

AIUla 360 - Tourism Econometric Model

Consultation process timeline in 2026

- Release Date: March 4
- **Response deadline: no later than March 20, 12pm**
- General Q&A session: April 7 – 10am to 1pm – French time (to be confirmed)
Negotiation phase(s): AFALULA and RCU reserve the right to conduct one or more negotiation phases, if necessary, with one or several shortlisted candidates. The schedule for these negotiations will be communicated to the relevant candidates.
- Kick off the project and deployment: April 20
- Delivery: November 19

Adjustments to the request for proposals may be made during the consultation process.

AFALULA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to request additional information, clarification, or edits on submitted proposals.

Please submit your proposal no later than to

- Gwénaëlle Delos, Tourism, Hospitality and Innovation Director – gwenaelle.delos@afalula.com
- Guillaume Maréchal, Innovation Advisor - guillaume.marechal@afalula.com
- For further inquiries, please contact them by email exclusively

1. Background - The AIUla project

AIUla county spans a surface area of about 22,500 km² in the North-western parts of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). AIUla has a distinguished natural and human heritage spanning millennia of interactions between human and natural history. As a cornerstone of the Kingdom's cultural and touristic ambition.

AIUla project will develop an archaeological, cultural and touristic complex, the so called "open-air living museum". This major investment aims to make the AIUla region the Kingdom's cultural capital as per the 2030 vision.

The 2030 vision of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia aims at i) developing AIUla as a global destination for history, heritage, culture, and ecotourism while adopting a sustainable and inclusive approach, ii) diversifying the local economy including agriculture, logistics, hospitality, sports, arts and culture; and iii) and preserving the natural heritage through responsible conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, ecological restoration and reintroduction of wildlife.

The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) was established by a Royal Decree in July 2017 to lead and achieve the vision for AIUla project. As an integrated management agency for AIUla County, the RCU was established as a mechanism for coordination to transfer all the activities related to the Commission's jurisdiction from the relevant government bodies. RCU is responsible for the Strategy development for AIUla, its implementation and the development of successful partnerships. RCU's special nature authority and administrative independence enables it to efficiently drive the coordination and delivery of this major development project, as aligned with its vision and local requirements.

The French Agency for AIUla Development (AFALULA) was founded in July 2018 (in Paris) following a bilateral agreement between KSA & France signed on 10 April 2018 at the Elysée Palace. The agreement mandates France to support Saudi Arabia in the economic, touristic and cultural development of AIUla and its transformation into a worldwide cultural and touristic destination.

2. Project Objective

The Destination Marketing & Management Office (DMMO) of the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) and the Tourism, Hospitality and Innovation department of the the French Agency for AIUla Development (AFALULA) seeks to appoint an independent vendor to design and operate a destination-level AIUla 360 - Tourism Econometric Model for AIUla.

As AIUla's tourism activity has expanded, multiple datasets and estimation approaches have been used to assess tourism volumes, behaviour, and value. While informative in isolation, these approaches do not currently integrate a consistently applied Econometric model suitable for strategic planning, meaning forecasting, and executive decision-making.

The purpose of this RFP is to establish a clean-slate Tourism Econometric Model, grounded in international best practice, that provides a coherent and forward-looking view of tourism dynamics in AIUla. The model is intended to complement — not duplicate — existing visitor counting initiatives by translating multiple demand and supply signals into interpretable, decision-grade outputs.

The appointed vendor (vendor) will be expected to **Collect, Design, Implement, and Operate** the AIUla 360 - Tourism Econometric Model as the institutional reference for tourism measurement and forecasting.

3. Scope of Engagement – Tourism Econometric Model

This engagement covers the **Collect, Design, Implement, and Operate**, of a destination-level Tourism Econometric Model, rather than a one-off analytical or advisory exercise.

The appointed vendor will be responsible for:

- Designing a **clean-slate econometric model** tailored to AIUla’s tourism ecosystem and destination master plans
- Defining and applying a consistent methodology to estimate tourism volumes, composition, behavior, and value over time
- Independently sourcing and integrating relevant data inputs, including proprietary, third-party, and primary data sources, as required by the model design
- Producing **forward-looking forecasts and scenario analysis** derived from the econometric structure

This engagement is **not intended** to reconcile, recalibrate, or retrospectively correct previously reported tourism figures. Historic data may be referenced for contextual understanding only and shall not form the foundation of the model.

RCU does not prescribe specific data inputs, coefficients, or estimation techniques. Vendor are expected to bring **their own econometric methodologies, intellectual property, and data access capabilities**.

4. Scope of Work

The selected candidate (the candidate) will deliver a full-service engagement encompassing the following workstreams:

1. Core Model Outputs

The AIUla 360 - Tourism Econometric Model must generate a **consistent and repeatable set of destination-level outputs**, suitable for executive decision-making, planning, and scenario assessment.

At a minimum, the model must support estimation and interpretation of:

- Tourism volumes and flows at destination level
- Market and origin composition (e.g. domestic vs international, place of residence)
- Average Length of Stay (ALOS)
- Average Daily Spend (ADS) and aggregate tourism spending
- Seasonality patterns and temporal demand dynamics
- Forecasts and scenario outputs based on defined demand and supply drivers

The vendor must clearly document model structure, assumptions, limitations, confidence ranges, and appropriate interpretation guidance.

2. Forecasting, Scenario & Analytical Capability

The AIUla 360 - Tourism Econometric Model must support **forward-looking analysis** that enables leadership to assess potential future outcomes under different demand and supply conditions.

At a minimum, the model must be capable of producing:

- Short- to medium-term tourism forecasts derived from the core econometric structure
- Scenario analysis reflecting changes in key drivers, including but not limited to:
 - Connectivity and access
 - Accommodation capacity and phasing
 - Events and programmed demand
 - Seasonality effects, including national holidays and Ramadan

Forecasting and scenario outputs must be **methodologically consistent** with the underlying model and accompanied by clear explanation of assumptions, sensitivities, and uncertainty ranges.

3. Governance, Transparency & Change Control

The appointed vendor shall ensure that the AIUla 360 - Tourism Econometric Model is governed in a manner that supports **transparency, consistency, and institutional confidence** over time.

At a minimum, the vendor will be required to:

- Fully document the model structure, assumptions, data dependencies, and estimation logic
- Work within the RCU IT ecosystem (Power BI, APIs, etc)
- Clearly define how methodological changes, refinements, or updates are identified, assessed, and implemented

While RCU retains ownership of the outputs produced by the model, the appointed vendor remains **accountable for the integrity, application, and consistency of the methodology**.

5. Deliverables, Duration & Commercial Terms

RCU intends to appoint a vendor to **Collect, Design, Implement, and Operate** the AIUla 360 - Tourism Econometric Model over a defined engagement period (3 years), rather than commission a standalone methodological study.

Vendor are expected to propose an engagement structure that includes:

Phase I (2026): an initial model design and implementation

- Phase I is expected to result in a fully functioning baseline model capable of producing initial estimates, forecasts, and scenarios.
- The budget should range between €150,000 and €200,000, with a maximum cap of €200,000 (excluding VAT) for Phase 1
- Deployment in AIUla is expected for contextual familiarization, ongoing project phases, the final report phase, knowledge transfer sessions, and stakeholder workshops.
- In addition, a regular on-site presence is recommended to ensure the smooth delivery of the project
- **Phase I of the contract will be signed between the vendor and AFALULA**

Phase II, during 1 year after full implementation from phase 1

- Ongoing operation, maintenance, and application of the model
- Quarterly periodic reporting and forecast updates in line with agreed cycles (Phase II)
- This second phase will start as soon as phase 1 is fully completed and approved by RCU and AFALULA. It will last 1 year and is expected to cover 2027
- Vendor should clearly specify the proposed annual commercial terms for the following years of operation and maintenance
- **Phase II is contingent upon the results and outcomes of Phase I. This will be a joint discretionary decision by RCU and AFALULA.**

6. RFP Application Elements - Candidate Application Dossier Requirements

Technical and financial proposals must describe the approach and methodologies, including the necessary human resources and timeline (with deliverable dates), for a mission starting in April 2026.

The technical proposal should demonstrate how the expertise will be sourced and deployed during the project and propose some CVs. A detailed budget should be included, that clearly differentiates between core costs and missions-related costs (travel, accommodation, etc.).

The candidate will have to provide a complete offer detailing its approach and methodology, as well as a schedule for carrying out the various phases of the project.

All proposals must be submitted in **PDF** format (including notes, presentations, charts) and in **English**. Content should be **concise and relevant**, with a clear, professional structure.

The application submitted by the candidate must include table of Contents, executive Summary and Numbered pages

The candidate proposal should include:

1. **Project understanding:** the candidate is expected to submit a concise note outlining their understanding of the project — including its objectives, key challenges, and specific needs
2. **Relevance of experience:** the candidate will provide a selection of a maximum of five summarized case studies (maximum of one page per case study), similar projects, or any other relevant examples that demonstrate their ability to meet the project's expected needs.
3. **Team structure and bios of key experts:** the candidate will provide a selection of CVs highlighting each expert's professional background, core competencies, major clients, and relevant past experience. The proposal must clearly identify both the project leadership and the core project team. An organizational chart should be included, detailing the human resources involved in the project and clearly indicating any subcontractors or third-party contributors. The candidate will also designate primary operational contacts who will serve as the main points of contact for AFALULA and RCU.
4. **Technical approach and methodology:** the candidate will present a detailed description of the proposed technical approach and methodology, outlining how the project objectives will be achieved. This should include the overall strategy, key phases, the social impact framework, digital dashboard functionalities, relevant social impact insights, and a clear understanding of the project's complexity and context. The candidate will also explain how they plan to conduct the data collection. In addition, the candidate must explicitly identify potential risks associated with the project and present a clear risk mitigation strategy, detailing how these risks will be anticipated, managed, and minimized.
5. **Work plan and timeline:** A detailed project timeline with key milestones, checkpoints, delivery reviews and deadlines for the submission of deliverables will be proposed by the candidate.
6. **Deployment in AIUla, onsite visits, and knowledge transfer:** The candidate should describe how the project will be implemented in AIUla, taking into account the local context — including the presence of local offices (if applicable), coordination with local stakeholders, and any logistical arrangements that will support effective on-the-ground execution. A continuous on-site presence is not required, a regular presence in AIUla is expected to ensure the smooth progress of the The candidate is also expected to describe their methodology for delivering a representative workshop session.

7. **Technical capabilities and tool usability:** the candidate will present the proposed tool and dashboard architecture, detailing key technical specifications, data visualization and reporting features. The proposal should also clearly demonstrate how the tool will be used by RCU and its stakeholders, emphasizing user-friendliness, security, accessibility, and adaptability to different user profiles.
8. **Innovation and added value:** the candidate will provide any relevant information, documentation, or examples that demonstrate innovative approaches, technologies, or methodologies. The proposal should highlight the added value the candidate brings to the project, particularly in ways that enhance effectiveness, efficiency, or long-term impact, thereby reinforcing the candidate's relevance and distinctiveness in delivering the assignment.

7. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on their ability to demonstrate **methodological rigor, independence, and operational credibility.**

- Strength of the proposed econometric methodology (25%)
- Demonstrated experience delivering comparable destination-level tourism models (15%)
- Ability to independently source and integrate relevant data inputs (20%)
- Clarity, transparency, and auditability of model design and outputs (15%)
- Capability to operate and stand behind the model on an ongoing basis (10%)
- Appropriateness of the proposed engagement structure and commercial approach, including compliance with the indicated budget range for Phase 1 and the submission of a competitive budget proposal for Phase 2 (15%)

8. Financial Offer

The candidate must provide a detailed cost breakdown.

The cost breakdown should include:

- **Human resources costs** (e.g. Project Manager, Data Analyst, Designer).
- **Others:** refers to any additional costs necessary to complete the mission in relation to the scope of work.
- **Options:** optional updates to the tool and framework, offered at a rate card that includes human resource costs.
- Costs must be provided excluding tax.

The candidate is required to submit a separate and dedicated breakdown of estimated travel and accommodation costs in a detailed cost table, which must remain within the overall budget cap.

- The candidate shall cover travel expenses to Saudi Arabia required for the performance of the Services, for both their representatives and any accompanying persons (e.g. experts)
- Flights will be in economy class, except for medium- and long-haul overnight flights, which may be booked in business class
- Accommodation expenses in Saudi Arabia

9. Administrative Requirements

- The signed non-disclosure agreement must be returned upon receipt of the RFP (Appendix 1)
- Signed Act of Engagement form (Appendix 2)
- Valid Kbis of the company

APPENDICES

1. Appendix 1: Non-Disclosure Agreement

COMPANY NAME

Address (n° de TVA : FRXX et n° de SIRET : XX)

Attention: Name

Paris, date.

Strictly private and confidential

On 10 April 2018, the government of the Republic of France and the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia entered into an intergovernmental agreement relating to the cultural, environmental, touristic, human and economic development of the AIUla governorate in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (the "**Intergovernmental Agreement**").

In order to carry out the missions set out in the Intergovernmental Agreement and to ensure their proper execution, each government set up an operator: the Royal Commission for AIUla (for Saudi Arabia) and the Agence française pour le développement d'AIUla (for France) (the latter being referred to as the "**Agency**").

In order to give you the opportunity to confirm your interest in the Project, the Agency will, directly and/or acting through its Representatives, provide you with information regarding the Project and, as the case may be, also organize your access to additional information regarding the Project (hereafter the "Information Package"). You acknowledge that the Information Package and any such additional information that any member of the Agency or its Representatives (as defined below) may provide to you for the purpose of furthering your evaluation of the contemplated Project are deemed to constitute Confidential Information (as defined below) and should be treated as such.

The purpose of this letter (also referred to as the "Confidentiality Agreement") is to record your irrevocable agreement and commitment to keep the Information Package and the Confidential Information confidential and comply with certain specific undertakings.

1 Definitions

In addition to the words and expressions defined hereunder, the following words and expressions shall have the following meanings:

- 1.1 "Affiliates" shall mean, with respect to a first entity, any entity controlling, controlled by, or under the same control as, that first entity. For the purpose hereof, the term "control", when used in respect of any entity, shall mean the power and authority to manage such entity, whether directly or indirectly, through the holding of shares with a voting right, through a contract or otherwise, and said term shall include the notion of control within the meaning of article L. 233-3 of the French *Code de Commerce*.

1.2 "Confidential Information" shall mean:

- (a) the Information Package;
- (b) all such other information, of any kind whatsoever (including, but not limited to, technical, commercial, financial, accounting, legal and administrative information), pertaining to the Project, the Agency, its shareholder and their Affiliates, as may be provided, whether before or after the date of this letter, in writing, orally or by any other means, and regardless of whether such information is identified as confidential, to your company and/or your Representatives (as defined below), by any member of the Agency, its shareholders or their respective Representatives;
- (c) all such analysis, compilations, studies and other documents or records as your company or your Representatives may have prepared or caused to be prepared and which may contain, reflect, refer to or simply derive from, the information mentioned in paragraphs (a) and (b) above; and
- (d) the very existence of the contemplated Project, this Confidentiality Agreement and the matter contemplated hereby, the fact that you are or have been involved in the analysis of, in meetings or negotiations related to, the Project, the contents, time and status of such negotiations, and generally any fact concerning the Project.

1.3 "Representatives" shall mean, in respect of any given entity, its Affiliates, and its and its Affiliates' directors, officers, employees and advisors (including financial, legal and tax advisors and auditors) of, such entity.

2 Confidentiality Undertakings

2.1 By signing this letter you hereby agree and undertake as follows, and agree to cause your Representatives to comply in the same manner with the obligations set forth in clauses 1.1 to 1.3, without any condition, limitation or restriction whatsoever:

- (a) To use the Confidential Information in accordance with this letter, for your own account only and for the sole purpose of considering and evaluating the Project and not for any other purposes;
- (b) To treat strictly confidentially and not to disclose the Confidential Information in your possession, whether in whole or in part, in any manner whatsoever, to any person or entity other than your Representatives as specified in paragraph (c) below.
- (c) To limit, by any appropriate means, the circulation, disclosure or use of all or part of the Confidential Information to those of your Representatives whose participation in the analysis and/or negotiations related to the proposed Project is necessary, provided that you hereby undertake (i) to keep records with the names of each of your Representatives to whom Confidential Information is disclosed and, upon request, to provide the Agency with the identity (on an entity basis) of each such Representative, (ii) to ensure that each such Representative be informed of the confidential nature of the Confidential Information and agree to comply with the obligations set forth hereunder as if it were a party thereto and (iii) to take all necessary steps to cause them to comply with this Confidentiality Agreement (provided that in any event you shall be responsible for any failure by any of your Representatives to comply with this Confidentiality Agreement).

- (d) Not to initiate or maintain contact, whether directly or indirectly, except in the ordinary course of such commercial relations as may exist (and, in any event, not in relation to the contemplated Project), with any Representatives of any member of the Agency or of its shareholder without our prior written consent; all questions, transmissions and communications relating to the proposed Project shall be asked or sent to the authorized representatives of the Agency;
- (e) To inform us of any breach of the obligations imposed under this Confidentiality Agreement as you may be aware of and provide all possible assistance in order to minimize the effects of such breach.

2.2 You further undertake, upon demand of the Agency:

- (a) To return immediately to us at your expense all of the documents mentioned in clauses 1.2(a) and 1.2(b) above, as well as any and all copies thereof made by you and your Representatives;
- (b) To destroy immediately all other documents constituting or containing Confidential Information, including those documents mentioned in clause 1.2(c) above, as well as any and all copies thereof made by you and your Representatives and, as far as possible, to expunge all such Confidential Information contained on any computer or word-processor or otherwise maintained in electronic format, and, upon request, to send us without delay a letter certifying the completion of the said destruction.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, neither you nor your Representatives shall be obligated to return or destroy any documents and other items referred to in paragraph 1.2(c) above which you or your Representatives must retain to comply with the requirements of any applicable law or regulation or in accordance with any applicable written document retention policy or any applicable written internal policy or procedure relating to the back-up storage of electronic data provided that (i) such documents and other items shall be retained in a segregated file and shall remain subject to the terms of this Confidentiality Agreement for so long as they are retained by you or your Representatives (notwithstanding termination of this Confidentiality Agreement), (ii) such documents and other items shall be returned, destroyed or deleted in accordance with the terms hereof in the event that you or your Representatives cease, for any reasons whatsoever, to be bound by the requirements of the applicable laws or regulations or the applicable written retention or internal policy or procedure which had justified such retention.

2.3 It is hereby agreed that the obligations you enter into by signing this Confidentiality Agreement shall not apply to the information which, within the meaning hereof, should be held as Confidential Information, provided that you can prove that:

- (a) such information had become publicly available prior to the date of disclosure thereof to you or your Representatives, or that it became publicly available after such date other than as a result of a breach of this Confidentiality Agreement by you or your Representatives;
- (b) such information was, prior to the date of disclosure thereof to you or your Representatives, disclosed to you on a non-confidential basis by a source other than the Agency or its Representatives, which, to your knowledge, did not derive the Confidential Information from any of these persons and was not subject to any legal or contractual prohibition to disclose such information to you; or

(c) such information was independently developed by you or your Representatives without use and/or reference to the Confidential Information.

2.4 The provisions of this paragraph 2 shall not restrict any disclosure required by law or by any court of competent jurisdiction or any enquiry or investigation by any governmental, official or regulatory body which is lawfully entitled to require any such disclosure, provided that you shall promptly notify the Agency of such requirement for the purpose of providing the opportunity for the Agency to contest such disclosure or otherwise agree on the timing and content of such disclosure. In the event that such a protective order is not, or cannot be obtained, then you may disclose to the appropriate body that portion of the Confidential Information which you are advised by independent legal advice you are legally required to disclose and shall use all reasonable efforts to obtain assurances that confidential treatment will be accorded to the Confidential Information.

2.5 The disclosure of the Confidential Information shall not confer to you or to your Representatives any property rights (including intellectual property rights) or other rights over the Confidential Information.

2.6 None of the Confidential Information has been subject to verification and neither the Agency nor any of its Representatives accepts responsibility for or makes any representation, or gives any warranty, express or implied, to you or your Representatives or to any other person with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the Confidential Information or any oral communication in connection with the Confidential Information, and you hereby waive any right which you may have against the Agency or any of its Representatives, by reason of the use of, or reliance upon, any of the Confidential Information.

3 Miscellaneous

3.1 You hereby undertake that you and your Affiliates will not, for a period of 24 (twenty-four) months as from the date hereof, seek to employ, employ or otherwise contract for the services (whether as director, employee, consultant or in any other capacity) of any person who currently is (or was in the six months preceding the date hereof) a Senior Employee of the Agency. For the purpose hereof, "Senior Employee" shall mean a director, manager or employee of the Agency whose annual gross remuneration (including bonuses) exceed [150,000] euros. This undertaking shall not apply to the recruitment (whether as director, employee, consultant or in any other capacity) of any director, manager or employee of the Agency who had ceased to be a director, manager or an employee of the Agency for a period of at least six months at the time of the commencement of employment discussions with you or your Affiliates.

3.2 Neither the Confidential Information nor anything else in this Confidentiality Agreement will constitute an offer by or on behalf of the Agency and the Agency will be under no obligation to (i) enter into any discussions or to negotiate with you or your Representatives or (ii) enter into any contract or accept any offer or proposal which may be made by you or on your behalf and related to the Project. Neither the Agency nor any of its Representatives shall have any obligation to provide equal treatment or access to information to any potential party in relation to the contemplated Project. You further acknowledge and accept that the Agency (i) shall be free to negotiate or enter into any agreement with any other person or entity without prior notice to you or your Representatives and (ii) reserve the right, in their sole discretion, to suspend, modify or terminate at any time any discussions or negotiations with you or your Representatives. In such event, you agree that you shall have no claim whatsoever against the Agency nor any of its respective Representatives arising out of any such circumstances.

- 3.3** This Confidentiality Agreement is being made for the benefit of the Agency. In addition, you hereby agree that the Agency shall have the right to assign its rights hereunder to any person or entity (and its Affiliates) and that such a third party may enforce this letter to the same extent and in the same manner as the Agency can enforce it. Notwithstanding the foregoing, this Confidentiality Agreement may be rescinded, amended or varied by the Agency (and its authorized assignees as the case may be) and you without the consent of any third party beneficiary.
- 3.4** No failure or delay by us or by a third party beneficiary or assignee in exercising any right hereunder shall operate as a waiver thereof, nor shall any waiver of any right preclude any other or further exercise thereof.
- 3.5** If any provision in this letter is to be held illegal, invalid or unenforceable, in whole or in part, such provision (or part thereof) shall, to that extent, be deemed not to form part of this letter but the legality, validity and enforceability of the remainder of this letter shall not be affected.
- 3.6** This Confidentiality Agreement shall enter into force on the date of signature hereof and shall terminate 36 (thirty-six) months thereafter.
- 3.7** This Confidentiality Agreement shall be governed by French law.
- 3.8** Any dispute arising out or in connection with this Confidentiality Agreement, whether relating to its execution, validity, interpretation or performance, shall be submitted to the jurisdiction of the commercial court of Paris (*Tribunal de commerce de Paris*).

If you agree to the terms of this Confidentiality Agreement, please express your consent by returning the enclosed duplicate hereof, duly initialled on each page and signed by a duly authorized representative of your company.

Very truly yours,

Agence française pour le développement d'AIUla
By: Jean-Yves Le Drian
Title: President

Agreed and accepted:

Name of: **Company Name**
By:
Title:
Signature:

2. Appendix 2: letter of Commitment

LETTER OF COMMITMENT

(To be signed and attached to the application file)

I, the undersigned, (first name, last name, and position within the company), acting in the name and on behalf of
..... (company name, legal form, and address), hereby confirm that I have reviewed the consultation file – **“AIUla 360 - Tourism Econometric Model”** for the development division of AFALULA.

By this letter, our company undertakes, if selected by AFALULA, to carry out the services as specified in accordance with the requirements of the consultation regulations and the terms set forth in the attached response, composed of:

- The administrative files
- The technical offer
- The financial offer

Executed in on

(Signature of the legal representative of the applicant)