

Invitation to Tender

Strategic Audience Engagement and Brand Development: Schools-Focused Marketing

Friday, 16 May 2025

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About BESA

The British Educational Suppliers Association (BESA) is the UK's trade association for the education suppliers sector. We represent nearly 400 members who provide high-quality educational products and services to schools and educational institutions in the UK and globally. Our role is to support our members and raise standards across the industry through our Code of Practice, market insight, and policy engagement. More information about BESA is available at www.besa.org.uk.

We are now seeking an agency to support us in developing and executing a long-term marketing strategy to raise BESA's profile among school decision-makers and drive recognition of our members' credibility in the education sector.

Project Purpose

We aim to build awareness and trust in the BESA brand among a defined group of school and trust-based decision-makers – ultimately positioning BESA as a mark of quality in procurement decisions and increasing the visibility of our members.

Objectives

- Clearly define the target audience (e.g. MAT leaders, school heads, procurement professionals) through research and stakeholder consultation
- Develop messaging that resonates with this group and reflects the value of BESA and its Code of Practice
- Work with internal and external advisory structures, including:
 - A task group of BESA members to guide tone and reach
 - An education advisory board of school-based professionals
- Support partnerships with relevant associations (e.g. school business leadership networks, procurement forums, teaching associations and unions)
- Grow a social media audience among education decision-makers, with clear platform strategies and content direction
- Develop a qualified education mailing list through content, thought leadership, lead capture and event presence
- Enhance brand recognition and awareness for BESA within schools and trusts, as a go-to place to source reliable suppliers, and raise trust for our insights and thought leadership
- Drive trust and business interest in BESA members, using messaging, content and positioning aligned to procurement needs

Scope of Work

The agency will be expected to:

- Expected to work with BESA and stakeholders to clarify the ecosystem and audience
- Work with a member task group and an education advisory board to create a clear 3 year strategy to achieve the ultimate goals
- Turn the above into an annual execution plan
- Develop and refine audience personas and value propositions
- Create a messaging framework and narrative for the target audience/s
- Identify and pursue partnership opportunities with aligned sector bodies
- Build a phased strategy for social media audience growth
- Recommend content formats and channels to grow mailing list subscribers
- Repurpose available materials such as research reports and recorded training and create new assets to engage educator audience, also considering BESA supplier directory and LendED EdTech trial platform
- Monitor impact and adapt tactics to ensure long-term progress toward awareness and engagement goals

Deliverables

Year 1 (6 months – 2025): Foundations

- Audience definition and personas
- Messaging and positioning framework
- Initial content strategy and thought leadership outlines
- Working with advisory structures on the above
- Identify and begin outreach to partner organisations
- Early audience building (social and email)

Year 2 (2026): Engagement

- Implement regular content and email activity
- Running campaigns organic and paid
- Partner co-branded activity (e.g. webinars, toolkits)
- Evaluate and optimise messaging and impact
- Support webinars or in person events to showcase members to the audience and to enable direct contact between members and schools audiences

Year 3 (2027): BAU embedding

- Deepen relationships with partners and advisory group
- Refine targeting and strategy
- Support documentation of insights and operational systems
- Deliver clear evidence of improved brand awareness and member visibility among schools based on agreed annual KPIs, and progress metrics

We expect a lean, strategic approach by phasing work sensibly, drawing on existing BESA assets and infrastructure, working collaboratively with the in-house team and focusing on high-impact activities.

Agency Criteria

- Experience working with associations, education stakeholders or public sector audiences
- Strong strategic thinking and data-driven approach with the ability to deliver practical execution
- Skills in stakeholder facilitation, messaging, content, and audience development
- A flexible and collaborative working style over a long-term relationship

Proposal Requirements

Please submit a written proposal which includes:

- Understanding of the brief
- Your proposed approach and delivery timeline
- Relevant case studies or project experience
- Team structure and key contacts
- Budget and phasing
- KPIs or tentative evaluation framework

Selection Process

Shortlisted agencies will be invited to either an in-person interview at the BESA offices, or online.

Timeline

- Tender issued: Friday, 16 May 2025
- Deadline for clarification questions: Friday, 30 May 2025
- Proposal deadline: Friday, 6 June 2025
- Interviews: Thursday, 19 June
- Appointment confirmation on: Tuesday, 24 June 2025
- Kick-off meeting and onboarding: Tuesday, 1 July 2025

Submission Details

Please send your proposal and any queries to:

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