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## Request for Proposal: COMMUNICATION EXPERT

### **Information on the contracting party: Manitoba Cooperative Association (MCA)**

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#### **Vision**

Cooperatives are leaders in building a strong economy and a healthy, socially vibrant Manitoba.

#### **Mission**

To enhance and support the development of a united, growing and influential cooperative community in Manitoba.

#### **Manitoba Cooperative Association Pillars**

- Cooperative Development – Promote the cooperative model as a mechanism for community and economic development. Provide development services to support the growth and success of cooperatives.
- Education – Develop leadership programs and activities that strengthen capacity and knowledge of cooperatives.
- Community Awareness and Government Relations – Engage, initiate and participate in activities that represent and advance the collective interests of the cooperative community.
- Member Engagement – Provide opportunities that unite co-ops and co-operators and promote the value of cooperatives and MCA.
- Sustainability and Accountability – Ensure appropriate funding is in place and allocated to MCA programs and services to implement the priority strategies and make an impact.

## Information on the Project

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### Current Situation

Created in 2009, the Manitoba Cooperative Community Strategy (CCS) aims to stimulate, broaden and sustain the development of a socially and economically successful Manitoba cooperative community. A larger, stronger and more influential cooperative community will yield significant benefits:

- Increases in the number and types of cooperatives, in the number of cooperative jobs created and in the total assets of cooperatives will help strengthen the province's economy.
- More integrated approaches to financing and skills development will make the cooperative community more self-sufficient and better able to meet challenges and pursue new opportunities.
- Cooperatives will have a greater positive social and economic impact in their communities.

Based on a unique collaboration between Manitoba Cooperative Association (MCA), Economic Development Council of Manitoba Bilingual Municipalities (CDEM) and Government, this partnership also involves the participation of about 30 volunteers representing cooperatives, government departments and community organizations. The latter identify and contribute to the implementation of co-op initiatives in a working group structure, one for each of the three strategic objectives.

Over the last 6 years, the Manitoba Cooperative Community Strategy has been home of over forty co-op initiatives (Schedule A). Some are improvements of existing programs. Others have radically changed the environment in which co-ops evolve. Aggregated, they have had a dramatic impact on the ecosystem needed to support the development of a vibrant, dynamic and sustainable cooperative community.

During a large consultation of the cooperative community in 2014, an activity followed by a survey revealed that a minority of attendees knew about the strategy and fewer were aware of the new programs available to them. In response to that situation, MCA has decided to act. MCA is currently seeking a Communication Expert to support the implementation of some aspects of its communication plan as described below. MCA's expectation is to reach out newly incorporated and existing Manitoba cooperatives, to further engage them in strategy, and to promote the services and programs that have been developed for the past 6 years and are now available to them.

For more information on Manitoba cooperative community, we encourage the candidates to consult MCA's website [www.manitoba.coop](http://www.manitoba.coop). Candidates will be able to access the complete strategy document by clicking on this link:

<http://manitoba.coop/Page.aspx?MainPageID=co-op-community&MenuPageID=strategy>

## **Project Objectives, Scope and Activities**

MCA's Communication Plan aims to:

1. Create a 2-way dialogue with Manitoba cooperatives by:
  - Revitalizing MCA's communication tools (website, forum, Facebook page, etc.)
  - Update current co-op database and ensure up to date contact information
  - Explore engagement/marketing strategies to increase co-op involvement
  - Publish articles/ads in media read by cooperators
  - Inform Manitoba cooperatives of key new and existing activities and opportunities available to them
  - Engage Manitoba co-ops in the implementation of Phase 2 of CCS
2. Create resources promoting CCS and key activities
  - Create content to boost activity on MCA's newsletter, social media and website
  - Develop and print resources on relevant CCS activities such as brochures to be handed out and mailed out to co-ops
  - Work on attractive messaging to increase the uptake of the new programs outreach such as the Co-op Development Fund Tax Credit, Community Enterprise Development Tax Credit, or the Co-op Management courses offered at the University of Winnipeg
3. Develop a partnership between key stakeholders to co-create and disseminate content
  - Develop a coordination strategy for communicating with Manitoba co-ops
  - Collect existing resources already available to the public
  - Disseminate content through partners' network and translate content created by consultant

In that framework, MCA is seeking a Communication Expert who will be responsible for executing the following activities:

- *A Brochure:* In collaboration with MCA's Project Team and members of the CCS working groups, the successful candidate will develop a brochure to promote the most relevant programs and opportunities to Manitoba cooperatives.
  - ✓ The successful candidate will have 400 brochures printed, and an electronic version will be made available for MCA's website
  - ✓ MCA is interested in capitalizing on a visual identity created for the brochure to ensure that CCS materials are easily recognizable by Manitoba cooperatives. All graphic design and format developed will be used for further communication
  - ✓ This brochure might have to be revised in the future to adapt changes in the programs offered to cooperatives. The successful candidate will ensure that MCA has the ability to modify the source file when needed
  - ✓ The brochure will include logos of funders provided by MCA
  
- *Success Stories:* The successful candidate will capture successful stories of cooperatives and cooperators to inspire entrepreneurs and gather relevant data on the model.
  - ✓ MCA expects 8 to 12 success stories from Manitoba cooperatives and cooperators as well as a list of external co-op success stories (between 5 and 10), each approximately 250 to 500 words
  - ✓ MCA's Project Team will be responsible for identifying the Manitoba success stories and connecting the successful candidate with Manitoba cooperatives/cooperators
  - ✓ The successful candidate will be working with Project Team to identify external co-op success stories
  - ✓ Candidates are invited to suggest innovative mediums to relate these stories
  - ✓ An electronic version of these stories will be accessible on MCA's website
  
- *Strategic Information Watch:* The successful candidate will provide MCA with a list of key co-op content makers to monitor.
  - ✓ This list could be comprised of newsletters, twitter accounts, Facebook pages, etc. from key organizations or individuals
  
- *Expertise In Communication:* The successful candidate will advise MCA on how to most effectively use its existing communication tools and possibly new ones. The successful candidate will also provide Guidance on effective two-way engagement approaches.
  - ✓ This is to help MCA address the first goal of its communication plan: creating a two-way dialogue

- ✓ Candidates are encouraged to suggest ways for this knowledge transfer in their proposal

## Information on the proposal

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### General Guidelines, Requirements and Qualification

This is an open and competitive process. Candidates must be authorized to provide services in the Province of Manitoba.

- Provide a company or a consultant profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
  - Provide your Vision and Mission (if relevant).
  - Briefly describe your capacity to respond to MCA's request (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
  - Describe your experience in developing similar projects that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project.
    - Examples related to cooperatives, social enterprises or non-profit organizations would be particularly valued
    - Provide current reference contact information for two to three former or current clients.
  - Disclose any existing relationships and previous work done with MCA staff or board members or similar related party transactions.
  - Indicate names of the project team (and authorized officers if needed).
  - The proposal must be signed by an authorized officer.
- Describe your project in response to this RFP.
  - Explain the plan you will follow to:
    - Develop the activities presented above (we are open to additional suggestions);
    - Generate necessary materials to execute the plan;
  - Include a clear timeframe with major milestones
  - State your communication process with the contracting party, including lines of reporting or evaluation process
  - Propose a budget.
    - Total Budget should be no greater than \$15,000.
    - It must encompass all design, production, publication and software acquisitions necessary for the development of communication and marketing materials.

- Candidates can provide several cost proposals to accomplish the scope outlined in this proposal or list pricing separately for each initiative or option

### **Project Team from MCA**

- The Project Lead responsible for sign-off on key decisions, providing project steering and maintaining relationships with outside stakeholders
- The Project Manager responsible for keeping the project on schedule and within the budget and maintaining communication between other team members.

The successful candidate should plan to work with non-technical members of the staff in implementing this project. Clear, jargon-free communication is a must.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

The following criteria will form the basis upon which MCA will evaluate proposals:

- Suitability of the Proposal – the proposed plan meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Expected Outcomes – number of stories, materials, tools, meetings, presentations, etc.
- Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate approach and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- Creative Approach and Aesthetic Capabilities – Proposed plan and prior work demonstrates efficient approach, artistic and innovative skills.
- Candidate Experience – Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Value/Pricing Structure and Price Levels – The price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposer.
- Depth and Breadth of Staff – The candidate has appropriate staff/expertise to execute the plan in the timeframe described below.
- Proposal Presentation – The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
- Experience / familiarity with cooperatives.

## Timeline

- Complete proposals must be submitted no later than 12 pm CST Friday, January 6, 2017. Proposals may be emailed or sent via hard copy.
  - If emailing your proposal, send it to [erwan@manitoba.coop](mailto:erwan@manitoba.coop)
  - If delivering a hard copy of your proposal, deliver it to the attention of:  
Erwan Bouchaud  
Manitoba Cooperative Association  
103 – 317 Donald Street  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 2H6
- Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. During this time we may require interviews at our office with our evaluation team. You will be notified if this is requested.
- The name of the candidate who has been selected will be decided on or about: Friday, January 13, 2017.
- MCA will negotiate contract terms upon selection. Negotiations will begin immediately with the successful candidate and should conclude no later than: Wednesday, January 18, 2017. All contracts are subject to review by MCA legal counsel, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget, and other necessary items. Once the contract is signed, all other candidates will be notified.
- Discovery phase and initial meetings will start immediately upon signature of the contract.
- All activities must be completed by: March 31, 2017.

Attached is Schedule A.

## SCHEDULE A

### MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY

- ✓ **Provincial Cooperative Partnership Table (CCS)**  
Memorandum of understanding formalizing the partnership for the implementation of the strategy
- ✓ **Co-op Website or One-stop gateway to on-line services**  
New website: [www.manitoba.coop](http://www.manitoba.coop) with a co-op location tool “Find a co-op”, a forum, a database...
- ✓ **Interdepartmental Committee**  
Working Group within government identifying co-op go-to people in the different branches
- ✓ **Provincial co-op developer’s network**  
Caucus of co-op developers discussing best practices, new tools or challenges they may face
- ✓ **Co-op Grants: Cooperative Assistance Fund (CAF) & Co-op Development Fund (CDF)**  
Small grants offered to Manitoba co-ops to support their development
- ✓ **Co-op Development Fund Tax Credit**  
In contributing to CDF, MB co-ops receive a tax credit up to 75%. Co-ops helping co-ops
- ✓ **Changes in the Co-op Act.**  
Option to hold electronic member meetings and votes. Worker co-ops can now count volunteers and contract workers as members. Reforms to the appeal tribunal for Housing co-ops
- ✓ **New model created for by-laws**  
To ease the incorporation of new co-ops, simpler model by-laws were developed
- ✓ **Multi-Stakeholder Co-op Model**  
Introduction of a new model allowing different classes of members to govern the co-op
- ✓ **Cooperative Research Fund**  
Fund created to conduct research for the benefits of the co-operative community
- ✓ **Co-op Management Curriculum**  
Creation of a comprehensive and complete curriculum for co-operative groups in development
- ✓ **All 4 Each, a high school teaching module**  
Teaching material accredited by MB Education for Grade 8-10 teachers

- ✓ **Chair in Cooperative Enterprises**  
Creation of a Chair in Cooperative Enterprises at the Faculty of Business and Economics, University of Winnipeg
- ✓ **Housing mobilizer pilot project**  
Support for groups in the inner city exploring starting up a housing co-op – Hosted at SEED Winnipeg
- ✓ **Inventory of co-op resources**  
Database of resources available to co-ops such as grants or free technical assistance\*
- ✓ **Monthly Newsletter: Co-op Connections**  
The latest news of the co-op world is available in *Co-op Connections*\*
- ✓ **International Year of Cooperative (IYC) Marketing Campaign**  
Celebration of the IYC: promotional activities such as a Facebook contest  
A co-op video, a traveling exhibit, a commemorative book, workshops, and booth at many events (Brandon's Winter Fair, Capturing opportunity, Folk Fest, Co-op Day, etc.)
- ✓ **Youth Cooperative of Services Program**  
Summer program dedicated to youth aged 12 to 17 teaching them how to run a worker co-op, to promote its services, and to manage its finances
- ✓ **Cooperative Youth Program Coordinator**  
Support for co-op initiatives and program undertaken by youth. Position hosted at MCA
- ✓ **Student Cooperative Program**  
High School Program aiming to start a student cooperative
- ✓ **Mentorship program for cooperatives**  
Knowledge, skills and experience sharing between a newly incorporated and an experienced cooperative.