



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health
FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health/CEO
DATE: 2018 February 1

SOUTHWEST TOBACCO CONTROL AREA NETWORK SINGLE SOURCE VENDOR

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Finance & Facilities review and make recommendation that the Board of Health award a single source vendor contract to Rescue: The Behavior Change Agency in an amount up to \$151,439.53 as identified in Report No. 004-18FFC re: "Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network Single Source Vendor."

Key Points

- In 2013, the SW TCAN (MLHU) issued an RFP and as a result hired the 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 selected as the successful vendor to complete Phase 2 of the project.
- In 2015, 2016, and 2017, the SW TCAN (MLHU) awarded a single source vendor contract to RSCG after receiving approvals from the Director, Medical Officer of Health, and Board of Health.
- In 2018, the SW TCAN (MLHU) aims to award a single source vendor contract to Rescue: The Behavior Change Agency (formerly RSCG) to advance the project.

Background

According to the most recent Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, 8.6% of Ontario youth use tobacco products (OSDUHS, 2015). 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 Southwest (SW) and Central West (CW) Tobacco Control Area Networks (TCAN) contracted the Rescue Social Change Group (RSCG) to perform a Functional Analysis for Cultural Interventions (FACIT™) study to identify attributes of modern-day teen smokers and what influences them. In summary, the 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%).

In 2014, the SW and CW TCANs worked closely with RSCG to use their research recommendations to develop a campaign that directly targets the Alternative peer crowd. In 2015, Phase 3 of the resulting Uprise project was rolled out, including a soft launch of the campaign in the SW and CW TCAN regions, followed by a full roll-out in 2016 and 2017.

Together, the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit (OTRU), Rescue, and Health Unit staff have developed an evaluation strategy for the Uprise project. A project like this takes time to yield results; the goal is not only to become an influencer in the "alternative" peer crowd, but subsequently also to create behavioural change among alternative youth. A logic model, developed with the goal of achieving decreased smoking rates among CW/SW alternative youth by 2020, is attached as [Appendix A](#). Baseline research was collected in 2015, which showed that 31% of alternative youth respondents had smoked a cigarette in the last thirty days, far in excess of the provincial rate of 9%. This helped us to confirm the importance of targeting peer crowds with tailored interventions like this one. Full results can be found in [Appendix B](#). A formative evaluation took place in 2017 to assess indicators to date, such as brand recognition, brand engagement, and intent to remain smoke-free. Results are currently being analyzed by OTRU.

Vendor Procurement

RSCG was the successful bidder in the 2013 and 2014 procurement processes, and was subsequently awarded a single source vendor contract in 2015, 2016, and 2017. In the past four years, RSCG has demonstrated a unique skill set that sets them apart from other research and marketing agencies. Rescue holds a copyright on “social branding,” and remains the only company in the world doing this kind of behavioral marketing. Ordinary marketing firms cannot do what Rescue does, as most firms do not have alternative culture collaborators (such as bands or concert venues) who can engage with people in the alternative scene. In essence, Rescue is a behavioural marketing agency, a research and evaluation agency, and a band/concert promoter all rolled into one company. Rescue has expertise in alternative culture that public health does not; therefore, they can ensure that their clients’ brands are promoted in a way that is authentic to the target audience.

The Uprise project went province-wide in 2017, and will continue to reach most of the province in 2018 (unfortunately, the Toronto TCAN had to withdraw from the project due to lack of funding for 2018). The SW and CW regions will remain the project managers, and our physical presence at events will remain unique to the SW and CW TCANs. Therefore, if approved, the majority of the contract will be paid by the SW and CW TCANs; only the project’s social media aspect will be shared provincially. A draft contract has been discussed with Rescue: The Behavior Change Agency for Phase 6 in the amount of \$151,439.53 CAD (inclusive of HST). The chart below outlines how the contract will be cost-shared among the TCANs.

TCAN	Size of Alternative Audience*	Total Cost
Central East	130,000	\$11,875
East	88,000	\$9,000
Northeast	14,000	\$2,667
Northwest	5,800	\$1,250
Southwest/Central West	203,000	CW= \$75,988.52 (60%) SW= \$50,659.01 (40%)
Total	440,800	\$151,439.53

*Audience size is based on calculations gleaned from Facebook’s ad targeting tool.

In accordance with Policy G-230 (Procurement) and the associated Procurement Guideline 5.11, it is recommended that Rescue: The Behaviour Change Agency be approved for hire as a single source vendor.

This report was prepared by the SW TCAN Team, Healthy Living Division.



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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.