



April 12, 2024

## National Branding Campaign for Community Health Centers: Request for Proposals

The National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) is seeking proposals from qualified firms to develop and execute a comprehensive national marketing and communications campaign to strengthen the identity and brand of the nation's nearly 1,500 Community Health Centers and attract more patients, a mission-driven workforce, and supporters.

### Background

Community Health Centers are the largest primary care network, serving 31.5 million patients nationwide across America and the US territories. They are also the largest, most diverse, and innovative healthcare providers, with nearly 60 years of experience advancing health equity in underserved communities by providing quality, affordable care to anyone regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. Because of their unique model of care, health centers play a critical role in lowering healthcare costs for the nation's health care system and the American taxpayer.

While every health center may look different on the outside, they all share in common a dedication to mission, health equity, and a team approach that reaches beyond the wall of the traditional exam room to address the social drivers of health that may cause illness. Health centers are also led by governing boards with a 51 percent-patient majority – a unique feature to ensure that resources are efficiently targeted to patient needs and the surrounding communities.

Unlike most health care providers, health centers are mission driven and provide a range of affordable whole health services under one roof that are easy to navigate – services such as oral health, behavioral health, substance abuse counseling, case work – in addition to good primary care. **A branding and marketing campaign would not only celebrate Community Health Centers as a movement that launched as part of the War on Poverty and Civil Rights but showcase health centers as a solution for the future of health care – a strong primary care infrastructure that welcomes everyone to a healthcare home.**

## Campaign Objectives:

1. Raise brand awareness about the essential role of Community Health Centers as a national primary care network.
  - a. *Item(s) to track/measure: The sentiment and tone of social media and website comments on mentions of Community Health Centers and NACHC.*
2. Create a comprehensive set of brand visual elements that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also have quantifiable metrics for evaluation.
  - a. *Item(s) to track/measure: Develop collateral that can be shared through social media and earned media initiatives. Effectiveness will be tracked through engagement rates. Track website downloads of assets created and number of health centers that use the assets.*
3. Build understanding and tie brand to the unique history of Community Health Centers grounded in the Civil Rights Movement and War on Poverty.
  - a. *Item(s) to track/measure: Develop digital campaign to promote the history of the movement and track engagement rates across website/social media*
4. Highlight the diverse range of services and benefits offered by Community Health Centers to communities.
  - a. *Item(s) to track/measure: Develop a dedicated webpage on NACHC's site that Community Health Centers nationally can link to in promotion of their work. Website visits and links to the site will capture engagement.*
5. Foster trust and engagement between Community Health Centers and the communities they serve.
  - a. *Item(s) to track/measure: Develop Net Promoter Scores, and Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) surveys to serve as a baseline for brand trust and subsequently perform a follow-up survey rollout to measure any increase in scores.*
6. Enhance the health center brand as the employer of choice, provider of choice and partner of choice.
  - a. *Item(s) to track/measure: Monitor mention of EPPOC on social media channels to measure increase in awareness. Possible idea of creating a EPPOC hashtag through a social media campaign to introduce the concept to NACHC's followers.*
7. Encourage support from policymakers and stakeholders for the expansion and sustainability of Community Health Centers as the largest and most successful primary care network.
  - a. *Item(s) to track/measure: Number of lawmakers signing on to annual NACHC letters requesting funding increases.*

## Audience

- Public

- Policymakers – members of Congress
- Healthcare consumers
- Mission-driven primary healthcare providers

## Scope of work

The selected firm will be responsible for:

1. Conducting comprehensive research to understand the current perceptions of Community Health Centers in the United States
2. Conducting a communications audit of NACHC to ensure the association is in the strongest position possible to lead the campaign
3. Developing a strategic framework for the national branding campaign, including target audience identification, messaging, and positioning
4. Creating a visual identity and brand guidelines that reflect the essence of Community Health Centers and resonate with the target audiences
5. Developing a traveling Community Health Center history exhibit
6. Designing and producing a range of promotional materials such as advertisements, videos, brochures, and social media content
7. Implementing a multi-channel marketing strategy to reach diverse audiences across traditional and digital platforms
8. Measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of the campaign through key performance indicators (KPIs) and feedback mechanisms
9. Providing ongoing support and guidance to ensure the sustainability and longevity of the national branding effort

## Proposal Elements

Proposals should describe a marketing campaign that incorporates different mediums to effectively reach the target audiences. Below are key elements to be addressed in the proposal. Submissions should be multi-layered and incorporate a number of approaches. We are open to ideas on the best ways to reach the target audiences and goal, and firms may consider other elements to include in the submission:

### Communications Audit

Conduct an audit of NACHC communication channels

- Review NACHC communications channels and vehicles (to include digital and print, external- / public- facing), related processes, and audience engagements
- Assess proficiency, impact, effectiveness, and cohesiveness and consistency of each; identify gaps and weaknesses
- Provide strategic improvement opportunities supported by actionable data and metrics

## **Message Development/Market Research**

- Use qualitative and/or quantitative methods to determine the most powerful and effective messaging.
- Messaging and market research data should be broken down by race/ethnicity, age, and other key demographics.

**Marketing Approach:** Develop and execute a comprehensive integrated marketing plan that delivers effective messages to our target populations. Potential mediums are listed below. We recognize that this list is not comprehensive, and we are open to other creative or effective approaches to consider.

- **Paid media:** Paid media strategy that includes, as appropriate, the development and purchase of sponsored social media posts, display ads, digital video ads, traditional mass media (e.g., cable TV, radio, etc.), text ads, etc.
- **Social media:** Social media strategy based on message testing that engages residents; focus on groups most likely to use and be impacted by social media.
  - Social media toolkits for 1) health centers and primary care associations/Health Center Controlled Networks, 2) influencers, and 3) partner organizations
  - Consider tactics to reach “beyond the choir” – can include but not limited to influencer marketing, launching new channels like TikTok, SMS

## **Collateral materials**

- Compelling print materials such as posters, rack cards, specialized content for libraries, provider offices, hospitals, faith communities, and other materials/locations.

**Other considerations:** We would also like to see the following considerations incorporated into the campaign, alongside the marketing approach. Firms should consider and address these in their proposal:

- Incorporate ways to authentically and respectfully engage patients and board members of health centers in this campaign and campaign process.
- Leverage diversity of voice, particularly elevating the experiences of those in our community (e.g., through storytelling).
- Center health equity and structural racism – with a focus on structural racism (laws, structures, and policies) vs. a focus on individual racism (beliefs and actions).

## **Interested firms are requested to submit proposals that include the following:**

1. Overview of the firm's experience in developing and executing branding campaigns, particularly on a national or international scale.

2. Approach and methodology for conducting research, developing strategies, and executing the campaign.
3. Examples of past work relevant to national branding, including case studies and client references.
4. Proposed timeline and budget for the project, including any potential additional costs.
5. Team composition and key personnel who will be involved in the project, along with their relevant experience and qualifications.
6. Any innovative or unique ideas that the firm proposes to enhance the effectiveness and impact of the national branding campaign.

**Submission Guidelines:**

Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format to [communications@nachc.org](mailto:communications@nachc.org) no later than May 3, 2024.

**Timeline**

April 15, 2024: Release RFP

April 22, 2024: Q&A deadline (responses will be posted on the website on April 25)

May 3, 2024: RFP deadline

May 6, 2024: RFP evaluation period begins

Mid-June: Winner is notified

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Relevance and clarity of approach to the project objectives.
- Demonstrated expertise and experience in branding, marketing, and communications.
- Creativity and innovation in proposed strategies and tactics.
- Feasibility of the proposed timeline and budget.
- Qualifications and experience of the proposed team members.
- Overall fit with the goals and requirements of the national branding campaign.

**Selection Process:**

Upon receipt of proposals, NACHC will review and evaluate submissions based on the criteria outlined above. Shortlisted firms may be invited for interviews or presentations to further discuss their proposals. The selected firm will be notified accordingly.

**Contact Information:**

For inquiries or clarification regarding this RFP, please contact Kathleen Pulupa, Communications Manager, at [kpulupa@nachc.com](mailto:kpulupa@nachc.com).

**Disclaimer:**

This RFP does not commit NACHC to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of proposals. NACHC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received in response to this request.