



## Request for Proposals

# Strategic Communications Planning and Support

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**April 10, 2025, at 9 a.m. A.T.**  
RFP Release Date

**April 25, 2025, at 2 p.m. A.T.**  
Proposal Due Date

## Contact

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## 1. Introduction

The [Building to Zero Exchange](#) (BTZx) is a growing coalition of building sector stakeholders committed to growing the number of net-zero buildings in Nova Scotia. This collaborative, member-driven organization is a Centre of Excellence, bringing together industry, government and others with the goal of retrofitting and creating high-performance buildings efficiently and at a large scale.

After launching in late 2023 and establishing an operational foundation, BTZx now requires a strategic communications and engagement framework, updated and expanded brand kit (including assets and guidelines and design templates), a social media strategy and calendar, and content strategy for our recently redeveloped website. This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks qualified and experienced consultant(s) to collaborate with the organization in carrying out this work.

[Net Zero Atlantic](#) (NZA), an independent energy research organization, serves as the Secretariat for BTZx. This project is supported by funding provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Energy and Natural Resources Canada.

## 2. Context

BTZx is evolving rapidly as a brand with high-profile projects underway, audiences unfamiliar with our type of organization, and no dedicated communications staff. The strategic communications planning and support being considered for the organization must be suitable for a small team in the short term and scalable to reflect our speed of growth and changing external conditions.

BTZx is also seeking to find efficient and effective methods for showcasing leadership and inspiring local innovation within our membership, which is currently 120 member organizations. BTZx will continue to grow quickly and will require the means to promote collaboration, equity, and workforce opportunities in the net-zero transition.

### *Our Commitment*

BTZx is dedicated to bringing together diverse voices and growing capacity across the building sector through research, events, resource development, skills training and communication.

### *Our Vision*

Ultimately, we want BTZx to serve as a rallying point for stakeholders from across the full spectrum of the building ecosystem. We'll come together as collective champions for the innovation of policy, business and regulatory actions necessary to develop Nova Scotia's net-zero transition within the building sector.



As BTZx continues to become more established, it's expected that:

- building sector stakeholders **will choose to adopt** more net-zero solutions for new and existing buildings,
- provincial and municipal governments **will recognize and leverage** their policy and regulatory authority to **mobilize net-zero buildings** as a vehicle for job creation, growth of the economy, and climate and sustainability action,
- the organization will become an **inclusive voice** advocating for consensus on innovative policies and a net-zero skilled workforce,
- there will be **new examples of green building excellence** as well as new and deeper collaborations and partnerships leading to technical advances, deployment strategies, leveraged financing, and additional investments.

### *Themes*

BTZx's efforts focus on advancing within the following three theme areas:

#### Building Capacity

Fostering collaboration to **identify industry needs and gaps** in training, research or other necessary resources that will support and grow the sector.

#### Enabling Conditions

**Supporting the engagement** of industry in the development, adoption, and acceleration of policies and codes that advance the net-zero transition.

#### Accelerating Action

Collaborating with industry, government, academia, and others to **test ideas and projects** that can be scaled for impact.

### **3. Objective**

BTZx is seeking the services of a third-party consultant (the Proponent) with a proven track record in strategic communication planning and support. The selected Proponent will be responsible for developing tailored, stakeholder-focused communication templates, overseeing social media strategy, brand build out, and website editorial planning, and for providing support during digital campaigns and promotional initiatives. Additionally, the Proponent will assist in sub-brand designs for key projects, creating graphic templates in Canva, and formulating strategic communication frameworks to enhance BTZx's outreach and stakeholder engagement efforts.

The successful Proponent will work with the BTZx team to ensure clarity of purpose and timing of service provision.

#### 4. Scope of Work

For this program, four primary categories of deliverables have been identified, but additional tasks may be required as work advances:

Task	Task Title	Task Description
1.	<b>Communications Strategy and Implementation Plan</b>	<p>Create a <b>three-year</b> communications and engagement strategy and implementation plan for BTZx with the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Goals, Objectives, and Target Audiences</b> – Clearly defined communication goals, key objectives, and an in-depth analysis of stakeholder groups and target audiences to ensure effective engagement.</li> <li>• <b>Key Messaging and Talking Points</b> – Development of core messages customized for different audiences, incorporating relevant data, statistics, and supporting evidence where available.</li> <li>• <b>Recommended Communication Strategies</b> – Strategic recommendations to improve information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and brand awareness across various communication channels.</li> <li>• <b>Implementation Plan</b> – A detailed roadmap outlining roles, responsibilities, key deliverables, and a timeline to ensure seamless implementation.</li> <li>• <b>Example Content Development</b> – Creation of sample materials, including an elevator pitch, proposed website content, draft social media posts, press releases, and other promotional materials to support campaign initiatives.</li> <li>• <b>Branding and Visual Identity Alignment</b> – Ensuring consistency in branding and messaging across all communication materials, including designing templates, refining brand guidelines.</li> <li>• <b>Monitoring and Evaluation Metrics</b> – Development of key performance indicators (KPIs) and tracking mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of the communication strategy and make data-driven improvements.</li> </ul>

Task	Task Title	Task Description
2.	<b>Stakeholder Engagement Strategy and Implementation Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stakeholder Engagement Plan</b> – The strategy must identify key stakeholders, assess risks associated with lack of buy-in, and provide effective engagement mechanisms. Key responsibilities are:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Stakeholder Identification:</b> Mapping key internal and external stakeholders, including executive leadership, project teams, regulatory agencies, suppliers, customers, and community groups.</li> <li>○ <b>Risk Assessment:</b> Evaluating the potential risks of non-engagement and categorizing them by impact level (high, medium, low).</li> <li>○ <b>Engagement Strategies:</b> Developing communication channels, feedback loops, and preparing tailored comms to each stakeholder group.</li> <li>○ <b>Risk Mitigation Plan:</b> Implementing proactive and responsive risk management approaches, including scenario planning, crisis communication, and continuous improvement mechanisms.</li> <li>○ <b>Implementation &amp; Monitoring:</b> Establishing KPIs, tracking stakeholder engagement effectiveness, and ensuring iterative improvements in engagement tactics.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Task	Task Title	Task Description
3.	<b>Brand guidelines, Visual assets, and Custom Canva templates</b>	<p>Building off the current logo, work on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Brand Guidelines Development</b> – Expanding the branding and visual identity standards, including typography, colour palettes, brand elements, and design principles to maintain brand consistency across all materials.</li> <li>• <b>Brand Elevation &amp; Visual Identity</b> – Strengthening BTZx’s brand presence by providing strategic recommendations on branding, visual identity, and best practices for digital and print materials.</li> <li>• <b>Digital Assets &amp; Photography Management</b> – Curating and organizing high-quality digital assets, including imagery, icons, and graphic elements, along with best practices for photography selection and usage.</li> <li>• <b>Custom Design Templates</b> – Creating branded, user-friendly design templates for various communication needs, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social media graphics</li> <li>○ Website banners and content</li> <li>○ Presentation decks</li> <li>○ Reports and documents</li> <li>○ Letterheads and business materials</li> <li>○ Event and promotional materials</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Customizable Canva Templates</b> – Developing editable Canva templates that allow the BTZx team to easily create visually cohesive content while maintaining brand consistency.</li> </ul>

Task	Task Title	Task Description
4.	<b>Social media strategy, calendar, tool and support</b>	<p>Create a strategy to guide BTZx’s social media presence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Social Media Strategy Development</b> – Creating a strategic roadmap to guide BTZx’s social media presence, including audience segmentation, content themes, engagement tactics, and best practices for optimizing reach and impact.</li> <li>• <b>Social Media Management Tools</b> – Recommending and coordinating the implementation of a scheduling and monitoring tool (e.g., Hootsuite, Buffer, Sprout Social, or an alternative) for efficient content planning, performance tracking, and community engagement across platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.</li> <li>• <b>Content Calendar &amp; Draft Posts</b> – Developing a structured three-month social media content calendar with draft posts, covering key messaging, hashtags, and visuals aligned with BTZx’s brand and communication goals.</li> <li>• <b>Content Scheduling &amp; Posting</b> – Provide support in content scheduling and publishing after approval, ensuring posts are optimized for timing, platform algorithms, and audience engagement.</li> <li>• <b>LinkedIn Channel Management</b> – Overseeing BTZx’s LinkedIn presence under the direction of the BTZx Director, ensuring a minimum posting frequency of one post every two days. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Drafting compelling post copy tailored to LinkedIn’s professional audience</li> <li>○ Designing visually appealing graphics using Canva or another professional design tool</li> <li>○ Engaging with the LinkedIn community by responding to comments, sharing relevant industry content, and fostering discussions</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Performance Monitoring &amp; Optimization</b> – Tracking and analyzing key metrics such as engagement rates, audience growth, and content performance, providing insights and recommendations for continuous improvement.</li> <li>• <b>Trend Analysis &amp; Adaptation</b> – Staying up to date with the latest social media trends, algorithm changes, and emerging best practices to ensure BTZx remains at the forefront of digital engagement.</li> </ul>

Task	Task Title	Task Description
5.	<b>Website Strategy &amp; Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Content Strategy &amp; Plan</b>– Creating a structured content plan, including key milestones, responsibilities, and a timeline for keeping the website content relevant and fresh.</li> <li>• <b>Search Engine Optimization (SEO) &amp; Metadata Strategy</b> – Ensuring the website is optimized for search engines by improving metadata, headings, keyword strategies, and implementing best practices for page speed and mobile performance.</li> </ul>

## 5. Timeline

The following timeline provides an overview of the anticipated schedule for this project:

Item	Date
<b>RFP Release Date</b>	April 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2025, at 9:00am AT
<b>RFP Q&amp;A Close Date</b>	April 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2025, at 2:00pm AT
<b>Proposal Due Date</b>	April 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2025, at 2:00pm AT
<b>Project Award date</b>	May 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
<b>Project Kickoff</b>	Week of May 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2025
<b>Project End Date</b>	November 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2025





## 6. Project Funding

Funding available for this project is capped at a maximum of \$39,000 CAD, excluding applicable taxes. Proposals that exceed this amount will not be considered. Note that proposals will be rated first in terms of experience/team/work plan and second in terms of value. Hourly or daily rates should be included within the submission.

## 7. Proponent Qualifications

The successful Proponent must demonstrate significant communications knowledge and experience. Experience in planning and managing social media for a growing organization is required, as is background in web development, branding and content creation. Ideally, the successful applicant will have experience in communicating construction and energy-related topics.

## 8. Proposal Requirements

- The proposal should be concisely worded with clearly described objectives, methods, budget, schedule, and deliverables. The proposal should include a work plan outlining how all the tasks will be approached. The work plan should not exceed 10 pages, excluding appendices, title page and cover letter. All components should be assembled into and submitted as a single PDF document.
- The proposal should include a description of the Proponent's organization and its relevant experience with similar projects. The Proponent must also describe the relevant work experience of the key staff members assigned to this project and their roles with the project. This material should be summarized in the body of the proposal and can be presented in more detail, if needed, in an appendix.
- The Proponent should provide a detailed budget including project tasks, team member's daily or hourly rates, and their intended number of days/hours to work on each project component. The detailed budget should provide a breakdown of costs by task and a separate line item for any applicable taxes.
- The proposal should be submitted as a single electronic document. Please ensure the proposal or cover letter is signed by an officer or equivalent with authority to bind the Proponent to the statements made in the proposal.
- The electronic copy should be uploaded in PDF format to the Net Zero Atlantic-FTP site available [here](#).



## 9. Questions and Clarifications

The Building to Zero Exchange will accept content-related questions from interested applicants on an ongoing basis until April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2 p.m. AT. Please email Lara Ryan, Senior Consultant, Building to Zero Exchange, at [lryan@buildingtozero.ca](mailto:lryan@buildingtozero.ca) with any questions prior to this date. Additionally, a Q&A page will be available on the Net Zero Atlantic [website](#). The names and organizations of those submitting questions will remain anonymous – only the question and the Building to Zero Exchange’s response will be posted. The Q&A page will only be available if content-related questions have been received.

## 10. Evaluation

This project will be administered through the Building to Zero Exchange. The rubric below demonstrates the weighting associated with each proposal component. Proposals will be quantitatively evaluated using the criteria below. Proponents should demonstrate good value for money but note that the lowest cost will not necessarily be selected.

Factor	Weight
<b>Experience and Knowledge:</b> Qualifications, experience, and capabilities of the company and delivery team; demonstration of knowledge relevant to this project as outlined in Section 7: Proponent Qualifications.	40%
<b>Project Plan, Approach and Methodology:</b> Proponent demonstrates an understanding of the project service requirements and has outlined a comprehensive and effective work plan. Proposal describes the objectives, methodology, milestones, and deliverables, and a sound approach in undertaking this project. Communication format and frequency between the Proponent and the BTZx Team are clearly described. Proponent describes an achievable schedule and demonstrates the ability to complete the work on or before the desired completion date.	40%
<b>Proposal Presentation and Organization:</b> The proposal includes all RFP requirements and tasks, demonstrates attention to clarity, grammar, presentation, and comprehensibility.	10%
<b>Value:</b> The project offers good value for the proposed budget. The budget is clear, convincing, and well-described.	10%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Please Note: BTZx reserves the right to fully award, partially award or not award this project.*