

# **RFP for US Sports Congress 2026**



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## **Introduction**

We are pleased to present you with our Request for Proposal (RFP) to partner and host the US Sports Congress in 2026. Our annual Congress attracts hundreds of sports events and tourism professionals who gather to exchange time, resources, strategies, solutions, and more. The Congress features dozens of education sessions, countless networking opportunities, and business development appointments, all to help our attendees produce measurable ROI for their organization, elevate their sports events, and improve the quality of life in their destinations. The purpose of this RFP is to provide a detailed overview of the US Sports Congress, as well as the minimum criteria used to evaluate submissions. We encourage you to add incentives or unique opportunities from your destination to set you apart from other bidders. Bidders should customize the proposal with content that demonstrates your uniqueness in the sports tourism industry. We look forward to receiving proposals and learning more about how we can partner with your destination on our signature event during the selection process.

## **Dates**

December 5 - 10 (preferred)  
12 - 17

## **Pattern**

Friday - Wednesday/Annual

## **Bid Fee**

\$35,000.00 and other considerations (see Partnership)

## **Partnership**

Host organization will submit the bid and should include multiple options for housing and event space. We will work closely with the host organization to showcase the destination. Potential host must commit to attend event the year prior to hosting the USSC and plan to sponsor the closing night's reception. Additionally, host will provide a mutually agreeable speaker for the year they are hosting and host the Opening Reception as well as provide complimentary golf for the VIP's (Days 2 & 3) for 22 ppl the year of hosting.

## **Description**

Event attracts top-level decision makers from across the country in the sports event industry, essentially creating a familiarization-tour for the destination and the host property. Decision makers place hundreds of sporting events and meetings annually. US Sports Congress includes educational sessions with a tradeshow and family-oriented activities.

- History:**
- 2007 Copper Mountain Resort
  - 2008 Hyatt, Savannah, GA
  - 2009 M Resort, Henderson, NV (Las Vegas)
  - 2010 Sanibel Harbour Resort, Ft. Myers, FL
  - 2011 Rancho Bernardo Inn, San Diego, CA
  - 2012 Ritz Carlton, Sarasota, FL
  - 2013 Grand Sierra Resort, Reno, NV
  - 2014 Hilton DeSoto, Savannah, GA
  - 2015 Omni, Fort Worth, TX
  - 2016 Sanibel Harbour Resort, Ft. Myers, FL
  - 2017 Sheraton at Wrigleyville West, Mesa, AZ
  - 2018 Hard Rock Hotel, Daytona Beach, FL
  - 2019 Hilton Hotel, Columbia, SC
  - 2020 M Resort, Las Vegas, NV
  - 2021 Hyatt Regency, Frisco, TX
  - 2022 Omni Hotel, Richmond, VA
  - 2023 L’Auberge Resort & Casino, Lake Charles, LA
  - 2024 Sunseeker Resort, Punta Gorda, FL

**Host Hotel**

Proposal should identify at least one hotel to serve as the headquarter hotel. A second option may be included in the proposal. Preferably all, but at least the headquarter hotel, must be a full-service property rated at least 3-star or 4-diamond. If attendees cannot safely walk to meeting space (i.e., must cross a busy street, sidewalks not provided), then free daily shuttle transportation must be provided by the host city beginning 30 minutes before the Symposium registration desk opens until 30 minutes after the registration desk closes. “Walkability” will be confirmed during the site visit.

**Room Block**

	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Total
Attendee	4	4	150	150	150	130	588
Rights Holder/ Staff	20	20	58	58	58	48	262
Total	24	24	208	208	208	178	850

**Room Rates**

Historically, room rates have ranged between \$139 and \$199 (commissionable) for this event.

Attendee room rate must be commensurate with the property rating, region and property type and location. It is preferred for the hotel to honor group rate, based on availability, until check-in.

Group rate must be available three days prior and three days post block with such rooms credited towards the group block pickup.

Sports Event Planner rate must be 30% less than attendee rate.

### **Desired Hotel Amenities**

- 3-star or 4-diamond
- Full-service restaurant
- Free high-speed WiFi in guest rooms
- Free WiFi for all attendees in meeting spaces (if meeting space contracted within hotel)
- Fitness area
- Bar/Lounge area
- Non-smoking
- Free shuttle transportation to and from convention center (unless walkable across the street)
- Connected to Convention Center or Meeting and Exhibit Space preferred

### **Reservation Cut-off Date Required**

3 weeks prior to event arrival day

Staff and event owner rooming lists will be provided to hotel prior to the scheduled cut-off date.

Preferred: Based upon availability, hotel will honor group rate until check-in.

### **Reservations**

Hotel to provide online reservation link that connects directly to room block, as well as a reservation call-in number.

### **Attrition**

US Sports Congress will not be responsible for attrition fees or to pay liquidated damages of any kind, including guest room and food/beverage. US Sports Congress will use its best efforts to offer and promote the use of the hotel(s) to its attendees.

## **Minimum Concessions**

- Complimentary meeting space (ballroom, exhibit halls, meeting rooms, and pre-function space)
- 24-hour hold on meeting space if utilizing the following day
- 2 complimentary room nights for site and pre-planning visits
- 1 complimentary 2 room suite for executive leadership (Friday arrival - Thursday departure)
- 2 complimentary standard rooms for staff (Friday arrival - Thursday departure)
- 1 complimentary guest room for every 30 room nights booked (cumulative)
- 5 room upgrades to suites and/or concierge level (Friday arrival - Thursday departure)
- Complimentary high-speed wireless internet in all guest rooms (unlimited number of devices)
- Complimentary high-speed wireless internet in all meeting spaces contracted – with customizable password
- Complimentary AV in meeting rooms (screen, projector, sound system, laptop)
- Complimentary parking for staff during contracted dates and site and pre-planning visits
- Complimentary parking for local speakers
- Discounted parking rates for attendees
- Waived handling of shipped boxes into the hotel (regardless of weight)
- Any affiliated event (i.e., an event planned by or on behalf of any event sponsors/delegates) cannot be held without prior approval from Group Meeting Planner. If approved, all affiliated food and beverage functions will count toward Group F&B minimum
- No attrition clause in hotel/venue agreements
- No F&B minimum in hotel/venue agreements

## **Suggested Enhanced Concessions**

- Group reserves the right to utilize the supplier of its choice at no additional service fee or surcharge for services or rentals in the areas of audio-visual, exhibit decorating, security, floral, transportation, tours, etc.
- 10% discount on food & beverage pricing/banquet menus
- 30% discount on in-house AV rental
- Waived resort fee (if applicable)
- No marketing/signage fee charges associated with branding opportunities
- Waived use of easels (direction signage) based on hotel inventory

## **Specifications**

1. Guaranteed Group Rates for 2026. Furthermore, said rates shall be guaranteed to be the lowest rate offered during the period of the US Sports Congress.
2. Any recent renovations or scheduled renovations between now and the date of the event.
3. Photos and map or diagram of the proposed meeting space including dimensions and capacity charts. Please indicate all elevators, escalators, stairways, loading bays.
4. List of any other groups currently scheduled in hotel/venue during proposed event dates.
5. Non-compete clause in agreement(s).
6. List the current service charges on meeting space, F&B and AV.
7. List the charges for handling of boxes/pallets and earliest delivery day prior. Where are boxes stored and are there any charges associated with storing the boxes/pallets?
8. What is your total number of sleeping rooms and meeting rooms within the proposed venue/hotel property(s)?

### **Policies for the following:**

1. Individual cancellation fee on guest rooms
2. No show and early departure penalties
3. Relocation of guests if oversold
4. Are guests charged parking fees? If so, what are the current charges?
5. Number of complimentary easel stands and list of complimentary signage (print and digital).
6. List of complimentary furniture available.
7. Confirm waived meeting room rental fees.
8. Confirm waived setup fees of meeting space (including tables, chairs, linens, water).
9. Confirm waived charges for easels and flipcharts (based on venue's inventory).
10. Current sales, hotel occupancy, and other taxes applicable to our group. Please note any local initiatives to increase hotel occupancy taxes or other taxes. Confirm which taxes, if any,

## **Site Visit**

Host must provide a complimentary site visit including airfare, hotel accommodations and car rental for up to four persons.

## **Meeting Space**

Provided on a complimentary basis. The following outlines the required meeting space:

Room A (Exhibit Hall): Must be placed on a 24-hour hold for 72 hours. The room must be large enough, at minimum, to accommodate 100 8'x8' booths (12,500 sq. ft). Ideally, the room could house 110 10'x10' booths. (14,500 sq feet minimum).  
Beginning Day 4 - Monday afternoon.

Room B (General session): Must be available Monday for 3 consecutive days from 7:00am - 4:30pm set as classroom style for 200 people including a stage (8x12) and rear projection. Set on a 24-hour hold.

Room C (Show Office and Registration Desk): Must be available for 6 consecutive days on a 24-hr. hold. Must include complimentary internet connection. Property must also agree to receive and handle all boxes of "show material" at no charge.

Room D, E & F (Break Out Rooms) Must be available Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Rooms should be set either in rounds or classroom for 50 persons.

\*Please see Appendix A for additional meeting space needs

## **Food and Beverage**

Menu prices must be guaranteed six (6) months in advance of the Symposium and all venues included with proposal must agree to a food and beverage price increase of no more than 1.5% per year of prices submitted with proposal.

US Sports Congress may request to bring in outside food and beverage product(s), including beer, wine, soft drinks, bottled water, snack foods, bakery items, etc., per contractual agreements with our sponsors. If the venues have a policy and/or fees associated with bringing in outside food and beverage, it must be included in proposal. Although the event understands that many facilities have legal requirements for fees associated with donated alcoholic beverages, preferred consideration will be given to proposals where these fees are waived or discounted.

**Food & Bev:** Sun: President's Reception – Heavy hors d'oeuvres hosted bar (85). Off- site

Mon: Breakfast, Lunch, Reception hosted bar, heavy hors d'oeuvres in evening.

Tue: Breakfast, Golf & other networking outings incl. lunch (off-site) After-Hours – open bar

Wed: Breakfast, Lunch, Closing Reception

### **Audio/Visual**

US Sports Congress has their own LCD projectors, but will require microphones, speaker-systems as well as some additional lighting. A current price sheet should be included with any proposal.

### **Outings**

Event conducts networking outings on day 5 (Tuesday). 3-4 outings are offered and one of the offerings must be golf. The other outings should be centered around activities with a local flavor. They have included, fishing trips, cooking classes, craft beer tour, etc.

A VIP Golf junket will be conducted 2 consecutive days starting on Day 1(Saturday & Sunday). This will consist of 12-22 persons golfing 1 round each day. These are Congress VIP's from the Olympic Governing Bodies. Golf for these VIP's must be provided complimentary (Saturday and Sunday).

### **Local Activities**

Each afternoon is open for the attendees to network and enjoy the resort or local area. A description of activities should be included with the proposal. Past activities have included, golf, shopping, skiing and afternoon spa treatments.

**Bid Timeline:** Bid timeline is subject to change. Bids will be accepted beginning in May (2024).

A short-list (2-3) of candidate cities will then be determined.

Site visit/s will be conducted in January & February (2025).



A site will be selected following site visits leading to contract with property and Letter of Understanding with host destination.

**Host Agreement:** The “Official” host (CVB and/or Sports Commission) must agree to the following:

- Provide a Rights Fee of \$35,000.00 to be payable no later than February 1st 2026.
- Provide a mutually agreeable, complimentary Opening Reception or sponsorship for same for year of hosting. This can also be provided by a state sports organization.
- Provide a mutually agreeable keynote speaker for the 2026 US Sports Congress.
- Provide a sponsorship fee of \$15,000.00 for the closing reception of the 2025 US Sports Congress, where Host will be announced as the destination for the 2026 US Sports Congress. This fee shall be payable in February 2025.
- Provide complimentary golf and transportation, for up to 22 people, for two days – usually the weekend prior to the 2026 US Sports Congress.

## Sample Schedule

Friday	<b>Day 1</b>	Saturday	<b>Day 2</b>
	Staff Arrival		VIP Breakfast (Rights Holders)
	Rights Holder VIP Arrival		VIP Golf
			VIP Dinner (off-site)
Sunday	<b>Day 3</b>	Monday	<b>Day 4</b>
	VIP Breakfast (Rights Holders)		Registration
	VIP Golf (AM)		Core Professional Development
	Registration - Afternoon		Lunch
	President's Reception		Core Professional Development
	Rights Holder Meet & Greet		Opening Reception
Tuesday	<b>Day 5</b>	Wednesday	<b>Day 6</b>
	Core Professional Dev. - AM		Core Professional Development
	Networking Outings		Tradeshow
	After-Hours		Lunch
			Core Professional Development
			Closing Reception

You may also refer to <https://www.ussportscongress.com/schedule-1> for a more detailed look at the program.