
Request for Proposals (RFP): Outreach and Engagement

Issued: February 1, 2016

Deadline: February 12, 2016 at 5:00 PM EST

Contact: Kecia Stauffer, Communications Marketing Manager, kecia.stauffer@ct.gov

I. Summary

Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) in March of 2010 and Governor Malloy's signing of Public Act 11-53 in July of 2011, Connecticut has built a state-based marketplace for health care coverage. The primary mission of the Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange D/B/A Access Health CT ("Access Health CT") is to increase the number of insured residents in Connecticut, promote positive health outcomes, lower costs and eliminate health disparities. To accomplish this mission, Access Health CT has developed an online shopping and enrollment experience for state residents and small businesses, as well as an extensive marketing, communication and enrollment infrastructure to raise awareness of health insurance options and facilitate enrollment in coverage.

Throughout the planning, building and operational phases of Access Health CT, several assessments were made of the location and composition of both the general population of Connecticut, as well as uninsured and underinsured residents. Gathered data includes information such as household income, race/ethnicity, age, gender and geographic location, and was instrumental in enabling Access Health CT effectively target and reach residents who were likely to benefit from health care coverage offered through Access Health CT. These assessments also helped Access Health CT establish a baseline against which its progress toward fulfilling its mission could be measured.

Since the launch of Access Health CT as Connecticut's official state-based health insurance marketplace, the uninsured rate in the state has fallen below 4%. In order to further reduce the uninsured rate in Connecticut and help ensure that residents maintain coverage, Access Health CT is looking to expand its current outreach efforts into a year-round program, reaching new communities and building on current community influencer relationships, in both the Individual and Small Business markets.

Access Health CT intends to contract with a vendor who can leverage existing research and customer data to design a year-round outreach, networking and engagement plan that enables Access Health CT to:

- Continue to enroll the uninsured in affordable health care coverage
- Educate and inform current customers, brokers and small business prospects about health care coverage and utilization
- Establish Access Health CT as a trusted advisor and resource for brokers, small businesses and all CT residents
- Assist Access Health CT in tactics that will engage and empower people to live healthier lives by getting to know the benefits of having and using their health care coverage.

II. Scope of Work

In anticipation of outreach and marketing efforts in 2016, Access Health CT seeks to engage a company with expertise in Community Outreach, Strategic Partnerships and Engagement to design and execute a year-round outreach and engagement program, for the Individual and Small Business markets. This program should target specific audiences and demographics as indicated through research and consultation with Access Health CT, and establish a means to measure its own success. Access Health CT's main goals for a year-round outreach program include:

- Engage and enroll diverse communities of uninsured residents,
- Ensure that outreach is conducted with cultural competence;
- Increase health insurance literacy among current and prospective customers;
- Increase plan utilization among current customers;
- Increase retention of current customers;
- Maintain focus on enrolling new qualified health plan (QHP) customers;
- Strengthen partnerships with regional communities and organizations, hospitals, church groups, brokers, Certified Application Counselors (CACs), chambers of commerce and business associations (e.g. SBA), and the Connecticut Department of Labor (DOL);
- Develop strategic alliances and new community partnerships in CT;
- Create opportunities for CT residents and small businesses to interact and engage with Access Health CT;
- Engage new small business enrollees (e.g. open enrollment meetings), working with brokers, as applicable;
- Conduct measurable outreach and engagement tactics, and
- Establish Access Health CT as trusted advisor for CT residents

The initial term of the contract will be one (1) year with the possibility of further annual extensions. For the purposes of this RFP, the strategic plan and goals should cover one (1) calendar year from the start date of the contract. After one (1) year, Access Health CT will review the vendor's progress, determine if timing, goals and targets need to be re-aligned, and, after reviewing the vendor's proposed strategic plan for the following year, decide if it wishes to extend the contract for the next year.

The scope of the vendor's work will include the following activities. Proposals submitted in response to this RFP should demonstrate the vendor's ability to complete these activities AND take into account the work and cost associated with completing these activities:

- 1) Conduct a complete review of internal and external research on current members and prospects for Access Health CT products and services, and develop a comprehensive

- understanding of these two groups (for both the Individual and the Small Business markets). Should gaps exist, the vendor should suggest additional research efforts.
- 2) Conduct a complete review of past outreach efforts, including metrics and lessons learned. Source documentation will be provided by Access Health CT. See **Appendix C** for previous topline reports.
 - 3) Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the current insurance landscape in Connecticut and of Access Health CT's development, and perform any necessary research to ensure that staff assigned to this project has a well-rounded perspective.
 - 4) Maintain a core team (including an account lead) assigned consistently to the Access Health CT project. This core team should be culturally and linguistically diverse. Every member of this core team must complete Media Training through Access Health CT and obtain certification through Access Health CT by completing our training program (individual and small business) and passing the certification test with a score of at least 80%.
 - 5) If additional staff is hired by the vendor to support any tactic, they should also go through the training and pass the certification test with a score of at least 80%.
 - 6) Provide consistent representation at outreach, educational and networking events, and serve as the equivalent of an official representative of Access Health CT. This means at least one staff member present at every outreach/networking event, as required by Access Health CT. When possible, an effort should be made to assign staff to events that are culturally and linguistically appropriate.
 - 7) Deliver oral presentations to organizations, or at public events, as requested by Access Health CT. This would range from informational sessions for Connecticut residents to official meetings with current and potential partner organizations.
 - 8) Assist in developing presentation materials for use at events.
 - 9) Assist with any distribution (collateral, promotional items, educational materials, etc.) needed by any entity or community partner in the state.
 - 10) Plan and execute ongoing series of educational outreach events, ranging from information/educational sessions to enrollment events. These events should be planned with geographic and demographic targets in mind, as well as industry/eligibility size targets for Small Business.
 - 11) Support development of the certified staff training program and identify efficiencies to strengthen relationships with each sub-group (Certified Application Counselors, Community Health Centers, Certified Brokers, and Enrollment Specialists).
 - 12) If requested by Access Health CT, the partner will assist with recruitment of temporary staff for the purposes of outreach efforts, event support, enrollment assistance and/or

education, data collection and tracking, etc. If any external agencies are utilized, Access Health CT must approve prior.

- 13) Must work in tandem with Access Health CT's vendors and internal departments as requested, with focuses including but not limited to research, creative development, enrollment support, customer assistance, the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) and public relations.
- 14) Maintain focus on target audiences (for both individual and small business) identified by Access Health CT.
- 15) Develop a strategic outreach project plan to reach our target communities. This project plan should include:
 - a. Primary and secondary goals
 - b. A creative and innovative strategy to achieve these goals
 - c. Detailed project timeline
 - d. Measures of success
 - e. Understanding of interdependencies with other vendors & internal resources needed to accomplish goals
 - f. Possible tactics to support strategic plan
 - g. Clear staff accountability among core team
 - h. Recommendation of potential satellite locations and the utilization of existing resources at Access Health CT to accomplish goals (e.g. storefronts, Certified Brokers & Certified Application Counselors (CACs), Summer Marketing program, and Broker partners)
 - i. Inclusion of SWOT: (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)
 - j. Strategy & tactics that address the Individual Market & Small Business Market, with the goal for Small Business being to increase awareness, presence and membership.
- 16) In support of the project, the selected vendor will need to participate in weekly Access Health CT project status calls, with in-person attendance required for at least one meeting each month. Expenses related to in-person meeting attendance, travel, mileage etc. will not be covered by Access Health CT. Project timelines and status updates on deliverables must be updated and shared with Access Health CT at least once weekly. The schedule for updates will be determined by Access Health CT.
- 17) Obtain written approval of Access Health CT prior to engaging any subcontractors to perform work in connection with Access Health CT projects. Access Health CT may require proposed subcontractors to provide additional documentation or information. If a subcontractor will be central to a vendor's performance of work for Access Health CT, the subcontractor should be available for follow-up questions and an oral presentation if requested.

18) Note: Access Health CT will not reimburse any travel expenses for any member of the selected firm or additional staff.

III. Background and Qualifications

Provide a summary of any past projects that would demonstrate your ability to successfully perform this work. Specifically address experiences you have working in the areas of health care, health insurance, and health literacy.

Provide an anticipated staffing plan for this engagement, including biographical sketches of staff who will be engaged, their proposed role, and the amount of time (as a %) they would devote to Access Health CT account activity. If there are plans to utilize a subcontractor to perform work for Access Health CT, it must be disclosed in your written Response.

All proposed staff must pass a background check (expense to conduct these should be covered by the vendor) before engaging with Access Health CT. Once this is done, the vendor should advise Access Health CT in writing.

Lastly, please provide three customer references for relevant prior work, including name, title, phone, email and a description of the work performed.

IV. Cost Proposal

Provide a cost summary using the basic template format below. Please provide a detailed narrative that supports these costs.

Additionally, please provide a rate card or approximate hourly rates for reference, should other work or services arise that were not detailed or anticipated in the current project scope.

Estimated Costs by Engagement Area	(\$)
Assessment of existing research & formal recommendation for additional research, if needed	
Development of comprehensive outreach strategy and plan	
Execution of outreach tactics, including:	
a) Staff presence at all events	
b) Tracking and reporting performance data	
Client and account management, including participation on weekly calls and meetings, and interactions with additional Access Health CT partners	
Total Cost	\$

V. RFP Processes & Guidelines

- Below please find a schedule of key dates and milestones for this RFP process.

Access Health CT reserves the option to request an oral presentation from select Responders. The Responder’s key staff, such as the proposed project manager, and any critical subcontractors must be present at the oral presentation.

Activity	Date
RFP Issued (open for 12 days)	2/1/2016
All Questions Due by 5 PM EST	2/5/2016
Proposals Due by 5PM EST	2/12/2016
Oral Presentations (if requested)	2/15 – 2/18/2016
Vendor Selection	2/19/2016

- When preparing your response to this RFP, please adhere to the following requirements and guidelines:
 1. The Responder’s proposal should consist of the following sections, in the order listed below:
 - a. Cover Letter
 - b. Table of Contents
 - c. Executive Summary
 - d. Approach and Methodology to Address Items Detailed In Scope of Work
 - e. Proposed Project Timeline to Meet Key Dates
 - f. Cost/Pricing Proposal
 - g. Biographical Sketches for Key Personnel
 - h. Organizational Background & Qualifications
 - i. 3 References
 - j. A Certificate of Insurance that meets the Insurance requirements laid out in the Contract attached as **Appendix A**.
 - k. Completed forms 1 – 4, listed below.
 - 1) IRS Form W-9
 - 2) Ethics Form 5 – Consulting Agreement Affidavit, attached as **Appendix B** (Selected firm(s) will be required to submit an updated Ethics Form 5 dated contemporaneously with Contract execution.)
 - 3) Ethics Form 7 – Iran Certification, attached as **Appendix B**
 - 4) SEEC Form 10 - Acknowledgement of Receipt of the State Elections Enforcement Commission’s Notice of Campaign Contribution and Solicitation Limitations, as attached in **Appendix B**
 2. The proposal should be formatted as follows:
 - Paper size: 8.5 x 11 inches

- Minimum font size: 11 point (except for footnotes, headers, or footers)
 - Ready for printing: All electronic files submitted will be pre-formatted for printing
 - Software: All electronic files submitted should be created (or fully compatible) with any of the following software suites or packages: Microsoft Office 2010, Adobe PDF.
3. The Responder must submit:
- One (1) digital copy of the proposal

VI. Rights of Access Health CT in Evaluating Proposals

Issuance of this RFP does not guarantee that Access Health CT will award a Contract to any Responder. Access Health CT reserves the right to withdraw, re-bid, extend or otherwise modify the RFP or the related schedule and process, in any manner, solely at its discretion.

Access Health CT also reserves the right to:

- Consider any source of information in evaluating Proposals;
- Omit any planned evaluation step if, in Access Health CT's view, the step is not needed;
- At its sole discretion, reject any and all Proposals at any time; and
- Open Contract discussions with the second highest scoring Responder, if Access Health CT is unable to reach an agreement on Contract terms with the highest scoring Responder.

VII. Disqualification

Any attempt by a Responder to influence a member of the evaluation committee during the Proposal review and evaluation process will result in the elimination of that Responder's Proposal from consideration.

VIII. Freedom of Information

The Exchange is a quasi-public agency and its records, including responses to this RFP, are public records. See Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 1-200, *et seq.*, and especially §§ 1-210(b)(4) and 1-210(b)(5)(B). Due regard will be given to the protection of proprietary or confidential information contained in all proposals received. However, all materials associated with this RFP are subject to the terms of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") and all applicable rules, regulations and administrative decisions. If a firm is interested in preserving the confidentiality of any part of its proposal, it will not be sufficient merely to state generally in the proposal that the proposal is proprietary or confidential in nature and not, therefore, subject to release to third parties. Instead, those particular sentences, paragraphs, pages or sections that a firm believes to be exempt from disclosure under FOIA must be specifically identified as such. Convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify each exemption consistent with § 1-210(b) of FOIA must accompany the

proposal. The rationale and explanation must be stated in terms of the reasons the materials are legally exempt from release pursuant to FOIA. Firms should not request that their entire proposal, or the majority of the proposal, be confidential. Any submitted proposal, once execution of a contract is complete and any completed contract will be considered public information. The Exchange has no obligation to initiate, prosecute or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information that is sought pursuant to a FOIA request. The firm has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. In no event shall the Exchange have any liability for the disclosure of any documents or information in its possession that the Exchange believes are required to be disclosed pursuant to FOIA or any other law.

IX. Notice of State Certification Requirements

- A. The selected firm must execute a Gift and Campaign Contribution Certification (Ethics Form 1), attached in **Appendix A**, contemporaneously with the Contract and deliver them together to the Exchange.
- B. Each Responder must deliver a Consulting Agreement Affidavit (Ethics Form 5), attached as **Appendix B**, with its proposal, and the selected firm(s) must deliver an updated form contemporaneously with Contract execution. The selected firm(s) must amend Ethics Form 5 whenever the firm enters into any new consulting agreement during the term of the Contract.
- C. With regard to a large state contract, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 4-250, and pursuant to Public Act 13-162, each Responder, if applicable, must certify that it has not made certain investments in Iran, and deliver an executed Iran Certification (Ethics Form 7), attached as **Appendix B**, with its proposal.
- D. With regard to a State contract, as defined in Public Act No. 07-1, having a value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts having a value of \$100,000 or more, the authorized signatory to the proposal in response to this RFP must expressly acknowledge receipt of the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice, as attached in **Appendix A**, advising prospective state contractors of state campaign contribution and solicitation prohibitions, and will inform its principals of the contents of the notice.
- E. Pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 4a-60(a)(1) and 4a-60a(a)(1), as amended by Public Act 07-245 and Sections 9 and 10 of Public Act 07-142, every contractor is required to provide the State with documentation to support the contractor's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. Copies of two certification forms (one for businesses and one for individuals) that will satisfy these requirements are attached to this RFP as **Appendix A**. The applicable certification form must be signed by an authorized signatory of the selected firm(s) and submitted to the Exchange at the time of Contract execution.

X. Execution of Contract

This RFP is the instrument through which proposals are solicited and is not a contract. Upon the Exchange's selection of a Responder, the selected Responder must enter into a contract with the Exchange substantially in the form of the Contract set out in **Appendix A**. The selected firm's proposal and this RFP may serve as the basis for additional Contract terms. If the Exchange and selected firm(s) fail to reach agreement on Contract terms within a time determined solely by the Exchange, then the Exchange may commence and conclude contract negotiations with other Responder(s). The Exchange may decide at any time to start this RFP process again.

XI. Subletting or Assigning of Contract

The Contract or any portion thereof, or the work provided for therein, or the right, title, or interest of the firm therein or thereto may not be sublet, sold, transferred, assigned or otherwise disposed of to any person or entity without the prior written consent of the Exchange. No person or entity, other than the firm to which the Contract was awarded, is permitted to perform work without the prior written approval of the Exchange.

XII. Compliance with Federal, State and Other Requirements

In the Contract, the firm will represent and warrant that, at all pertinent and relevant times to the Contract, it has been, is and will continue to be in full compliance with all codes, statutes, acts, ordinances, judgments, decrees, injunctions and regulations of federal, state, municipal or other governmental departments, commissions, boards, bureaus, agencies or instrumentalities,.

XIII. Executive Orders

The Contract shall be subject to the provisions of Executive Order No. Three of Governor Thomas J. Meskill, promulgated June 16, 1971, the provisions of Executive Order No. Seventeen of Governor Thomas J. Meskill, promulgated February 15, 1973 and the provisions of Executive Order No. Sixteen of Governor John G. Rowland promulgated August 4, 1999.

XIV. Conformity and Completeness of Proposals

To be considered acceptable, proposals must be complete and conform to all material RFP instructions and conditions. The Exchange, in its sole discretion, may reject in whole or in part any proposal if in its judgment the best interests of the Exchange will be served.

XV. Presentation of Supporting Evidence

Respondents must be prepared to provide evidence of experience, performance, ability, financial resources or other items that the Exchange deems necessary or appropriate concerning the performance capabilities represented in their proposals.

XVI. Misrepresentation or Default

The Exchange may reject a proposal and void any award resulting from this RFP to a firm that makes any material misrepresentation in its proposal or other submission in connection with this RFP.

XVII. Disqualification

Any attempt by a Respondent to influence a member of the evaluation committee during the proposal review and evaluation process will result in the elimination of that Respondent's proposal from consideration.

XVIII. Oral Agreement or Arrangements

Any alleged oral agreements or arrangements made by firms with any State agency, the Exchange, or an employee of a State agency or the Exchange will be disregarded in any proposal evaluation or associated award.

XIX. Offer of Gratuities

Respondents must represent that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State of Connecticut or the Exchange has, or will, benefit financially or materially from the Contract. The Contract may be terminated by the Exchange if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered to, or received by, any of state officials or employees from the firm, the firm's agent(s), representative(s) or employee(s). Such action on the part of the Exchange shall not constitute a breach of contract by the Exchange.

XX. Validation of Proposals

Each proposal must be signed by an authorized official and shall be a binding commitment that the Exchange may incorporate, in whole or in part, by reference or otherwise, into the Contract. The proposal must also include evidence that the person submitting the proposal has the requisite power and authority on behalf of the firm to submit and deliver the proposal and subsequently to enter into, execute and deliver, and perform the Contract.

XXI. Ownership of Proposals

All proposals shall become the sole property of the Exchange and will not be returned.

XXII. Amendment or Cancellation of this RFP

Issuance of this RFP does not guarantee that the Exchange will award a Contract to any Responder. The Exchange reserves the right to withdraw, re-bid, extend or otherwise modify the RFP or the related schedule and process, in any manner, solely at its discretion.

The Exchange also reserves the right to:

- Consider any source of information in evaluating Proposals;
- Omit any planned evaluation step if, in the Exchange's view, the step is not needed;

- At its sole discretion, reject any or all Proposals at any time; and
- Open contract discussions with other Responder(s) if the Exchange and the first selected Respondent(s) are unable to agree on contract terms.

XXIII. Errors

The Exchange reserves the right to correct clerical or administrative errors that may be made during the evaluation of proposals or during the negotiation of the Contract and to change the Contract award accordingly. In addition, the Exchange reserves the right to re-evaluate proposals and the award of the Contract in light of information either not previously known or otherwise not properly having been taken into account prior to the Contract award. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of the Contract already made to a firm and subsequently awarding the Contract to another firm.

Such action on the part of the Exchange shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the Exchange since the Contract with the initial firm would be deemed void and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the Exchange and such firm.

The Exchange may waive minor irregularities found in proposals or allow the Responder to correct them, depending on which is in the best interest of the Exchange. "Minor irregularities" means typographical errors, informalities that are matters of form rather than substance and evident from the proposal itself, and insignificant mistakes that can be waived or corrected without prejudice to other Responders, as determined in the sole discretion of the Exchange.

XXIV. RFP Contact

The contact person for the purposes of this request is:

Kecia Stauffer
The Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange D/B/A Access Health CT
280 Trumbull Street, 15th floor
Hartford, CT 06103

kecia.stauffer@ct.gov (Email)
860-757-5315 (Phone)

All questions must be received by February 5, 2016 at 5:00 PM EST.

**Answers will be distributed among respondents and posted on
ct.gov/hix by February 8, 2016 at 12:00 PM EST.**

**All proposals must be received by the contact above no later than 5:00 PM EST
on February 12, 2016 to be considered.**

For Appendices A, B & C, please see attachments on ct.gov/hix under Doing Business with the Exchange