitors Bureau officially launched in 1945. The Hawai'i County Chapter, originally called Big Island Visitors Bureau was created in the early 1980s.

The average number of employees at the Island of Hawai'i Visitors Bureau has varied through the years, from a kiosk in Kona and main office in Hilo to two fully-functioning offices – East and West Hawai'i, the one office, based in West Hawai'i. The pandemic also impacting staffing levels. Our current IHVB staffing level is four full-time workers, plus a full-time DMAP manager and CEP manager.

**IHVB Staff (as of this writing):**

**Vacant, Executive Director**

The Executive Director of the Island of Hawai'i Visitors Bureau is responsible for overseeing IHVB's marketing and associated programs impacting the island's visitor industry. Serving as the lead liaison between the island's stakeholders and the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB), he/she also oversees the development of relationships with community leaders, government officials, and visitor industry marketing partners.

*In the absence of an executive director, and by corporate resolution\*\*:*

**Tom Mullen**, Senior Vice President, Chief Operating Officer, Hawai'i Visitors & Convention Bureau

At HVCB, Tom holds the responsibility for finance and corporate services, contract compliance, business development, and travel industry partnerships. Before taking this role in 2015, he was chief administrative officer with the Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board. He also held a 27-year position at American Express, where he spent the majority of his time in Hawai'i working in various sectors of the company.

**Vacant, Director of MCI and International Sales**

This position oversees all activities and programs related to IHVB's global MCI efforts and worldwide international sales.

*In the absence of this position, we have included\*\*:*

**Brandon Goda**, Compliance Analyst, Hawai'i Visitors & Convention Bureau. Brandon has been with the HVCB since 2009. In this role, he supports the entire HVCB team, including the island chapters by reviewing and processing all expenses and payment vouchers, ensuring accuracy and compliance with corporate, accounting, and travel policies. Prior to joining HVCB, he worked at Hawai'i Tourism Japan, then at Pacific University.

**Deanna Isbister**, Director of Leisure Sales

Ms. Isbister develops partner relationships with wholesalers and travel agents and oversees island destination training. She has more than 30 years of experience in the hospitality industry in Hawai'i and the U.S. mainland. Most recently, she was director of sales at Courtyard by Marriott's Hotel King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel. Deanna resides with her husband in Hōlualoa, Kona.

**Donna Kimura**, Director of Marketing

With 35+ years of hospitality industry experience, Ms. Kimura manages the public relations and social efforts for IHVB as well as develops/designs marketing programs and collateral. She works closely with HVCB to ensure the proper island (of Hawai'i) messaging in all consumer-facing materials. She also supports the executive director in developing tourism-facing messaging crisis situations. She is a lifelong resident of Waimea.

*\*\*Once the vacant positions are filled, we will update this section accordingly.*

Sample Projects:

Attached

### Sample Projects:

#### **Meetings Today LIVE! Hawai'i**

The Island of Hawai'i Visitors Bureau (IHVB) and industry partners welcomed 20 qualified meeting planners from the continental U.S. who participated in *Meetings Today LIVE!* at Fairmont Orchid from April 19 – 21, 2023. This year's event incorporated various opportunities for planners to learn more about Hawaiian culture through place-based learning.

IHVB partnered with the County of Hawai'i to create a "Taste of Hilo" day on Saturday, April 22. The group visited Pu'ukoholā Heiau National Historic Site and toured Native Hawaiian-owned/operated O.K. Farms in Hilo. A luncheon and pop-up mākeke (market) coordinated by Chef Summer Cazimero of Showtime Hawai'i was held at Grand Naniloa, where a welcome oli (or oli komo) was shared by Grand Naniloa staffer Glen. After a quick omiyage stop at Big Island Candies, the group then headed to Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, toured a few locations, had dinner at The Rim restaurant at Volcano House, then wrapped up with a hike through Nāhuku Lava Tube.

#### **Dallas Travel & Adventure Show**

The Dallas Travel and Adventure Show (April 1 and 2) was an opportunity to engage and gather the travel interest of both consumers and travel advisors to the island of Hawai'i throughout this region. Many attendees drove from Houston and beyond to attend this event. There are future growth opportunities in Texas to attract our targeted mindful traveler with the right / pono messaging. This show served as the starting point for IHVB and partners leading to four additional travel trade events in Texas and Colorado.

IHVB and partners were also able to meet with several travel writers who focused on outdoor adventure. Shyla Victor, reigning Miss Kona Coffee was able to share more about sustainable tourism (her platform). Travelers appeared to be very open to educational and cultural experiences in their travel plans. The Dallas Travel & Adventure show is estimated to draw an audience of about 7,000.

While in the area, IHVB reached out to wholesale regional managers to invite targeted travel advisors to four events (Dallas, Austin, Denver, and Ft. Collins). The Hawai'i Island Travel Advisor Educational Seminars (April 3 – 6) was a huge success reaching 175 travel advisors. Travel advisors were eager for destination updates and showed much interest in presenting their clients with opportunities to immerse in history and culture, supporting/buying local, and authentic experiences. They appreciated hearing from Shyla (youth and resident perspective) and other industry partners in attendance.

#### **Pono Pledge Video**

In late 2020, the Island of Hawai'i Visitors Bureau (IHVB) reached out to the School of Hawaiian Language at UH-Hilo to collaborate on a video project in 'ōlelo Hawai'i and English for the Pono Pledge ([www.ponopledge.com](http://www.ponopledge.com)), a website that was developed and launched in late 2018 to support responsible, sustainable, mindful travelers to the island. The video would be produced

and directed by Hawai'i Island residents, and add a multi-media option to promote Pono Pledge messaging while sharing the Hawaiian language. The video was released in 2021 with the support of the IHVB's public relations contractor, Anthology Marketing Group.

Since its launch, not only the visitor industry but private and public businesses have requested/used the link. The video also won an international Telly Award. The online pledge count grew from around 5,000 to well over 21,000.

We continue to use Pono Pledge in our messaging in our sales, public relations, and marketing efforts for Hawai'i Island.

We also supported the team at the Hilo dock for incoming cruise passengers. The Pono Pledge video plays there and free postcards (with Pono Pledge printed on one side) are available for passengers. This is a better solution than a flier, which tends to end up in the trash. Additionally, it amplifies our Pono Pledge messaging should the passenger decide to send the card to their family/friends. Hilo locations (Wailoa State Park and Waiānuenue Rainbow Falls) are featured.