



Request for Proposals Integrated Communications Strategy

The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) invites proposals for the development of an integrated marketing communications strategy.

1. Purpose

The overall objective of this project is to develop an integrated marketing communication strategy that:

- Is aligned with TRIEC's new strategic goals
- Supports the development and strengthening of TRIEC's brand
- Provides consideration for all of TRIEC's diverse stakeholder groups
- Integrates TRIEC's communication goals with the communication and marketing goals of TRIEC programs (including both employer engagement and immigrant employment initiatives)

2. Background

About TRIEC

The Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC) creates and champions solutions to better integrate skilled immigrants in the Greater Toronto Region labour market (see www.triec.ca). Founded by Maytree and the Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance in 2003, TRIEC is taking action on the underutilization of skilled immigrants' education, talent and experience. TRIEC believes that by bringing all stakeholders together through a council – employers, regulatory bodies, professional associations, educators, labour, community groups, government and immigrants – we can develop local and practical solutions.

In September 2013, TRIEC launched a new strategic plan for 2014-2017. This new strategic plan is stakeholder-focused and outcome-driven. It outlines three core objectives for TRIEC:

1. LEAD EMPLOYER CULTURE CHANGE

Employer engagement is a key pillar for immigrant integration. Employer engagement, specifically with the focus of shifting employer culture towards more inclusion, will continue to be central to TRIEC's work as we seek to identify new opportunities to engage partners in advancing employer culture change.

2. REACH AND EMPOWER MORE SKILLED IMMIGRANTS

TRIEC's solutions to improve the working life of skilled immigrants are powerful – yet they could be even more so if we could reach even more individuals. While supporting The Mentoring Partnership and the Professional Immigrant Networks initiative, TRIEC will continue to work through partnerships to expand our ability to reach and empower immigrant talent.

3. BE AN OUTSTANDING ORGANIZATION FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

In order to deliver on our goals, TRIEC needs to be an effective and sustainable non-profit organization. Looking forward, we aim to build our sustainability by diversifying our revenue sources, strengthening our staff, IT infrastructure and governance processes, while also developing our brand and implementing measurement and evaluation strategies.



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About TRIEC Communications

TRIEC has undertaken a wide range of communication activities over its first 10 years. Initially, TRIEC communication focused on both employer and public awareness – awareness of the value of skilled immigrants to businesses, to the economy and to the region. Initiatives such as the travelling photography exhibit, 20 Journeys (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/triec/sets/72157627402052352/>), the ad campaign “Hire immigrants”, and the Immigrant Success Awards were all established with this goal in mind, as well as to solicit interest and engagement by employers in the Council.

More recently, TRIEC has also focused on raising the organization’s profile, working to position TRIEC as the regional expert on immigrant employment, with a particular focus on employers and the media. This goal has guided the development of our website, our social media activities and our media relations work over the past few years. In addition, a significant amount of TRIEC’s communication resources have gone to support TRIEC’s programs, particularly The Mentoring Partnership, Professional Immigrant Networks (PINs) and the TRIEC Campus.

TRIEC’s communication activities are run by a small in-house team of two, although we’ve recently secured a junior communications team member until March 2014.

With the new organization strategy in place, TRIEC is now seeking to develop an integrated marketing communication strategy to guide our activities in this area from 2014-2017.

3. Project scope

TRIEC is seeking a consultant or agency with expertise in strategic communications and/or integrated marketing communications to support the development of this strategy. Experience working with non-profits and/or B2B organizations is desirable. The key contact for this project will be Jessica Hume, Communications Manager, who is responsible for the delivery of the strategy. The consultant will also work with TRIEC’s senior management, program leads and communication team.

The scope of the project is to complete an integrated marketing and communication strategy that will provide a framework for TRIEC’s marketing and communication activities over the next three years. This should incorporate both TRIEC general and TRIEC program communications.

This strategy should include:

- Communication strategic goals
- Key audience analysis (note that this will include multiple audience groups)
- High-level key messages
- Brand implications
- Overview and recommendations for communication and marketing activities and campaigns over the 2014-2017 (including but not limited to PR, web, social media, promotions and other marketing activities)

Note that the scope does not include the development of detailed implementations plans for specific communication or marketing campaigns. Rather, the scope is to provide a strategy that will allow TRIEC to develop a strong communications framework with its current resources, and provide the necessary background to fundraise for further potential activities or campaigns.



4. Project deliverables

It is expected that the consultant or agency will deliver in the following three areas:

1. Internal consultations and communication assessment

The consultant or agency will undertake internal consultations with TRIEC staff including the communications team, senior management and program staff. In addition, the consultant will be expected to complete an assessment of TRIEC's current communication activities. The results of these consultations and assessments will need to be shared with TRIEC through a meeting, presentation and/or written document.

2. Audience research

The consultant or agency will undertake research and analysis of TRIEC's target audiences (for example employers, skilled immigrants, etc. – TBD through step one). This research should include developing a clear characterization of the audience, an understanding of the types of messages that would resonate with them, and identifying the best means to reach these audiences. The results of the audience research will need to be shared with TRIEC through a meeting, presentation and/or written document. Salient points will also be expected to be incorporated in the final communication strategy.

3. Integrated Communication Strategy

On the basis of the above, the consultant or agency will work closely with the TRIEC communications team to develop the communication strategy. This strategy will need to be shared with TRIEC both through a presentation and a final written document.

4. Brand communications as a part of the Integrated Communications Strategy

As a part of the integrated strategy, the consultant or agency is expected to review the current organizational brand and program brands and provide expertise on how to better integrate and use them to position the TRIEC brand to achieve its strategic goals. This can either be incorporated as part of the communication strategy or as a separate deliverable.

Throughout the work process, the consultant or agency is expected to work closely with the TRIEC communications team and actively seek their input on all the above deliverables.

Note re: Ownership

All rights, title and interest in any and all deliverables will, upon creation, be the sole and exclusive property of TRIEC.

5. Timeframe

TRIEC anticipates this project will begin in December 2013 with the following timeline:

- December 2013: Internal consultation and communication assessment
- January 2014: Audience research
- February 2014: Strategy development
- March 1, 2014: Final strategy due



6. Budget guideline

The proposed budget should include a suggested work plan and a breakdown of fees for professional services, hours, and administrative services, including taxes. The budget range for this project is \$15,000 to \$25,000 excluding taxes.

7. Required skills and experience

The successful consultant or agency will have:

- Experience developing integrated communication strategies
- Experience in non-profit and/or B2B communications and marketing
- Demonstrated ability to undertake audience research
- Expertise in brand development

8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals received will be judged on the following selection criteria:

- Relevant experience and skills
- Scope of work proposed and associated work plan
- Ability to meet the timeline and budget expectations
- References

TRIEC values diversity among its suppliers, and welcomes proposals from organizations that are minority owned (51 per cent +), have a substantial percentage of employees from diverse groups, or who can show a demonstrable commitment to diversity and in particular to the inclusion of skilled immigrants in the workforce. In cases where proposals are of equal strength, a demonstrated commitment to diversity may be used as an evaluation criterion.

9. Submission Guidelines

Respondents are requested to submit responses in the following format; if this requirement is not met the bid will not be considered. The proposal must include:

- A **cover page** including the proponent's name, project title and the closing time and date
- A description of the relevant **background, skills and experience** of all members of the consulting team
- A **work plan** outlining how the tasks described above would be carried out and an overall estimate of time required for each deliverable.
- A firm **estimate of fees** to be charged including all anticipated costs.
- **References:** Names and contact information (contact person, title, company, address, telephone number, and email) for 3 relevant recent clients.
- A signed TRIEC Vendor Statement of Ethical Practices and Conflict of Interest form.



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10. Proposal Submission

Any questions/clarifications requiring TRIEC response during the preparation of proposals can be directed to Jessica Hume, Manager, Communications, at jhume@triec.ca.

Proposals must be received by email by **12:00 p.m. (noon) local time on November 25, 2013** with the subject line "Communication Strategy Proposal" All documents must be in **MS Word or PDF** file formats.

Proposals should be sent to:
Jessica Hume, Manager, Communications
jhume@triec.ca

11. Terms and Conditions of the RFP

- Proposals received after the time and date noted above will not be accepted.
- This is not a Request for Tender or an offer. TRIEC is not bound to accept the proposal that provides for the lowest cost or price to TRIEC, and reserves the right not to proceed with the contract and to reject any or all bids.
- TRIEC reserves the right to request additional information from a bidder.
- TRIEC may select more than one supplier to satisfy the RFP requirements.
- An award resulting from the RFP is subject to the successful conclusion of a contract.
- An evaluation committee will review each proposal. TRIEC reserves the exclusive right to develop the list of criteria that will be used to evaluate the proposals. Selection of a supplier will be based on an evaluation of all responses against the stated evaluation criteria.
- The supplier will absorb all costs in the preparation of the proposal. All proposal and all supporting materials submitted in response to the RFP will not be returned.
- Each proponent is required to disclose any instances, which may cause a conflict of interest. If such disclosures are made, the proponent is required to indicate the manner in which they intend to address such conflicts. Where TRIEC is not satisfied with the manner in which the proponent intends to address such conflicts, TRIEC, in its sole discretion, may refuse to consider the proponent's proposal.