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Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres

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RFP/ Project Brief: NSHSC Communications Plan: 2018-2021

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Background

Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres (NSHSC), a not for profit government funded organization, provides audiology services to Nova Scotians of all ages and speech-language services to preschool children and adults. NSHSC delivers integrated and standardized provincial services across 34 clinic sites, located in 24 communities. Its provincial approach to delivery of services provides for client centered inter-professional collaboration, as well as integration of services across service delivery contexts and in concert with external partners in the N.S. health systems. Through long standing partnerships with the Department of Health and Wellness, the NS Health Authority, and the IWK, and other community based partners and programs, it supports a continuum of integrated services that follow clients and families in their communities, throughout their care, and in some cases, throughout their life span. Over the past 55 years it is estimated that NSHSC has provided services to over 500,000 Nova Scotians with diverse communication challenges related to a wide range of medical conditions. Last year, NSHSC registered approximately 27,000 new clients/patients and its staff of 164 provided 80,000 clinical visits (services) in a variety of settings including hospitals, out-patient clinics, homes, preschools, family resource centres, and libraries. In November, 2017, NSHSC achieved a significant milestone with the award: Accredited with Commendation from Accreditation Canada, having surpassed the requirements under the Accreditation Canada Qmentum Program. To learn more about the value of receiving this accreditation visit the following: <https://accreditation.ca/accreditation/value/>. The organization is mid-way through its current Strategic Plan 2020 (SP2020), having made excellent progress on its strategic directions and objectives. For more information about Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres, please go to www.nshsc.nshealth.ca.

Objectives and Scope of Project

Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres (NSHSC) is seeking the services of a full-service communications firm to develop a viable three year Communications Plan which will promote the current strategic directions and goals of NSHSC and result in increased public awareness of the NSHSC 'brand' and the services it provides. The NSHSC Board of Directors and staff view NSHSC as the provincial leader in delivery of audiology and speech-language pathology services and desire communication strategies which advance the organization's visibility with the community and across

government and non-government sectors, and stimulate increased opportunities for working collaboratively with external partners in reducing barriers for individuals faced with communication disability.

This three year Communication Plan will describe how NSHSC is to optimize its current communications capacity and will provide clarification of key messages, target audience, and appropriate viable communication vehicles/tools. The Plan will be informed by input from both internal and external stakeholders and include development of communication practices appropriate for varied audiences, including individuals with communication challenges. It will be based on an evaluation of NSHSC current communication strategies (i.e. the strengths, opportunities, and priorities for development) and provide a plan for building internal capacity, including training priorities, and identification of accessible resources and strategies for implementation of the plan and tools for evaluating its effectiveness.

Specific Responsibilities of the Provider

- Meet (in person) with the designated NSHSC Communications Project Lead Team, consisting of three NSHSC representatives from Senior Leadership, NHSC Board, and the NSHSC Communications Committee, for a full briefing of the project.
- Conduct stakeholder engagement sessions in the assessment, development, and evaluation stages of the project; seek and respond to feedback from NSHSC throughout the project.
- Complete an assessment of NSHSC current communications: a) effectiveness (including public awareness of NSHSC services and how to access them) and, b) organization's current and developmental capacity (including skills and resources) for implementation of the communication plan.
- Meet weekly with the Communications Project Team Lead(s) providing progress updates and plan for addressing key elements of the project.
- Develop and present a draft of the full communications plan within three months of the project start date for review and feedback by NSHSC Communications Committee (a standing committee of management, staff, and client/patient advisor).
- Provide basic communications training to NSHSC personnel designated to be responsible for communication of key messages and for implementation and sustainability of the communications plan.
- Provide actionable recommendations for implementation of the communication plan over a three year period including: a social media strategy, web site re-build for enhanced interconnectivity and public accessibility, and identification of appropriate stakeholder/public engagement opportunities.
- Demonstrate application of the principles, standards, and tools which are consistent with N.S. Government Access by Design 2030, throughout the project and within the plan itself.
- Provide a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the Communication Plan and for reporting on selected indicators on the NSHSC Integrated Quality Scorecard.
- Develop a revised communications plan for presentation, review and feedback by NSHSC Communications Committee, management and patient advisory teams.
- Develop and present the final communications plan for review and approval by the NSHSC Leadership Team.

Anticipated Selection Schedule

- Request for Proposal Release Date: Oct.1, 2018
- Bidders to Submit Questions (in writing): Oct.12, 2018
- NSHSC Responds to Bidder Questions: Oct.26, 2018
- Responses to the RFP must be received by email: Nov.5, 2018
- Selection of Top Bidders/Notification to Unsuccessful Bidders: Nov. 21, 2018
- Start of Interviews: week of Nov.27, 2018
- Contract Award/Notification to Unsuccessful Bidders: Dec.14, 2018

Submission of Proposals

The RFP will be posted on the NSHSC website, www.nshsc.nshealth.ca as of 10:00 am on October 1, 2018. Responses to this RFP should be submitted by email to Lynn.McKenna@nshsc.nshealth.ca with a copy to Greg.Noel@nshsc.nshealth.ca no later than November 5, 2018, 5:00PM AT. Submissions received after this date and time will not be accepted. NSHSC will acknowledge receipt of your submission by email. Submissions should be clearly marked "RFP NSHSC Communications Plan".

Project Timeline: NSHSC requires completion of the project within 6 months.

Elements of the Proposal

1. The proposal submission must, at a minimum, include the following elements:
2. Description of the firm that includes a general overview, names and credentials of the creative team, number of full-time employees.
3. A 1-page narrative outlining the firm's strengths and distinguishing skills or capabilities as they might relate to NSHSC RFP Communications Plan Project Scope and Objectives.
4. A representative selection of media promotion material, website development, direct response material, collateral, and website development created for current and past clients, including clients from the not for profit sector.
5. A 1-2 page proposed work-plan and budget including:
 - Description of how the firm will support the project, name of principle provider who will be accountable for the deliverables, names of any sub-contractors, guarantees for deliverables, and penalties for non-performance.
 - Work plan with suggested activities, project progress meetings, and timeline for deliverables
 - Billing cycle, rate structure, budget tracking and expenditure reporting
 - Description of any components of the RFP which are felt to be not possible within the budget.
 - Any alternate and/or value added solutions or strategies.
6. Description of any existing business relationships, ownership interests, or personal conflicts of interest, direct or indirect, that could affect doing business with NSHSC. Failure to disclose this information may result in disqualification from the process or termination of the contract.
7. Three references from past clients with projects similar in scope that could be contacted about their working relationship with your company. Reference information should include: names and current contact information, and a brief overview of the services provided.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
A. Company Background: profile, services provided track-record of success, experience with similar not for profit organizations.	20
B. Firm's resources: expertise and experience in projects of similar scope, nature, timelines, quality of work samples and creative concepts implemented and presented.	30
C. Expertise developing, implementing, and incorporating public/stakeholder engagement into product design.	20
D. Firm's Proposed Workplan and Budget: proposal innovation, understanding of objectives, key requirements and deliverables; quality and capacity of proposed team/subcontractors; budget control and reporting.	30

Possible Challenges: Stakeholder engagement activities will need to accommodate NSHSC clients. Clients may experience communication challenges (hearing, speech, understanding and using language), are from diverse cultures, and have varied preferences/access in use of communication systems.

Budget: \$20,000.00 - \$30,000.00 for the deliverables of this RFP. The full implementation of the recommendations in the three year Communications Plan will be addressed through annual budgeting.