



**Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) Project
Request for Proposals**

Capital Campaign Communications,
Marketing and Design Consultancy

Capital Campaign Design Firm RFP Issued

April 28, 2022

Deadline for Proponent Questions

May 9, 2022

Closing Time & Date - Submission Deadline 14:00 MST on May 16, 2022



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Arts Commons
205 - 8 Avenue SE Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2G 0K9

Registered Charitable Number
11882 3269 RR0001

artscommons.ca

RFP Schedule

Capital Campaign Design Firm RFP Issued	April 28, 2022
Deadline for Proponent Questions	May 9, 2022
Closing Date & Time - Submission Deadline	May 16, 2022
	14:00 MST (Mountain Standard Time)
Interview Invitations Issued to Short-listed Proponents	May 18, 2022
Review Process and Interview Proponents	May 24 - 26, 2022
Select Capital Campaign Design Firm	May 30, 2022

All proponents must ensure that they are available to attend an interview with Arts Commons Selection Committee in an online forum as determined by Arts Commons on either May 24, 25, or 26, 2022. Alternate dates are almost certainly not available, and Arts Commons has no obligation to make them available.

RFP Submission Contact

Proposals should be addressed to Arts Commons and must be received electronically at the e-mail address below on or before the closing date and time. Proposals submitted after the closing time will be rejected.

**Capital Campaign Design Firm for
Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) Project**

Attn: Kaija Dirkson

Vice President Brand and Audience Development
Arts Commons

kdirkson@artscommons.ca

Proposals shall be in PDF format only and submitted by electronic transmission to the email address noted above.

Proposals submitted by facsimile or mail will not be accepted.

It shall be the proponent's responsibility to notify Arts Commons requesting clarification if the proponent finds discrepancies in, or omissions from, the RFP document or if their intent or meaning appear unclear or ambiguous. All inquiries related to this RFP will only be accepted via e-mail before 14:00 MST (Mountain Standard Time) on May 9, 2022, to the person named above.

Proposals and supporting documentation will become the property of Arts Commons and will not be returned. Arts Commons has the right to copy the materials for evaluation and informational purposes.

Issuance of this RFP does not commit Arts Commons to award a contract or to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of proposals responding to the RFP. Arts Commons reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, re-advertise, and/or select a candidate outside of the RFP process.

Introduction - Arts Commons

As Western Canada's largest arts centre, Arts Commons occupies a full city block in the heart of Calgary's Cultural District in the downtown core. It is home to the 1,797-seat Jack Singer Concert Hall and five theatres, including the 750-seat Max Bell Theatre, the 412-seat Martha Cohen Theatre, the 190-seat Big Secret Theatre, the 185-seat flexible Engineered Air Theatre, and the 50-seat black box Motel Theatre, as well as additional event and education spaces. Arts Commons also houses costume and set construction shops, administrative offices, meeting rooms, a café, and a centralized box office.

Arts Commons hosts more than 1,800 performances each year, including live theatre, concerts, dance productions, readings, public forums, art exhibits, and more, all open to the public. In addition to Arts Commons Presents, resident companies include Alberta Theatre Projects, Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, Downstage, One Yellow Rabbit, and Theatre Calgary, all of which create, perform, and present a wide range of award-winning and highly acclaimed theatrical events and concerts. While similar sized facilities host about 414 events each year, pre-pandemic, Arts Commons hosted 844 in its six major venues, as well as activities in more unconventional spaces throughout the building.

Arts Commons has been a key contributor to the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual life and well-being of Calgarians and visitors since its founding in 1985. It typically serves more than 400,000 patrons at ticketed events and more than 150,000 people annually at free events and gatherings. The existing facility has been enormously successful, consistently working far beyond industry standards. However, it is utilized beyond the intended design to address the needs of its resident companies and the community it serves.

Introduction - ACT

Following extensive ongoing collaborations, a shared vision for an expanded facility and campus was created with input from all Arts Commons resident companies, advocates, and other stakeholders. The \$450 million Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) project is a collaboration with the City of Calgary and the Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC) that will create a civic arts centre that is more accessible, vibrant, and inclusive and will act as an integral community resource. Executed in two phases, ACT will both expand capacity in an adjoining new building and renew the existing facility, bringing it up to today's standards.

The ACT project has been identified as a pivotal project for downtown Calgary's revitalization. On April 26, 2021, ACT reached a monumental milestone by reaching its fundraising goal of \$240 million for Phase 1 – the expansion of Arts Commons – with an \$80 million dollar investment made by the City of Calgary through Calgary's Greater Downtown Plan. This was the greatest allocation of funds within its \$200 million initial investment budget, recognizing ACT as a catalyst for downtown redevelopment and vibrancy.

Phase One of ACT is expected to break ground on the fully funded Phase One expansion in 2024 and will add versatile, purpose-built venues to meet growing market demands and community aspirations. It will also add over 35 percent more additional seating capacity. While renovations of the current complex are underway in Phase Two of ACT, the new facility will become the temporary home for resident company activities. Phase Two will revitalize the existing 560,000 square foot complex and elevate the public's experience through upgraded amenities and technology. ACT will generate almost 1,000 permanent jobs and will have an annual economic impact of more than \$95 million. It will also accommodate the varied needs of a world-class city, aligning with Calgary's and Alberta's long-term strategic objectives to build a culturally vibrant, inclusive, and economically diverse community.

Description/Objective

In 2021, Arts Commons in partnership with fundraising consultant KCI, conducted a feasibility/planning study outlining Arts Commons' short- and long-term philanthropic goals and long-term opportunities for financial success. The study's findings identified campaign prospects and determined the goal of raising \$100 million from private sector support.

The outcomes of the study and themes arising from the major donor consultations, including existing market research and other ACT project assets, will be provided to the successful proponent to help inform and shape the Capital Campaign collateral in support of the fundraising efforts.

The overall fundraising campaign communications and marketing objectives are:

- Leverage and capitalize on existing partnerships with individuals, corporations and foundations which may provide additional fundraising and communications opportunities.
- Foster awareness and support of the campaign priorities among prospective donors and campaign volunteers.
- Leverage ongoing communications from Arts Commons and CMLC to provide timely and relevant information which will compel philanthropic support to targeted audiences, prospects, volunteers, and donors.
- Ensure consistent information and messages are communicated throughout all Capital Campaign collateral produced in support of the fundraising efforts.
- In consultation with Arts Commons, manage relationships with advertising vendors and take advantage of opportunities provided by existing and campaign-specific events.
- Utilize both traditional and digital media to reach out and engage a broader audience, increasing the visibility and position of ACT, its staff, and key volunteers in a broad conversation.

Scope of Work

Reporting to the VP Brand and Audience Development, in collaboration with Vice President & Chief Advancement Officer, the chosen firm will be responsible for the development and implementation of the ACT Capital Campaign marketing and communications strategy, action plan, creative writing, and design concept development and execution. The materials produced will be utilized by Arts Commons to help successfully raise the required funds.

- 1) Development of the overarching marketing strategy and creative concept which will launch the ACT Capital Campaign and continue over a 6-year (CY 2022-2028) time frame. A key component of the strategy is the development of the hook line – the “Got Milk?”. The visual style should work to complement and elevate the established ACT brand identity.

- 2) Strategic plan must include, but not limited to, the following criteria:
 - Provide a comprehensive and cost-effective marketing plan; detailing recommendations for print, video and digital tactics
 - Develop a communications plan that aligns with the project’s communications plan and the long-term strategic ACT capital fundraising goals.
 - Make recommendations to leverage Arts Commons existing platforms (i.e. website, e-newsletter, season brochures, etc.).
 - Responsible for the design of all campaign communications collateral, including but not limited to:
 - Electronic template for e-blasts/e-bulletin
 - Campaign newsletter (print and electronic)
 - Presentation folders

Brochures – Major campaign, smaller campaign brochure,
ways to give, named giving opportunities

Campaign fact sheet/card

PowerPoint presentation template

Promotional videos

- Develop and oversee all creative production to support recommendations.
- Utilize immersive technology/augmented reality assets or other experience products that will be developed by the Prime Design Team (PDT), and in consultation with Arts Commons and CMLC, as a means to take ACT to supporters and donors.
- Work in collaboration with representatives from Arts Commons Brand and Audience Development team to enhance the ACT micro-site with campaign messaging and graphics.
- Media activation strategy (recommendations only)
- Budget recommendation and cost to facilitate the work.

Note - we do not have a predetermined budget for the execution of the tactics that may be included in your plan. We will need to conduct an RFQ for any recommendations brought forward from the selected agency.

3) Critical path for delivery of the plan

Note - the evaluation of your agency's success is not dependent on fundraising revenue goals being met. That goal is owned entirely by Arts Commons.

Strategic Considerations

The overall communications strategy for the Capital Campaign is intended to build on existing awareness of both the project and its impact on the community at large. The key to heightened profile and increased level of philanthropic support is to capitalize on existing opportunities while being mindful of the following strategic considerations as outlined;

- In addition to the ACT Capital Campaign, Arts Commons and CMLC will also be implementing communications and marketing tactics on behalf of the ACT project. Tactics from all three parties should be deployed in alignment with each other, while meeting the overall campaign strategy as it relates to the project and revenue goals.
- The ACT Capital Campaign will have its largest push during its first two years. The subsequent phases of the campaign will not be undertaken until a significant portion of the Campaign revenue is achieved. Momentum must continue to build throughout the duration of the campaign and each phase must grow the engagement of the audience from the previous phase.
- The ACT Capital Campaign should be bold and stand out from others in the fundraising market but still relate back to the ACT brand identity. The marketing solution should be memorable and create an emotional connection to help drive donations.
- The Campaign's creative direction will need to appeal to an array of audiences – from traditional arts patrons and philanthropists, to city building donors and corporations – understanding that each will have different motivations for supporting ACT.
- Campaign materials should align with the overall project positioning and storyline and be consistent in terms of positioning, key messages, and creative vision to help build brand and campaign consistency.
- Many other charities and local not-for-profits will also be in the market with their own campaigns throughout the duration the ACT Capital Campaign.

- While the Phase 1 Expansion is fully funded, the ACT Capital Campaign will need to promote the assets included in the expansion as potential funding opportunities for naming rights.
- The ability to adapt (personalize) campaign collateral and written material will be imperative to campaign success. For example, provide campaign leadership with PowerPoint presentations they can use in addressing various audiences.
- Encourage integration and collaborative effort. Communications should be as integrated as possible. Talking points for the campaign should be incorporated into any donor event where major donors may have an opportunity to hear its objectives. Advancement staff and campaign volunteers should continue to be oriented to “campaign” fundraising which provides a springboard for larger asks.
- Arts Commons currently works with the following partners to increase brand awareness for the institution and its presenting arm, Arts Commons Presents;
 - Postmedia – Calgary (Digital & Print)
 - Bell Media (Television & Radio)
 - Rogers (Digital & Radio)
 - Pattison (OOH)
 - Globe and Mail (Digital & Print)

Details of the current media buy, schedule, investments and any other planned activities will be shared with the chosen agency, as required.

- The promotional strategy and marketing communications campaign creative will be approved by Arts Commons, Vice President, Brand and Audience Development, in collaboration with Vice President & Chief Advancement Officer, and in consultation with CMLC, Vice President, Marketing & Communications.

Proposal Requirements

It is important to Arts Commons that the selected design firm have experience with similar projects of size and scope. All submissions must, at a minimum, include the following elements:

- Description of the firm that includes a general overview, names and credentials of the creative team, number of full-time employees.
- A one-page narrative outlining the firm's strengths and distinguishing skills or capabilities as they might relate to the ACT Capital Campaign.
- Describe similar projects performed within the last 5 years that best characterize the firm's capabilities, work quality, customer service, and cost control.
- Describe the firm's experience and capabilities working with not-for-profit organizations.
- Describe the firm's internal procedures and/or policies associated or related to work quality and cost control.
- Describe any current projects of similar size and scope, detailing experience raising funds from the private sector.
- A representative selection of collateral development created for current and past clients.
- References - Complete contact information of three references from the past three years.

Evaluation Criteria

Arts Commons will evaluate and score proposals in their sole discretion based on the following criteria (not listed in order of importance):

- Strategic thinking and methodology submitted in your proposal
- Quality of match between qualifications/capabilities and experience, project scope and requirements
- Have been operating continuously as a marketing agency for a minimum of 24 months and possess full-service, in-house capabilities for marketing, creative services, production, media planning and placement, direct response and research.
- Previous experience/past performance history
- Samples and/or case studies from previous relevant projects
- References
- Projected costs & optional costs and services
 - The projected costs are based on the work of your agency.*
 - We understand that not all costs will be provided as these are highly dependent on the agreed-upon strategy.*
- Knowledge of, and experience working in the Calgary market

Note: We welcome your proposal to include how your company would support the Campaign through cash/contra sponsorship, or other considerations.

Additional Information

For additional information on Arts Commons and ACT, please visit our website and/or refer to the following pages:

Arts Commons

<https://artscommons.ca/who-we-are>

Arts Commons Transformation (ACT) Project

<https://artscommons.ca/act>

Audited Financial Statements & Report to the Community

<https://artscommons.ca/reporttocommunity>

ACT Brand Guide

<https://artscommons.ca/actbrandguide>