

Procuring social marketing services

Quick reference guide

This quick reference guide can also be downloaded at www.thensmc.com.

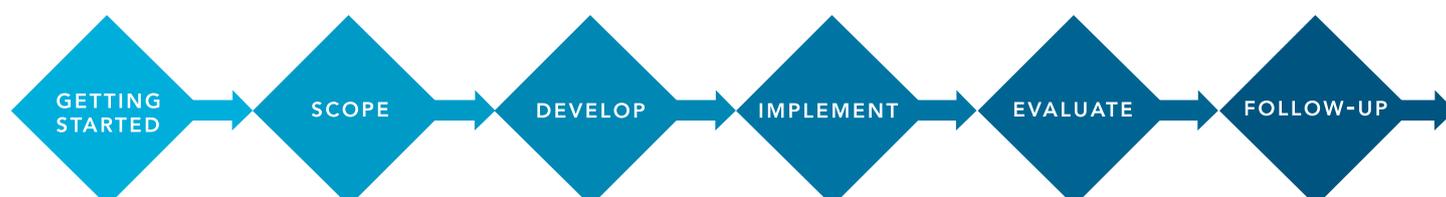
What is social marketing?

Social marketing is the systematic application of marketing, alongside other concepts and techniques, to achieve specific behavioural goals for a social good. A key feature is an emphasis on gaining a deep understanding of the target audience, and using this insight to effect a change in behaviour, not just in attitude. This focus on behaviour is at the core of the social marketing process.

The social marketing benchmark criteria are eight key elements that are included in successful social marketing interventions.

1. **Customer orientation**
2. **Clear focus on behaviour**
3. **Informed by behavioural theory**
4. **Insight into what moves and motivates the target audience**
5. **Exchange** – increases benefits of, and reduce barriers to the desired behaviour
6. **Competition** – considers external and internal influences on people's time, attention and inclination to act
7. **Segmentation** – targets specific audience groups
8. **Methods mix** – uses information, communication, design, services and controls

The six stages of a social marketing intervention



The NSMC recommends that an initial scoping phase is commissioned first. The results of this phase should be thoroughly analysed before any decision about how to proceed is made.

What to consider before procurement

The first stage of the procurement process is to define your objectives. There are steps to take before starting the intervention. These include:

- Deciding the timeframe and securing adequate resources for each stage of the intervention
- Confirming if the whole intervention is to be procured, or just one stage
- Ensuring the intervention reflects your organisation's priorities, and identifying and engaging with key stakeholders
- Verifying if ethics approval is required
- Reviewing what similar interventions have been done elsewhere

Remember:

You don't have to commission one company to carry out the entire intervention. It is prudent to look for specialist agencies and commission them individually. The NSMC recommends that budgets are also allocated in stages.

The procurement process

1. Defining your objectives

What are you trying to achieve and with who?
How can you achieve it and by when?

2. Writing the tender brief

This should include:

- Background context and rationale for the intervention
- A clear statement of the aims and objectives
- Information on the budget
- Intervention timescale, contract period, start date and end date

A tender brief template can be downloaded at www.thensmc.com.

3. Shortlisting potential suppliers

Create a shortlist of companies to invite to pitch from those who responded to the tender.

The selected companies should:

- Have sound organisational structure and financial capability
- Have experience and evidence of delivering social marketing projects
- Have the same, or a better, understanding of social marketing as your organisation
- Meet the reporting procedures required, and the format and timeline of the tender process

A checklist can be downloaded at www.thensmc.com.

4. Organising and assessing the pitch meeting

- Provide the relevant information for the agencies, arrange the pitch meeting and put systems in place to debrief the candidates
- Consider what questions can be asked at the pitch meeting to find the information required to choose the right agency

- Assess the pitch systematically according to a set of predefined criteria

A checklist can be downloaded at www.thensmc.com.

5. Managing the agency

Once the selection has been made and work begins, it will be necessary to monitor and manage the agency throughout the contract period.

- Communication is key. Ensure the agency has the information and guidance required to progress the intervention
- Confirm format and frequency of the progress reports
- Decide who will be the point of contact with the agency, and how management of the intervention will be led and communicated internally
- Utilise the agency's expertise, but ensure that the end product fits with your organisation's values and culture
- Effective communication should solve any problems that may arise. However, if the contract needs to be terminated early, issues such as compensation and intellectual property will need to be examined

Conclusion

The procurement of social marketing services can be a cost-effective way to bring specialist knowledge to public or third sector organisations. However, the commitment and resources must be available to apply comprehensive and systematic management of the selection and delivery process.