



TO: Chair and Members of the Finance & Facilities Committee

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health/CEO

DATE: 2019 February 14

SOUTHWEST TOBACCO CONTROL AREA NETWORK (SW TCAN) SINGLE SOURCE VENDOR

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Finance & Facilities Committee recommend that the Board of Health award a single-source vendor contract to Rescue: The Behavior Change Agency in an amount up to \$127,003.53 as identified in Report No. 008-19FFC re: “Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network (SW TCAN) Single Source Vendor.”

Key Points

- In 2013, the SW TCAN (MLHU) issued an RFP and contracted Rescue: The Behavior Change Agency 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 Rescue was selected as the successful vendor to complete Phase 2 of the project.
- For 2015–18, the SW TCAN (MLHU) awarded a single-source vendor contract to Rescue after receiving approvals from the Director, Medical Officer of Health, and Board of Health.
- For 2019, the SW TCAN (MLHU) would like to award a single-source vendor contract to Rescue: The Behavior Change Agency to complete the final year of work in our logic model.

Background

According to the most recent Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey, 7% of Ontario youth use tobacco products (OSDUHS 2017). 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 and Central West Tobacco Control Area Networks (SW TCAN and CW TCAN) contracted Rescue to perform a Functional Analysis for Cultural Interventions (FACI™) study. The purpose of the study was to identify features 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/CW TCANs worked closely with Rescue to use the research recommendations to develop a campaign that directly targets the alternative peer crowd. 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. In 2016, 2017, and 2018, there was a full roll-out of the Uprise project.

The Ontario Tobacco Research Unit (OTRU), Rescue, and Health Unit staff have developed an evaluation strategy for the Uprise project. A project such as 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 behaviour change among alternative youth. A logic model has been developed (see [Appendix A](#)) with a goal of seeing decreased smoking rates among CW/SW alternative youth by 2020. Baseline research was collected in 2015, which showed 31% of youth respondents had smoked a cigarette in the last 30 days, far surpassing the provincial rate of 9%. This helped us to confirm the importance of targeting peer crowds with tailored interventions such as this. A formative evaluation took place in 2017 (see [Appendix B](#)). Another round of evaluation is currently taking place, and the report can be shared when it is received.

Vendor Procurement

Rescue was the successful bidder in both the 2013 and 2014 procurement processes, and was subsequently awarded a single-source vendor contract from 2015 to 2018. In the past six years, Rescue has demonstrated their unique ability to reach alternative youth successfully through social media and by engaging with key influencers in the alternative scene, such as bands and concert venues. A market scan conducted by Health Unit staff in January 2019 determined that Rescue remains the only existing agency with the expertise and experience required to perform this work. Although Rescue holds a copyright on “social branding” and on the FACI™ tool used in the evaluation of this campaign, they have previously worked collaboratively with TCAN staff and the OTRU to establish the evaluation framework. This methodology will be used again for the final phase in the project’s five-year plan. Rescue will work directly with Health Unit staff to analyze outcomes and draft an evaluation report. Rescue has expertise in connecting with the alternative culture—expertise that neither public health nor other research and marketing agencies currently have—and can promote the brand and key messages in a way that is perceived as authentic by the audience.

The Uprise project expanded across the province in 2017 and will continue to reach most of the province in 2019. Unfortunately, the CE and Toronto TCANs had to withdraw from the project due to lack of funding for 2019. The SW/CW TCANs will thus remain the project managers and maintain a physical presence at events. Therefore, if approved, the majority of the contract will be paid by the SW/CW TCANs, with only the project’s social media aspect shared across the province. A draft contract has been discussed with Rescue for Phase 7 in the amount of \$127,003.53 (figure includes HST). The chart below outlines how the contract will be cost-shared among the TCANs.

TCAN	Size of Alternative Audience*	Total Cost
East	88,000	\$9,000
North East	14,000	\$2,667
North West	5,800	\$1,250
Southwest/Central West	203,000	CW = \$68,451.92 (60%) SW = \$45,634.61 (40%)
Total	440,800	\$127,003.53

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

If approved, the Health Unit will enter into a contract with Rescue for the 2019 project year. In the contract’s severability clause, explicit language will be included to allow the Health Unit to terminate the contract in the event of funding constraints.

In accordance with Policy G-230 (Procurement) and the associated Health Unit Procurement Protocols (G-230A) identifying non-competitive purchases (3.0) and approval guidelines for single-/sole-source contracts (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.