

Request for proposal

Tender promotion Flower Bulbs from Europe make the United States Bloom from February 2024 – February 2027

1. Royal Anthos

Koninklijke Handelsbond voor Boomkwekerij- en Bolproducten (Royal Anthos) is the Dutch Royal trade association for traders in flower bulbs and nursery stock products. The companies affiliated with Royal Anthos represent more than 85% of the world trade in flower bulbs and are responsible for more than 80% of the total export of flower bulbs to the United States. Royal Anthos' mission is to represent the common interests of the trading companies in the flower bulb and nursery stock industry and to act as their general representative at home and abroad. One of these interests concerns the development and financing of worldwide promotion campaigns to support the sale of flower bulbs. Royal Anthos has a lot of experience with the development and implementation of these campaigns.

2. Flower bulb sector

This project focuses on the promotion of European flower bulbs in the United States of America. Flower bulbs allow for an easy way of growing high quality flowers in many different settings. They can be used in private or public gardens and can also be used to produce bulb flowers for resale.

According to UN Comtrade Data the worldwide flower bulb market had a value of \$1.201 Million in 2021. The European Union is the largest player on the flower bulb market and annually supplies around 70-75% of the world's production of flower bulbs. Of the bulbs produced in Europe about 55% is exported outside the Union. The U.S. is the largest flower bulb importer in the world and the largest importer of European flower bulbs.

Of the exported flower bulbs, about 50% is sold to professional flower producers in the U.S. that commercially plant the flower bulbs in their nurseries to produce bulb flowers for the local market. The other 50% is sold to end consumers, through retailers. Consumers use the flower bulbs for plantings in their gardens. Promoting flower bulbs to end consumers provides a unique opportunity to both promote the sale of flower bulbs and the flowers that come from them; thereby also promoting the bulb flower market that uses European flower bulbs, further increasing the sale of European flower bulbs in the U.S.

When promoting flower bulbs, the seasonal aspect of the product is very important to emphasize. Most species of flower bulbs can for instance only be planted in the spring and the fall. Therefore, the emphasis of the promotion campaign will lie on the spring and fall season, communicating the seasonal aspect of flower bulbs.

With the promotional campaign that that run from 2020-2023 a first important step has been taken and the sector is already more positive about the future of the US market than it has been before. To really make impact though and make the US the growth market that it has been for decades before, a prolonged promotional campaign will be essential.

3. Campaign

There are three main objectives formulated for this campaign.

1. Stabilize and strengthen the flower bulb awareness levels amongst US consumers;
2. Turn 'flower bulb aware consumers' into 'flower bulb educated consumers' to strengthen current and future prospects within the US flower bulb market;
3. Stabilise and increase total flower bulb export value by Euro 2.9 million by early 2026.

These objectives will be completed by a set of three activities that will be continued for each year of the campaign.

1. A media campaign focused on creating awareness about European flower bulbs (AWA);
2. A media campaign focused on educating consumers about European flower bulbs (EDU);
3. Tulip day events one or more, creating both awareness and educating consumers about European flower bulbs (TUL).

The aim of the "Flower Bulbs from Europe make the United States Bloom" campaign is to bring the right time to purchase to the attention of the consumer, as well as to stimulate the level of knowledge about planting bulbs and the use of bulb flowers. This will breathe new life into the U.S. flower bulb market and will convert decreasing sales numbers into a healthy sales growth.

For the implementation of the PR campaigns to create awareness and to educate households, we need the support of a U.S.-based PR-agency. The description of PR-activities can be split up into the following work-packages.

Work Package 2: Public relations (annual activities)
<p>WP2.1 Yearly 100 x sample flower bulb bouquets delivered</p> <p>Objective: Engage the target audience through a sample program so that they are open to messaging within the education campaign and are more likely to consume additional online content.</p> <p>Annual budget: € 1,400.-</p> <p>Output: Organize visibility in online channels and local distribution</p> <p>Total budget per year: € 1.400.- (including the fee of the PR-agency - for a period 3 years)</p>
Work Package 3: Website and social media (annual activities)
<p>WP3.1 Social media campaign (AWA)</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate online visibility to attract target audience (focus on reluctant and casual gardener typologies) with visually pleasing and easy to consume messaging; • Increase amount of flower bulb aware households to 71.8 million early 2026, up from 67.8 million in 2021. <p>Annual budget: € 90,000.-</p> <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised creative assets (e.g. logo's, banners) • Revised style document • 150 Social media posts • Campaign logbook (Y1) • Evaluation of results and lessons learned for rest of Awareness PR campaign <p>WP3.2 Digital Web Campaigns (EDU)</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain current engagement and flower bulb knowledge levels in the US, messaging focussed on casual and enthusiast gardener typologies; • Expand engagement and knowledge levels in US with in-depth online messaging. Target of 28.8 million educated households early 2026, up from 21.3 million in 2021. <p>Annual budget: € 25,000.-</p> <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Digital web campaigns • Campaign logbook (Y1) <p>WP3.3 Co-productions with influencers (EDU)</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain current engagement and flower bulb knowledge levels in the US, messaging focussed on casual and enthusiast gardener typologies; • Expand engagement and knowledge levels in US with in-depth online messaging. Target of 28.8 million educated households early 2026, up from 21.3 million in 2021. <p>Annual budget: € 115,000.-</p> <p>Output:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 posts, video's or vlogs by influencers

WP3.4 A Digital Lily campaign (EDU)

Objective:

- Retain current engagement and flower bulb knowledge levels in the US, messaging focussed on casual and enthusiast gardener typologies;
- Expand engagement and knowledge levels in US with in-depth online messaging. Target of 28.8 million educated households early 2026, up from 21.3 million in 2021.

Annual budget: € 26,000.-

Output:

- Develop creative assets and campaign execution

WP3.5 Tulip Day Event Publicity (TUL)

Objective:

- Generate publicity prior to the Tulip Day events to attract as many people within the target audience;
- Engage target audience after Tulip Day events with imagery and messaging from the event.

Annual budget: € 40,000.-

Output:

- 25 social media announcement posts
- 25 social media follow-up posts

Total budget per year: € 296.000.- (including the fee of the PR-agency - for a period 3 years)

Work Package 5: Communication tools (annual activities)

WP5.1 Press releases (EDU)

Objective:

- Develop core messaging for in-depth online articles aimed at maintaining current levels of flower bulb knowledge. Focus on casual and enthusiast gardener typologies;
- Get articles published with third party websites through channels of PR Agency.

Annual budget: € 10,000.-

Output:

- 5 Press releases fit for different channels

WP5.1 Press releases (TUL)

Objective:

- Develop core messaging for online articles aimed at attracting as many visitors for the Tulip Day events;
- Get articles published on third party websites through channels of PR Agency.

Annual budget: € 5,000.-

Output:

- 4 Press releases fit for different channels for the

Total budget per year: € 15.000.- (including the fee of the PR-agency - for a period 3 years)

Work Package 6: Events (annual activities)

WP6.1 Annual Tulip day events (TUL)

Objective:

Organising and hosting annual Tulip Day events on both the East and West Coast of the US. As described in chapter 2.1 the main objective of this work package is to draw as much attention as possible from a target audience as large as possible. Media attention prior, during and after the events are in line with the objectives for both awareness and educational campaigns. The events will take place during spring time, with organisational and promotional activities happening before and after the events.

Annual budget: € 45,000.-

Output:

- Media liaison trade press

Total budget per year: € 45.000.- (including the fee of the PR-agency - for a period 3 years)

The PR-campaigns are performed every year to provide synergy with the other parts of the campaign (organization of events). These other parts will be implemented, mainly by Anthos, although some support of the PR-agency may be needed.

Invitation to quote on all workpackages, or on individual packages.

4. Selection criteria PR-agency

The offers are then weighted, using the following award criteria:

1. **Quality:** the service provided must be clear and transparent, entirely consistent with the job description and meet the requirements of the contract documents;
2. **Experience** with similar (promotion/evaluation) projects: the provider must demonstrate that they have carried out similar projects in the past (references) and is capable to do so now. Expertise in the sustainability domain is of great importance;
3. **Price:** the total price and/or partial prices, billing terms and conditions of supply are compared;
4. **Flexibility:** in case of unexpected events (such as extreme disturbances in the economy, e.g. Covid19) the project should be allocated in a flexible manner;
5. **Knowledge** of and/or involvement in the flower bulb sector, its sustainability goals, the region in which this promotion will take place (the US) and the communication field.

For this the following weighting scale is used:

1. **Quality** 40%
2. **Experience** 10%
3. **Price** 30%
4. **Flexibility** 10%
5. **Knowledge** sector 10%

A value is assigned between 1 and 10 for each of the criteria. These numbers are multiplied by the percentages of the weighting. The tendering party with the highest final score obtains the contract. After the selection of a party an explanation is provided on the process to reach that decision.

Enclosure: background information.

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FOCUS OF THE CAMPAIGN

In the flower bulb business we divide 2 market segments:

1. Flower bulbs that are used by the consumer for **garden planting**;
2. Flower bulbs that are used by professional nurseries for the production (in greenhouses) of **bulb flowers and potted bulbs**.

The campaign has to be focused on both market segments.

BULBS FOR GARDEN PLANTING

When promoting flower bulbs for garden planting, the seasonal aspect of the product is very important to emphasize. Consumers can only buy and plant flower bulbs in the spring and the fall. Therefore, most PR-activities in the campaign will be undertaken in the spring and fall season, communicating the seasonal aspect of different types of flower bulbs. The main species that can be planted in these seasons are shown in this table.

Spring	Fall
Lily	Tulip
Dahlia	Daffodil
Gladioli	Iris
	Crocus
	Hyacinth
	Allium

BULB FLOWERS AND POTTED BULBS

Professional nurseries plant the bulbs in their greenhouses for the production of cutflowers and/or bulbs on pot. The campaign must be focused on the seasonal aspect of the product and on the message that it is "locally grown". The production of the tulip as a cut flower must take place in the period January –April, the campaign for the lily, Calla and gladioli has to take place during spring and summer. The main species that can be bought in these seasons are shown in this table.

Winter/Spring	Spring/Summer
Tulip	Lily
	Calla
	Gladioli

CHALLENGES

The main challenges for flower bulbs and bulb flowers in the United States lie in the declining knowledge and awareness of households:

Bulbs for garden planting:

- Households do not know how and when (in which season) to plant flower bulbs.
- Households do not know that certain flowers grow from a bulb.
- Uneducated households associate the planting of flower bulbs with hassle and labor.
- Households are unaware that bulb flowers in the garden contribute to good biodiversity.
- Households are unaware that flower bulbs from Europe are used in most of the bulb flower production in the U.S.

Bulb flowers and potted bulbs:

- Households do not know that certain flowers grow from a bulb.
- Households do not know how to care for/treat bulb flowers in a vase or pot.
- Households are unaware that flower bulbs from Europe are used in most of the bulb flower production in the U.S.
- Households are unaware that cut tulips bring spring-feelings in their life during wintertime.

Besides these, there are also other challenges that need to be tackled:

- The U.S. is a large country with many different climates that effect when and how the flower bulbs need to be planted and taken care of. This means different climates can demand individual attention, making it a challenge to create an impact over the whole region.

OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities lie in making households aware and knowledgeable about (the use of) flower bulbs and bulb flowers. To reach this goal the following specific opportunities should be seized:

- Data shows that participation in lawn and garden activities and spending is now at an all-time high in the U.S.

Households want to spend time and money on their garden and with the right promotion European flower bulbs can become the center piece in this trend.

- Research shows that households who are familiar with flower bulbs and bulb flowers only have positive associations with the product, such as exciting, surprising, exclusive, special, hip and healthy. The promotion campaign should build on this positive image;
- Research shows that the unconscious associations with flower bulbs and bulb flowers are almost always positive and there are no unconscious reasons not to buy them, indicating that awareness and knowledge about are the most important factors in the promotion campaign. If people are aware and have knowledge about flower bulbs and bulb flowers, they tend to buy the product.

Therefore, there lies an opportunity to appeal to a large potential group of households (users and non-users) by making them aware and knowledgeable about flower bulbs and bulb flowers, and by promoting the positive image of flower bulbs and bulb flowers, for which the starting point hip, healthy and surprising can be used.

TARGET AREA

Based on available research and demographics of the United States, the choice is made to focus on the West, Midwest and the Northeast/Atlantic areas of the U.S. These areas are the most favorable in terms of climate and have the highest population density. This way, maximum effect will be achieved with the promotion campaign.

