



# Invitation to Tender:

Communications Support Partner for School Food Matters and Guy's and St Thomas' Charity's childhood obesity project in Southwark and Lambeth schools

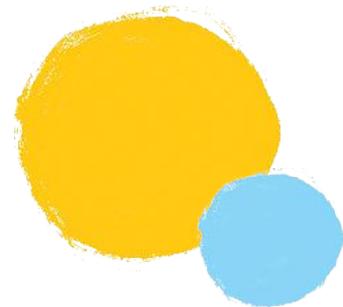


# About the Charity

Guy's and St Thomas' Charity is an independent, urban health foundation.

We work to improve people's health and reduce health inequalities in our boroughs. We set impact goals for our long-term health programmes and articulate how we expect to see change over time. We then use data, evidence and lived experience to help us target our activities, monitor progress and learn what works. We develop insights into diverse, urban settings which are relevant for other inner-city places in the UK and abroad.

By working at scales from local to international, and with a diverse set of partners, we take a whole-systems approach and aim to demonstrate the impact that is possible in a local place by working with people, institutions and physical spaces that make up a system and a community.





# Overview

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Guy's and St Thomas' Charity (GSTC) are looking to appoint a communications specialist for an ambitious and exciting project in their childhood obesity (CO) portfolio, which is being delivered by partner School Food Matters (SFM). SFM will work across c.80 primary and secondary schools in Lambeth and Southwark located in areas of high childhood obesity over the next five years. The aim of the project is to create sustained changes to school food environments, so that healthy food options are prioritised throughout the school day.

The communications partner will be required to manage content gathering (including potential for specific user generated content by young people), production and creative support throughout the course of the project. GSTC and SFM plan to use the communications outputs to support local and national influencing work to call for improvements to school food which can support children's health.

We expect the communications support partner to work with us on a long-term basis for the full five years. We are expecting the resource requirements to vary year on year as influencing will be dependent on external factors like the policy landscape, and planned campaigns in the sector.

## About School Food Matters (SFM)

SFM is a registered charity with a mission to ensure that every child enjoys fresh, sustainable food at school and understands where their food comes from. SFM campaigns for better school meals and food education for all, to improve children's health and happiness. This project is focused on the provision of healthier school food and associated supportive activity.

SFM regularly delivers programmes in London schools and campaigns for policy changes at a national level to improve school food. SFM partners with over a hundred schools each year and uses its experience and insights to inform policy and develop national thinking on school food provision. The charity convenes broader school food campaigning activity with a coalition of partner organisations, including Sustain, The Soil Association and The Food Foundation.

## About the Charity and our childhood obesity programme

GSTC was established to improve health in Lambeth and Southwark over five centuries ago. Today, we use our ability to take a long-term perspective and bear risk to explore lasting solutions to some of the most difficult health issues.

We have a ten-year programme aiming to [reduce childhood obesity](#) in the London boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark. The mission of the programme is to close the 'childhood obesity inequality gap' between the most and least affluent areas in the boroughs. In practice this means working to improve food environments in the spaces that children and families spend their time, increasing access to and incentivising healthy food options. Because of our programme mission, this work is focused in the borough areas with lower average incomes.

This project sits within the School strand of our CO programme. Schools are a critical environment for our programme, with a high degree of influence over the food children eat throughout the day in their settings. In general, the food on offer in local primary and secondary schools at breakfast, lunchtime and after school is of varying nutritional content, and healthy options are often not as prominent as they could be.

# The project

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SFM has already been working with GSTC on an 18-month pilot project with two primary schools and one secondary school in Southwark. The project has involved supporting staff and pupils to improve the healthiness of the food provided in after-school clubs and working with the kitchen teams to test changes to the way food is procured and served at lunchtime.

The partnership with SFM is now moving into a new phase, building on the insight and lessons learned from this work, to set up new strands of work at scale across more than 80 local schools. The high-level outcome sought from the second phase of the project is an improvement in the healthiness of food environments of participating schools; in other words, measurable changes being implemented that will lead to children eating fewer excess calories in school, without compromising their overall nutrition.

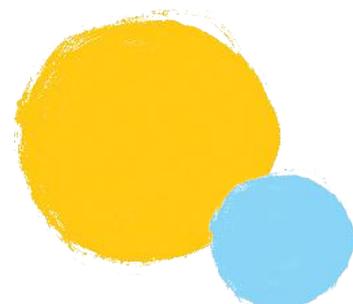
The programme will primarily focus on improving food policies and provision of food outside of lunchtime. The key interim outcomes for this project are as follows:

- Increased compliance with School Food Standards in schools in the Lambeth and Southwark childhood obesity corridor
- Healthier food in the correct portion sizes is being served throughout the school day (breakfast, after school, snack times etc.)
- Children eating healthier/more nutritious food throughout the school and less unhealthy food available in school throughout the week

SFM will work with schools, local authorities and providers to improve the healthiness of the food on offer in Lambeth and Southwark schools, specifically by implementing sustainable changes to breakfast clubs, after school club food provision, and food policies more broadly (water-only initiatives, healthy desserts, meat free days, etc).

We expect the communications partner to assist SFM and the evaluation partner to translate the evidence the project gathers into outputs aimed at influencing others to act. This will likely include targeting policy makers at a national level who can influence school food provision as well as supporting SFM and their partners to call for the monitoring of existing regulation and guidelines. Outputs will vary, for example long-form reports may be required, as well as digital content or brief statements to promote effective messaging.

Further information on the project can be found in Appendix A (Draft project Theory of Change), which will be further refined with the evaluation partner when appointed. Appendix B (draft audience mapping framework), is a confidential document that will be available upon request from SFM for those intending on bidding for this work.



# Communications brief

**We are looking for a communications partner to work alongside SFM and GSTC on this exciting project. We aim to partner with a team who can manage content gathering, production and creative support throughout the course of the multi-year project.**

We anticipate that the communications for a project of this scale and nature will include general content gathering over the course of key project stages as well as potential for specific user generated content by young people.

The appointed partner will be expected to support on developing a brand for this project including a great name, visual identity and key messages.

The communications and content produced will need to align to a messaging framework that GSTC have developed with the Frameworks Institute. This is something we can support partners with initially, though they will be responsible for appropriate framing over the course of the project.

Types of content will depend on objective, audience and evaluation insights, but generally we are flexible and looking for a partner who can offer innovative ideas. We envisage a variety of outputs – videos, articles, Q&As, infographics, white papers, case studies – but are looking for a partner who will guide our decision making and produce engaging, influential content.

We expect the communications assets produced to draw out key insights from the project in order to influence key audiences. We expect the communications partner, together with the SFM team and evaluator to identify routes through which this work would potentially have influence and to keep a watching brief on who the key audiences are for this work as the project runs.

We would expect our communications partner to alert SFM to appropriate media and influencing opportunities which we would use to share insights and influence identified key audiences.



### Key considerations:

- Years two and three are likely to be priority for project activity taking place in schools and changes being tested and rolled out.
- We expect that capturing the achievements of food policy changes in schools /at local authority level will be crucial for driving impact beyond Lambeth and Southwark.
- Local schools are located in fairly close proximity to each other. Key times of day for content gathering in schools will include: breakfast, break times, lunchtime and after-school.

For context, the key areas the external evaluator will focus on are:

- Changes to the food and drink offering at supported schools and associated health benefits for pupils
- Changes made by food providers, implications for schools they serve and associated health benefits for pupils
- The impact of food changes in breakfast clubs, after school clubs and policies on: compliance to school food standards; school budgets; educational attainment, food waste
- Policy changes resulting from SFM's lobbying efforts, implications for schools and associated health benefits for pupils
- The effectiveness of strategies aimed at changing the food and drink offer to make it more healthy weight promoting
- Lessons learnt from delivering different kinds of interventions in different school settings

We are seeking a communications approach that delivers the objectives and areas of focus set out in the brief. We are expecting to see the following elements from the team:

- **An agile approach:** the communications team will need to be flexible and adaptable, and work closely and collaboratively with the key partners, including schools.
- **Reaching our key audiences:** the assets produced need to be compelling and of a high standard to reach key external audiences identified by the partners. This is a very important element of the brief and we will be looking for teams who are skilled at communicating insights to a range of different audiences.
- **Balancing rigour with practicality:** the communications team need to balance the need to create persuasive, insightful outputs within the time and resource constraints of the project.
- **A mixed-methods approach:** we expect this will require a mixture of content produced by the communications partner and content produced by schools and other stakeholders.
- **Creative outputs:** we're looking for a communications partner who can think outside of the box and create visually striking and well-written outputs, making use of up-to-date tools and technology in their work.
- **User focus:** we expect the bidders to consider how well the communications approach fits with the needs of key stakeholders. E.g. the capacity and capability requirements of the schools involved.
- **Prioritising influence:** it's important that whoever we partner with is alive to the policy landscape, not only producing content that helps us achieve national policy change, but also engaging with other individuals/organisations who are working in the same space. We would like the pitch to explain how the comms team might collaborate with others in the sector to drive lasting change in this area.

# Key timescale and deliverables

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We are looking for a communications agency to start work in May/June 2020 and work with us for the full project timeframe. SFM is currently in set-up phase for the project, so the projected end date is November 2024. There will be a review point at the end of the first three years (October 2022) where a decision will be made on the remaining two years of the project and therefore the accompanying communications work likely to be required.

Alongside other innovative content, we would like to see the following formal deliverables from the communications work:

- A detailed communications plan (by end of August 2020)
- We are flexible about the types of output created for this project, but expect to see at least one digital output per year and a final output in October 2024 to summarise overall achievements of the comms work

The communications partner will need to work closely with the team at SFM, the communications team at GSTC and the evaluation partner throughout the project. The reporting timescales are subject to change given the length of time of the project. Although there is a requirement for the more formal deliverables outlined above, it will be very important that the communication partner is flexible and agile enough to provide real time learning and insights to inform the project. We would like to see this reflected in bidders' approach and costs.

## Project management arrangements

We expect to see appropriate project management arrangements in place to ensure that the project is delivered on time, to budget and to meet our requirements. It is expected that the communications partner will provide quarterly updates to SFM and attend regular meetings with SFM and GSTC (minimum twice a year).

## Budget

The total budget available for communications support for the full five years is **up to £95,000 inclusive of VAT** and all expenses.

# Submission details

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If you are interested in this evaluation, please submit a proposal to Dela Foster at [delafoster@schoolfoodmatters.org](mailto:delafoster@schoolfoodmatters.org) by **9am Thursday 16 April 2020**. Your proposal should be succinct (no more than six pages) and should include:

- Details of the relevant experience, skills and knowledge of your team – we will be looking for teams with experience of undertaking other similar communications pieces;
- Your understanding of the requirements of the brief;
- Your proposed approach and example outputs – we will be looking for proposals that are creative and focused on our key objectives;
- Your project management and quality assurance arrangements;
- An overview for the timeline of your work;
- A detailed breakdown.

Shortlisting will take place w/c Monday 20 April and **interviews will be held on Friday 1 May and Wednesday 6 May 2020**.

## Clarification questions

Any clarification questions on the brief should be emailed to Dela Foster at [delafoster@schoolfoodmatters.org](mailto:delafoster@schoolfoodmatters.org) by Friday 20 March 2020.



