

TO: Chair and Members of the Finance and Facilities Committee

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health and CEO

DATE: 2016 February 18

SOUTHWEST TOBACCO CONTROL AREA NETWORK SINGLE SOURCE VENDOR

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Health waive the competitive procurement process and award a contract estimated at \$89,947 to Rescue Social Change Group as detailed in Report No.010-16 re: "Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network Single Source Vendor" be received for information.

Key Points

- In 2013, The SW TCAN (MLHU) issued an RFP and as a result hired Rescue Social Change Group (RSCG) to conduct research on youth social identities in the SW and CW TCAN regions.
- In 2014, the CW TCAN (Hamilton Public Health) issued an RFP and RSCG was again selected as the successful candidate to complete phase 2 of the project by working with young people in our TCAN Regions to create branding for the Alternative Peer Crowd identified in the research done in 2013 as the peer crowd to be the most susceptible to tobacco use. This contract was extended in 2015.
- An informal search confirms that there does not appear to be any other consultant in North America that can provide the required service at a level of sophistication that is comparable with that of RSCG.
- In 2016, The SW TCAN (MLHU) will again award a single source vendor contract to RSCG to advance the project and continue the work being done with the Alternative Peer Crowd to infuse tobacco free messages into their cultural identity.

Policy Application

In accordance with Section 3.2(2) (iii) of the Procurement Policy (Policy 1-070), the requirement for competitive bid solicitation for goods, services and construction may be waived under joint authority of the appropriate Director and Medical Officer of Health and replaced with negotiations by the Director and Finance if only one source of supply would be acceptable and cost effective. Further if the value of the contract is greater than \$50,000 subsection (4) of the policy states the Board of Health must approve the contract unless it due to an emergency.

Project Background

According to the most recent Ontario Student Drug use and Health Survey, 8.6% of Ontario youth use tobacco products (OSDUHS, 2015). While this low youth prevalence rate merits admiration, it also presents new challenges for future prevention efforts. To date, tobacco prevention efforts have been targeting the average teen, but today the average teen in Ontario is likely to be tobacco-free. Therefore, tobacco prevention efforts need to be tailored to reach the small subpopulations of Ontario teens who continue to use tobacco. The South West (SW) and Central West (CW) Tobacco Control Area Networks (TCAN) contracted RSCG to perform a Functional Analysis for Cultural Interventions (FACI™) study to identify features of modern-day teen smokers and what influences them. In summary, the CW-SW research found that youth influenced by the Alternative and Hip Hop peer crowds were 2.3 times more likely to use tobacco products than youth not influenced by these peer crowds (49.2% vs 18.6%).

The CW-SW Project Team has taken the research recommendations and developed a campaign that directly targets the Alternative peer crowd rather than a general campaign that targets all “youth.” Phase 2 (Brand Development) of this project is complete; seven young adult consultants from the Alternative peer crowd were brought on to work with the project team and professional mentors to develop, test, and select an overarching brand and vision for the Alternative Peer Crowd Strategy. In 2015 phase 3 of the project was rolled out which saw a soft launch of the campaign in the SW and CW TCAN regions. Phase 4 of the project, to begin in 2016 will include full implementation of the project and a robust evaluation process.

Single / Sole Source Justification

Rescue Social Change Group has been the successful bidder in both 2013 and 2014 procurement processes and was awarded a sole source contract in 2015. After working with RSCG for the past 3 years they have demonstrated that they possess a unique skill set that sets them apart from other research and marketing agencies. Additionally, they have developed a history working with the CW and SW TCANs that would be hard to translate to another company and would require additional time and resources to educate another vendor to enable them to work on phase 4 of this project. Further, discussions with tobacco control leaders from across North America have confirmed that there does not appear to be any other consultant in North America that can provide the required service at a level of sophistication that is comparable with that of RSCG.

Phase 4 of the project will require an enhanced presence on social media, and an increase in physical presence at events. It is estimated phase 4 of the project will cost \$89,947.00 CAD. This expenditure will be cost shared between the SW and CW TCANs which represent 16 public health units.

Conclusion

Due to the nature of this project, the expertise and specific knowledge of Rescue Social Change Group can provide to the project, it is recommended that the competitive procurement process be waived and the Board of Health approve contract estimated at \$89,947 to Rescue Social Change Group to fully implement the project and provide a robust evaluation.

This report was prepared by Ms. Donna Kosmack, SW TCAN Manager.



Christopher Mackie, MD, MHSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health

<p>This report addresses the following requirement(s) of the Ontario Public Health Standards (2014): Foundational Standard 1, 2 & 4; Chronic Disease Prevention 1, 7, 11, 12.</p>
--