

TECHNATION^{CA}

TECHNATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL DIGITAL MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE AGENCY

ISSUED ON: APRIL 22, 2020
CLOSING DATE: MAY 11, 2020

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1. ABOUT TECHNATION (formerly the Information Technology Association of Canada)



TECHNATION^{CA}

- We are the industry-government nexus for technology prosperity in Canada.
- TECHNATION unites Canada's technology sector, governments and communities to enable technology prosperity from coast to coast to coast.

- We promote growth by connecting Canadian scale-ups with global tech leaders; engaging the global supply chain; **filling the technology talent pipeline**; and providing advocacy, professional development and networking opportunities across industry and government.
- We develop solutions to achieve both the national and global goals that Canada's \$184 Billion technology industry shares with governments of all levels.
- Technology prosperity that benefits everyone relies on a strong partnership between the private and public sectors.

ABOUT CAREER READY & FUTURE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



As part of the Government of Canada's Student Work Placement Program (SWPP), our wage subsidy program supports businesses by financing their decision to hire a student for a work-term placement. This in turn creates a rewarding opportunity for the student to apply their learning in real-world settings and puts them on a path to a bright career. We have successfully placed over 2,000 students with 1,000 employers across Canada, mainly in Ontario and Quebec.

Employers can earn either 50 per cent of wages (to a maximum of \$5,000) or 70 per cent of wages (to a maximum of \$7,000) if the student is from an underrepresented group; persons with disabilities, women in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) programs, recent immigrants (new to Canada in the last five years), students participating in a co-op placement for their first time, and Indigenous groups. There are three funding cycles in a year (winter, summer and fall) and you can apply multiple times per student. The process is managed from beginning to end at our online application portal.

Eligibility – For Employers

- A registered Canadian business, private or non-profit
- General liability insurance
- Ability to compensate the student for the committed term

- Not hiring to replace a displaced/laid off employee
- Not hiring an immediate family member
- Ability to provide a meaningful work experience and mentorship to a student which will also immerse them in technology as it relates to their studies or career interests
- Hiring “Net New” students; demonstrating increase in students hired than in previous years

Eligibility – For Students

- Enrolled at or returning to an accredited Canadian post-secondary institution
- Considered full time by that post-secondary institution
- STEM students primarily, however non-STEM students are also eligible; the program supports many hybrid roles too which blend Arts & Humanities with technology in work roles
- Canadian citizen, permanent resident or refugee with claimed status and work permit

The overall goal of TECHNATION's Future Workforce Development (formerly known as ITAC Talent) team and related initiatives is to proactively address the long-term talent and skills requirements of Canadian businesses, government and organizations. We are creating the skills for the digital economy and growing the talent pipeline. We inspire young people to choose and remain in technology careers, help transform education to accelerate the flow of talented people from all backgrounds into technology careers, support diversity in the industry, and help shape public policy to support the growth of talent.

TECHNATION has brought together Canada's leading employers to rally and catalyze industry to address and take responsibility for the significant shortfall in technology skills today which is predicted to increase over the next 10 years unless we set ourselves ambitious goals and work together.

Our vision is to ensure that Canada remains one of the most digitally enabled nations.

Our mission is to improve the talent pool, skills and diversity to ensure Canada has the 21st century skills and talent for growth of the digital economy.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The objective of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to procure the services of a qualified Digital Marketing & Communications Agency. It is preferred that the Agency has experiences in delivering projects for non-profit organizations whose program(s) operate at a national level. The Agency must also operate in Canada.

It is understood that the scope of the RFP may require the use of subcontractors to provide the services. The Agency is to provide details regarding services that will be subcontracted and/or relationships with third parties that will be used on a regular basis.

3. GENERAL PROJECT OVERVIEW

The TECHNATION Career Ready Program is seeking a consultancy for the development and implementation of a national outreach/awareness campaign to draw employers to use the wage subsidy it provides, and of the benefits in providing co-op/internship opportunities to Canadian students.

The agency will be required to plan a complete and robust integrated national marketing and communications campaign – with a metrics and results driven strategy to support Career Ready objectives.

Timing: June 2020 (or sooner) – October 2021 (approximately 15 months)

- Phase I (June 2020 – January 2021)
 - 3300 student placements program target
- Phase II (January 2021 – October 2021)
 - 5000 student placements program target

Career Ready Program Key Objectives:

- a. Provide wage subsidies to employers hiring students (co-op or internship)
- b. Fund approximately 9000 student placements between Summer of 2020 and Winter of 2022
- c. Increase the amount of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) experiences in the Canadian ecosystem
- d. Expand the tech talent workforce to provide for current and future skills shortages in 4 Priority Labour Market Areas (PLMAs)
 - i. Traditional tech/ICT roles (software engineering, IT services)
 - ii. Artificial Intelligence
 - iii. Cybersecurity
 - iv. Hybrid (Roles in digital workforce suited for Arts/Humanities/Business students; digital marketing, tech writing/recruiting, design/development, etc.)

Career Ready Program Target Audience:

- a. Primary Target – Employers (demand) who hire post-secondary students
- b. Secondary Target – Employers who might hire a post-secondary student, and where a subsidy is an incentive
- c. Tertiary Target – Eligible post-secondary students (supply) who are looking for employment; can be used as a competitive advantage

Outreach/Awareness Campaign Goals:

- a. Substantially increase the number of requests for wage subsidy we receive
- b. The overarching campaign should highlight TECHNATION as a national leader in Future Workforce Development in leading edge Tech Skills
- c. Promote WIL as a strategic method to scale business operations while developing Canada's future digital workforce, and Career Ready as a key vehicle which enables that
- d. Promote a cultural shift whereby post-secondary students do not have to rely on a traditional summer job in industries irrelevant to their field of studies – rather, it ought to be the norm in Canada to have a meaningful experiential learning opportunity - especially over summer (for coop students and non-coop)
- e. Enable target audiences to learn more, understand how to participate and comprehend the process (e.g. the process is simple, not intimidating or out of reach)
- f. Campaign presence nationally, with enhanced presence in British-Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec (bi-lingual necessary)
- g. New, interesting and beautiful marketing collateral to help us hit our placements targets while reducing volume of inquiries

4. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Please address the following questions in your proposal. Proposals that do not include this information will not be considered.

a. Business Profile

i. Positioning

1. What position has your Agency taken in the competitive digital environment?
2. Where do you see your Agency 5 years from now?

ii. Strengths

1. Describe your Agency's area strength. How is your firm different from others? Where do you out-perform your competitors? How do your Agency's core values play into this?
2. Is there anything special about your Agency's capabilities, experience, and expertise that TECHNATION should know about?
3. Describe up to three of your Agency's achievements relating to post-secondary students.

iii. History

1. When was the company founded? When was the office submitting this RFP opened?
2. List any subsequent mergers, acquisitions or name changes.
3. Who are the current owners of your firm?
4. What is the total number of employees for The Agency's entire organization as well as for the office submitting this RFP?
5. Provide a short, one-paragraph biography of your office's key executives and their current roles in your organization.

iv. Industry Associations

1. List any memberships in industry organizations, length of time as a member, involvement by any staff in such organizations, and any other pertinent information.

v. References

1. List 3 client references that TECHNATION may contact. Please provide names, titles, company names, addresses, telephone and email addresses.

b. Relevant Experience

- i. Provide one example of how your agency planned and executed a national campaign.
 1. Research conducted; insights obtained
 2. Overview of media objectives, strategy, competition, execution
 3. Use of word of mouth, social media or other initiative to generate excitement/buzz
 4. Overview of production requirements
 5. Results
- ii. Provide one example of how your agency delivered an innovative and forward-thinking business solution.
 1. Define business need
 2. Consumer insights identified
 3. Overview of the idea, execution and identify how it was innovative
 4. Use of word of mouth, social media or other initiative to generate excitement/buzz
 5. Results

c. Strategic Thinking, Media and Staff Plan

- i. How might your agency track or analyze trends in our employers who would use the Career Ready Program?

- ii. How does your agency provide robust, on trend media recommendations?
- iii. What processes are in place to ensure projects are delivered on strategy, on time, on budget?
- iv. Describe some of your agency's preferred ways to establish results / metrics driven campaigns to drive successful results. How do you use this data to inform future campaigns?
- v. Provide a high-level staffing plan that demonstrates your depth and breadth of resources and experience to manage the business requirements.
- vi. Regarding the current COVID-19 pandemic, how has this shaped your work in the marketing space?

d. Requirements

i. Account Management:

1. The Agency will provide a senior lead that manages our relationship and The Agency's team. They are responsible for the composition, performance of The Agency team in respect to quality of work, timeliness of delivery, ability to work within budget and ability to deliver the communications objectives set out in this RFP. The Agency's account manager will be responsible for writing and briefing the various Agency personnel as needed to fulfill TECHNATION's requirements.
2. Please provide agency document examples of:
 - a. Media brief and plan
 - b. Event brief and plan
 - c. Status update
 - d. Budget control report
 - e. Results dashboard
3. Monthly/quarterly campaign reports to ensure effectiveness and success; plan and ad-space buys should be adaptable throughout the length of the agreement.

ii. Communications Strategy:

1. The Agency will develop the digital communications strategy for the outreach/awareness campaign across all digital target touchpoints. The Agency will also be responsible for keeping TECHNATION aware of consumer trends and technology developments that have potential impacts on TECHNATION digital communications. The digital communications plan will take into consideration and work seamlessly with other non-digital communications.

iii. Media Planning

1. The Agency will develop or manage the development of the AI Pathways digital media plan across paid, owned and earned media with budget/timeline/approval milestones throughout the process following The Agency's brief as approved by TECHNATION. The Agency may recommend sub-contractors with TECHNATION knowledge and approval.

iv. Marketing Technology Recommendations

1. The Agency and TECHNATION will agree to digital marketing technologies to be used within the relationship. Capabilities, fees, staffing, training, usage and benefits of each tool will be reviewed and agreed upon by TECHNATION and Agency. The Agency will conduct a review of the existing technologies, propose new additions, replacements, map connections between technologies to organize and integrate all digital touchpoints as required.

v. Social Media

1. The Agency will develop TECHNATION's Career Ready Program social media plan and then deploy it in partnership with TECHNATION's in-house Communications team. The Agency will use social media platforms and tools to extend and measure the distribution of TECHNATION's communications and to alert TECHNATION to positive and problematic messages and developments. The Agency may be required to recruit and manage online influencers, bloggers, writers, editors, publishers and publications.

vi. Results Analysis

1. The Agency will collect data across all digital touchpoints to aggregate into a report(s) that ensures all creative and media

communications are working properly, contracts are being honoured and problems/opportunities are followed up on. The Agency in collaboration with TECHNATION, and TECHNATION's other partners (if applicable), will create a tagging methodology for digital platforms/sites and deliver/manage all tags for the purposes of gathering performance information. The report will be presented to TECHNATION on a periodic basis including a post-evaluation of year one activities.

2. Overall ability to address and respond to our needs.
3. Provision of additional remarks on areas we might not have outlined or explored which might be of value, along with associated costs of these “bells and whistles.” If none, rationale why i.e. The needs we have outlined are reasonable and comprehensive.

5. BUDGET, SCHEDULE AND SCORING

BUDGET			
Phase I	7 months (June 2020 – January 2021)	\$300,000.00 maximum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaign design • Campaign launch • Creation of new marketing collateral • Program target 3300 student placements • Main presence in Ontario, Quebec and British-Columbia
Phase II	10 months (January 2021 – October 2021)	Commensurate with strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and analyze data to make changes • Expand upon Phase I • Refresh and iterate • Increase scope; expand campaign presence to prairie and Atlantic regions

Requirements (not limited to):

- a) Review of existing website architecture, sub-page development and SEO
- b) A recommendation for Career Ready Program sub-brand hierarchy; we are very cautious not to create confusion or divert from TECHNATION
- c) Enable a fully optimized information hub for SEO, SEM, link building, content marketing and social media
- d) Strategic campaign plan for program awareness
- e) Media and media planning – SEM, social, etc.

- f) Purchase and management of ad space (digital and physical)
- g) Development of the overall campaign creative look and feel; should feel holistic and function with/incorporate current (new) TECHNATION branding guidelines
- h) Consultation on how to integrate with concurrent roll-out of new organizational branding guidelines (Information Technology Association of Canada is now TECHNATION Canada), including enhancing our new website and Career Ready section
- i) Integration with other TECHNATION Future Workforce Development Program program/platform marketing where possible
- j) Short promotional video/commercial, with multiple purposes and lengths
- k) Overall focus on the Demand (employers), with rationale provided if tactics are focused on the Supply (students)
- l) Mini campaign where the targets are employers in the northern territories
- m) Mini campaign where the targets are indigenous-owned businesses
- n) Strategic consultation with/for the Program Manager to inform and shape more effective outreach and business development activities
- o) Optimized content development and copy/creative messaging (boilerplates, slogans, taglines, etc.)
- p) Data collection and increased subscriptions
- q) Community/public relations and communications strategies, including social and sharing kits which can be used in-house or sent to partners
- r) New collateral including but not limited to:
 - a. Flow charts
 - b. Info graphics
 - c. Toolkits/guides/resources
 - d. Program postcards/brochures/flyers
 - e. Digital graphics, logo refresh with motion graphic option (.gif)
- s) Campaign tracking and measurement
- t) Other recommendations per your experience
- u) All product made available in both official languages

Schedule:

All submissions are to be received by 5:00PM EST on May 11th, 2020.

- I. Please include a budget outlining costs for the various elements of the project and identification of any ongoing costs.
- II. Electronic copies to be emailed to the TECHNATION Primary and Secondary contacts noted below.

Date	Activity
RFP Published	April 22 nd
Intention to bid	April 30 th at 5:00PM EST
Cut off for questions	May 4 th at 5:00PM EST
Responses sent	May 6 th
Closing Date, proposals due	May 11th at 5:00PM EST

Notification to finalists	May 15 th
Presentations may be conducted	May 21 st – 25 th
Selection notification	May 27 th
Project start date	June 3 rd

Scoring (weight):

Technical Proposal	60%
Business Profile	5%
Relevant Experience	15%
Strategic Thinking, Media and Staffing Plan	20%
Requirements	20%
Presentation Interview (if selected to present)	40%
Total	100%

6. TECHNATION CONTACT AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Primary contact:

Brett Hotas, Senior Program Manager

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Secondary contact:

Janet Gibson Eichner, Director of Communications

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Staff currently working remotely due to COVID-19