

## Application Score Sheet

Proposed Project: Visit Florida, NWFL Beaches Adventures Within Reach, #320  
Proposed Project/Program County: All  
Board of County Commission Support: Yes  
Rural County: Yes  
Opportunity Zone: N/A

Total Projected Project Cost: \$13,500,000  
Match Provided: \$3,000,000  
Triumph Funds Requested: \$10,500,000 (77%)  
Triumph Funds Recommended by Staff:

Score: A

ROI: \$12.55 in additional after-tax personal income for each dollar of VF spending per 2021 EDR study (p32)

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### **Economic Analysis, Impact and Score**

VISIT FLORIDA (VF) is seeking \$10.5 million from Triumph over three years. With its partner, the Northwest Florida Tourism Council (NWFL), VF will create and execute a regional tourism promotion project for the eight counties in the Triumph region. The project intends to diversify and enhance the region's tourism by spreading the benefits of tourism to areas not typically realizing those benefits by promoting visitation outside of the peak summer season and extending seasonal employment into additional months or year-round employment. It will also add resilience to the region's tourism industry by facilitating the diversification of regional tourism product offerings beyond the beach.

Match of \$500,000 per year will be provided by both VF and by NWFL for a total match of \$1 million per year to be used in conjunction with the \$3.5 million per year proposed to be provided by Triumph, leading to a total project budget of \$13.5 million over three years. This means that Triumph will be providing 77.8 percent of the total funding. The project consists of two pillars: (1) a regional brand campaign; and (2) destination campaigns.

Based on the findings of a pilot program, the regional brand campaign will have an adventure focus intended to expand outdoor recreation in the area by connecting more families to nature in undiscovered places in environmentally conscious ways. The regional brand campaign will expend \$7.5 million of the \$13.5 million total project budget.

The destination campaigns annual budget will be \$2,000,000. These efforts will consist of NWFL and VISIT FLORIDA cobranded cooperative marketing efforts designed to tell a more specific story for each community within the umbrella of the "Adventure within Reach" narrative. Each county will be able to more deeply personalize creative assets and determine the media and timing that best achieve county-specific goals alongside the regional effort.

ROI analysis for VISIT FLORIDA and its promotion programs is conducted every three years by the Florida Legislative Office for Economic and Demographic Research (EDR) as per statute. The most recent analysis was published in 2021. It found that on average 59.9 percent of all out-of-state tourist were influenced by tourism marketing as they planned their vacations. EDR found that the leisure and hospitality industry contributed \$63.8 billion in gross domestic product, or 7 percent of the Florida total, and 1.45 million jobs, or 13 percent of all Florida jobs, and 13.4 percent of Florida's general revenue.

The EDR report cites from studies by OmniTrak and other sources. While the estimates are not precise given the difficulty of accurate attribution of new household income to new tourism dollars due to "ad-aware" versus "ad-unaware" visitors, it is likely that flows of direct tax revenue to state and local governments range from \$6 dollars per dollar of advertising spend to \$12 in direct tax revenue per dollar of advertising spend. Further, the 2021 EDR study suggests (p32) that every dollar of VF spending yielded \$12.55 in additional after-tax personal income. Including the match dollars on top of Triumph's dollars increase this ratio to \$15.3. This is somewhat lower than the average return calculated for Triumph projects.

Although both the match and the ROI are somewhat low, staff score this program as an "A."

### **Project Summary (based on information provided by the applicant)**

VISIT FLORIDA is requesting a \$10,500,000 Triumph grant to create and execute a three-year regional tourism marketing project for Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Bay, Gulf, Franklin and Wakulla counties. The funds will be used to expand on the new Northwest Florida (NWFL) "Adventure within Reach" promotional effort. The goal of this large-scale regional branding project is to extend tourism seasonality, open new origin markets, and diversify tourism to off-beach experiences. The project has the support of all eight county tourism boards and the boards of county commissioners. VISIT FLORIDA will administer and implement the grant in close collaboration with its partners.

Promotional activities envisioned align with and compliment each county's ongoing tourism marketing efforts as well as the VISIT FLORIDA's state-level marketing efforts which also support the region. The establishment of a large-scale regional adventure brand with consumer awareness will create a new asset for the region that can be leveraged to support the region's tourism business for as long as it is supported with funds. The project has cash buy-in from nine different organizations (all eight counties and the State). Best-in-class marketing efficacy tools will be used to evaluate project performance and official State-level tourism data is available to evaluate long-term outcomes.

The proposed annual project budget consists of \$3,500,000 in Triumph grant funds (for a total of \$10,500,000), \$500,000 from VISIT FLORIDA (for a total of \$1,500,000) and \$500,000 from NWFL tourism partners (for a total of \$1,500,000).

The regional brand campaign's annual budget will be \$2,500,000. It will expand existing NWFL "Adventure within Reach" efforts by using learnings from a 2023 pilot program to inform its direction. The adventure focus will expand outdoor recreation in the area by connecting more

families to nature in undiscovered places and environmentally conscious ways. Adventure travelers spend at least 2X per person in the local economy on average compared to other categories. Promoting the region in this way creates a unique, new asset that can be leveraged for growth in specialized industries like charter fishing, scuba diving, and other outdoor categories.

The destination campaign's annual budget will be \$2,000,000. These efforts will consist of NWFL and VISIT FLORIDA cobranded cooperative marketing efforts designed to tell a more specific story for each community within the umbrella of the "Adventure within Reach" narrative. For example, while the regional effort may promote kayaking and paddling across the region, here, Walton County may focus on the coastal dune lakes or a great spot on the Choctawhatchee Bay to stop and have lunch, Franklin County may promote the Apalachicola River Paddling Trail, and so on per each destination.

Equitable distribution of destination campaign benefit will be achieved through each county being allocated \$25,000 plus a pro-rata share of the region's visitor spending (as measured by 1% of the tourist development tax collected in each county). The funds allocated to each county by that formula will then be applied by each county to opportunities developed by VISIT FLORIDA. The eight county tourism offices have discussed and agreed upon this formula.

To implement the project, VISIT FLORIDA will work with the NWFL tourism partners to clearly define targeted emerging markets for the region, clearly define relevant regional seasonality; and clearly define the region's core tourism areas and geofence areas targeted for development ("off the beaten path" areas).

VISIT FLORIDA will then create and execute the marketing campaign elements in collaboration with the NWFL tourism partners. Success measures will include the ability of the campaign to effectively persuade emerging market customers to visit the region and visitor experiences taking place in areas targeted for development within the region as measured by using VISIT FLORIDA Arrivalist data and increase in accommodation bookings from defined origin markets.

This project seeks to facilitate the growth in employment in NAICS 713. Within the Leisure and Hospitality super sector, NAICS 71 sector jobs earn higher wages than those in Accommodation and Food Services, NAICS 72. Adventure tourism is composed of year-round recreational opportunities, which also translates into year-round employment, as opposed to seasonal employment. These goals align with the Northwest Florida FORWARD vision to give regional residents and businesses a wealth of opportunities

While it is difficult to forecast with high certainty exact employment outcomes, as part of a successful application to the U.S. Department of Commerce ("USDOL") for CARES Act funding in 2020, VISIT FLORIDA did an analysis supported by model developed by an independent econometrics consulting firm demonstrating that an additional expenditure of \$10M on VISIT FLORIDA marketing programs, based on historic performance data, would result in an increase of approximately 700,000 visitors within a year from the end of the campaign. Those extra visitors were projected to spend \$434 million dollars, which (according the IMPLAN model for Florida's economy) were estimated to support the hiring of 7,100 employees resulting

in an additional \$250M in wages. This analysis was deemed credible by USDOL and relied upon as a part of its evaluation and approval of the CARES Act grant it awarded VISIT FLORIDA.

If funded, VISIT FLORIDA intends to seek additional funding from Triumph to continue the evolution of the project as long as funds are available. Beyond Triumph funding, NWFL and VISIT FLORIDA will evaluate and agree upon the future of the project as supported by other available funding sources to be identified in the future, including but not limited to each organization's existing recurring funding sources including bed tax collections for NWFL, State appropriations from designated trust funds and general revenue for VISIT FLORIDA.

All nine organizations involved with the project have supported prior efforts to market the region as a region. The Northwest Florida Tourism Council has been incorporated since 2002 and been collaborating with VISIT FLORIDA on periodic projects since the BP Oil Spill. Smaller scale promotional efforts will continue. However, this award would enhance those efforts greatly by establishing a much larger-scale consumer effort that is not possible without the support of Triumph.

### **Budget and Funding**

See Attached

### **Letter of Support**

Florida Department of Commerce  
Walton County Board of County Commissioners  
Santa Rosa County Board of Commissioners  
Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners  
Gulf County Board of County Commissioners  
Escambia County Board of County Commissioners  
Bay County Board of County Commissioners  
Franklin County Board of County Commissioners  
Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners  
Wakulla County Tourist Development Council

**Exhibit B**

**Project #, NWFL Adventure Within Reach**

Budget

Estimated start date - April 1, 2024

Estimated education component start date: NA

	Strategic Consulting				
	Service Fees	Production/Media	Category #3	Category #4	Total
<b>Please change year # to actual year</b>					
<b>Project Total</b>					
Calendar Year 2024	110,000.00	4,390,000.00	-	-	4,500,000.00
Calendar Year 2025	110,000.00	4,390,000.00	-	-	4,500,000.00
Calendar Year 2026	110,000.00	4,390,000.00	-	-	4,500,000.00
Calendar Year 4	-	-	-	-	-
Calendar Year 5	-	-	-	-	-
Calendar Year 6	-	-	-	-	-
Calendar Year 7	-	-	-	-	-
Calendar Year 8	-	-	-	-	-
Calendar Year 9	-	-	-	-	-
Calendar Year 10	-	-	-	-	-
Calendar Year 11	-	-	-	-	-
Calendar Year 12	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>330,000.00</b>	<b>13,170,000.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>13,500,000.00</b>

<b>Triumph</b>					
Calendar Year 2024	-	3,500,000.00			3,500,000.00
Calendar Year 2025	-	3,500,000.00			3,500,000.00
Calendar Year 2026	-	3,500,000.00			3,500,000.00
Calendar Year 4					-
Calendar Year 5					-
Calendar Year 6					-
Calendar Year 7					-
Calendar Year 8					-
Calendar Year 9					-
Calendar Year 10					-
Calendar Year 11					-
Calendar Year 12					-
<b>Triumph Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,500,000.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>10,500,000.00</b>

<b>Grantee</b>					
Calendar Year 2024	110,000.00	890,000.00			1,000,000.00
Calendar Year 2025	110,000.00	890,000.00			1,000,000.00
Calendar Year 2026	110,000.00	890,000.00			1,000,000.00
Calendar Year 4					-
Calendar Year 5					-
Calendar Year 6					-
Calendar Year 7					-
Calendar Year 8					-
Calendar Year 9					-
Calendar Year 10					-
Calendar Year 11					-
Calendar Year 12					-
<b>Grantee Total</b>	<b>330,000.00</b>	<b>2,670,000.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,000,000.00</b>

<b>Match Source 1</b>					
Calendar Year 2024					-
Calendar Year 2025					-
Calendar Year 2026					-
Calendar Year 4					-
Calendar Year 5					-
Calendar Year 6					-
Calendar Year 7					-
Calendar Year 8					-
Calendar Year 9					-
Calendar Year 10					-
Calendar Year 11					-
Calendar Year 12					-