

Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan Tender

Project overview

The Greater Manchester VCSE Leadership Group is looking for a communications professional to produce a communications strategy and an implementation plan for the next five years.

The leadership group is a coalition of VCSE service providers, infrastructure organisations and equalities organisations. The Leadership Group champions the 17,000 plus groups across Greater Manchester and seeks to use its networks and connections to support the inclusion and voice of the wider sector across Greater Manchester.

There is a small network of agencies and VCSE organisations involved in delivering the project and a number of working groups linked to the GM VCSE Leadership. This is a partnership delivery model and our communications strategy implementation plan should build on and connect to the communications channels that already exist, without creating unnecessary complexity.

Delivery of this work should support the delivery of the Accord and support the aims of the Leadership Group. There is in development:

- a delivery plan for the GM VCSE Accord over the next five years across all 10 GM boroughs.
- a set of high-level outcomes for the Leadership Group.

We are inviting potential providers to submit a short proposal (no more than 1200 words), with appended budget, risk register and delivery timetable (April to September 2022), outlining how you would approach producing a communications strategy and developing an effective implementation plan for the project.

We are also asking for experience in delivering communications strategies and implementation plans, how this experience relates to this project (800 words max) with an organisational CV (comms projects) appended, and three previous contractor references.

Secretariat Support for the Greater Manchester VCSE Leadership Group
is provided by Voluntary Sector North West.

Project details

Target audience

The communications strategy will aim to reach and influence two key audience groups: 1) VCSE sector organisations and groups – within and outside of the leadership group; and 2) Public sector partners.

Strategic goals

Strategic goal 1: Raise awareness of the project aims, ongoing work and impact within the VCSE sector – ensure the 17,000 VCSE sector organisations across the 10 Greater Manchester boroughs are able to see progress and impact made by key stakeholders across the 8 strategic priorities, at a regional and borough level.

Strategic goal 2: Build in mechanisms for the voice of VCSE groups and networks to connect into the work of the GM VCSE Leadership Group – our work relies on the intelligence and input of VCSE groups from across Greater Manchester's geographies and communities.

Strategic goal 3: Enable effective internal communication across the leadership group – ensure the leadership group remain up to date on status of key projects from across the group, are able to feed in updates on their work, and are aware of upcoming external opportunities to influence public sector partners as a group.

Strategic goal 4: Demonstrate the impact of VCSE sector work to public sector partners in key areas – plan communications to reach and influence local government, health and social care partners at key project moments, demonstrating the impact of VCSE sector actions in developing solutions across the 8 strategic priorities.

Approach

- **Establish the GM VCSE Leadership Group website and communications channels as the go-to resource for updates in relation to the GM VCSE Accord and the work of the Leadership Group**
 - Lead re-development of the website as a hub for the project, communicating: the goals of the GM VCSE Accord, the groups and organisations involved in delivering the project, and providing an overview of the work – both completed and ongoing – in each strategic area. Please note that this work has already begun.
 - Develop a system for stakeholders to feed in regular updates on project progress via their comms teams, and surface this in internal and external comms.

- Identify which communications channels will allow us to most effectively reach and influence our target audiences.
- Support the work of each of our Leadership Group working groups:
 - Alternative Provider Federation
 - Commissioning
 - Equality Alliance (GM=EqAI)
 - Inclusive Economy
 - Mental Health Leaders
 - Population Health
 - Workforce
- Work with VCSE networks, especially:
 - local VCSE communication channels across the 10 boroughs of Greater Manchester
- **An approach and narrative that places stakeholder groups at the heart of the project, rather than the leadership group**
 - Highlighting the work delivered by the individual organisations and groups in partnership, is the important focus here. The leadership team are here to facilitate information sharing and empower work across the networks.
- **Develop our communications strategy in dialogue with the wider VCSE sector and build on current communication channels**
 - To ensure buy-in from across the leadership groups and wider sector and enable effective communication, this strategy should be developed in consultation with the local VCSE organisations across Greater Manchester.
 - We want to understand how groups would like to participate in shaping the external communications outputs and what information will be most useful to empower their work.

Project scope

Although this is a five-year project, the scope for the communications strategy and implementation plan is 6 months, beginning 1st April 2022. The implementation plan must be deliverable by 1FTE Communications Officer working with VCSE partners and public sector partners.

Deliverables

Stakeholder workshop(s)

Plan and facilitate an online workshop with key stakeholders from the leadership group to inform the internal communications strategy. This session should help us identify what information they require from across the network to help with delivering their work and how they can best feed into sharing updates and participating in key external campaign moments.

Communications strategy

Develop a communications strategy which outlines goals, measurable KPIs, key messages and the proposed communications channels required to reach the target audiences outlined above.

We would like to present this in a simple, digestible slideshow format, to be circulated with key stakeholders and funders.

Website and software brief

Develop a brief for the redevelopment of our website that supports the goals of the project and is suited to our target audiences. This outline should also indicate software or solutions required to deliver the communications strategy, such as an email service provider or CRM. This work has begun and so it may be that the recommendation is to build on the current redevelopment work.

Implementation plan

Produce a roadmap for the next 18 months to support the implementation of key projects required to deliver on the strategy outlined, highlighting milestones, deliverables and time required. Key to this will be an understanding of how the delivery of the communications strategy complements and supports a network of communications channels. This is central to this work.

Budget

The expectation is that the budget for delivering this work is between £10k and £18k.

Application

Applications should be submitted to Cassandra Banks, Partnerships Officer, by email Cassandra.banks@vsnw.org.uk. Deadline is noon, Friday, 18th March 2022.

Scoring Criteria

Submissions: Please note that submissions should include and will be scored against the following criteria:

Application	Score (Out of 120)
Company/tenderer information	
Delivery proposal (max 1200 words) outlining development of:	
• Communications Strategy	25
• Communications Strategy Implementation Plan	25
• Delivery Timetable	10
• Risk Register	10
Budget (ballpark is £10k to £18k)	20
Experience in Delivery	30
Three previous contractor references	

About the GM VCSE Leadership Group

Greater Manchester leaders in local government, health and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) have signed a new GM VCSE Accord outlining a framework for collaboration, involving VCSE leaders in the delivery of the Greater Manchester Strategy (GMS) over the next five years.

VCSE representatives will be involved in the development, governance and delivery of 8 key strategic areas that the accord covers. The increased involvement of VCSE groups follows recognition of the significant role has to play in building a resilient local economy, tackle inequalities and inequities, and improve the health and wellbeing of the people who live, work and study in Greater Manchester.

The role of the leadership board is to steer the development of a shared vision across the VCSE sector and a plan for how it will be delivered.

Useful references

[GM VCSE Accord](#)

[GM VCSE Leadership Group website](#)