



## **Invitation to Tender: Developing the DEC Social Media Strategy**

### **Background**

The Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) is a unique and dynamic membership organisation comprising 15 of the UK's leading humanitarian charities.

Since 1963, the DEC has launched more than 79 national fundraising appeals and raised over £2.5 billion to support people affected by disasters around the world.

The DEC's fundraising model is unique. Appeals are amplified through UK broadcasters, member charities, the Rapid Response Network, corporate partners, supporters, influencers and the wider public. While appeals remain at the heart of our work, we are also increasingly focused on how we convey the impact of donations, build trust, understanding, participation and community beyond appeal moments.

We are seeking an agency to develop a new organic social media strategy that helps the DEC deliver on its wider organisational strategy. The DEC currently maintains social channels on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, X and Bluesky, all of which will form part of the strategic review.

### **Project purpose**

We are inviting expressions of interest to develop the DEC's social media strategy.

The DEC wants to explore how social media can build a stronger, values-led community around humanitarian engagement. This needs to fit with the DEC model that is primarily focused on fundraising for appeals at times of major crises overseas, and during which our visibility is very high for a limited period of time, with clear reporting back on impact and learning.

We are interested in understanding how people engage with the DEC, how digital and social channels can sustain growth in followers, increase reach and engagement to maximise appeal income but also to foster participation and belonging, and how audiences can stay connected with the DEC, and with humanitarian causes in general. The strategy should reflect the DEC's role as a network of 15 member charities, including opportunities to highlight member charities and their impact. Notably, it does not include engagement around longer-term development issues and political advocacy.

The strategy should articulate what success looks like for the DEC with a roadmap of specific targets

over the next two years built on a test-and-learn approach where appropriate. In addition, it should include audience growth, nurturing and stewardship across organic and paid, and define a thriving community.

## **Reviewing and developing our existing approach**

The successful agency will not be starting from scratch. You will help make our social media presence stronger in line with our unique model and maximise digital opportunities not just on DEC channels but those of our partners and supporters.

The DEC has mapped out its current approach to social media per channel and has ongoing digital projects including audience segmentation and digital journeys across paid and organic social media that will be developed alongside the social media strategy.

Two core aspects of our work that the social media strategy must complement and maximise are our active paid social activity and our planned work with influencers. Responsibility for these sits outside this strategy, but close collaboration is required. The strategy should analyse how organic and paid social work together beyond paid as an amplification channel.

## **Project outputs**

Examples of that the strategy project might include are:

### **1. Review of current performance**

- Evaluate social performance, audience engagement, social listening insights, and the optimal use of boosted posts and paid ads across organic and paid activity.
- Assess content production, accessibility, inclusivity, and organic/paid integration.
- Identify key strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.
- Define the role of organic and paid social across channels, content types and stages of the supporter journey within the charitable sector more broadly.

### **2. Community building and audience strategy**

- Define platform-specific personas and the creative approaches that resonate with each audience segment.
- Recommend test-and-learn community initiatives and proof-of-concept projects, supported by a framework measuring the impact of organic and paid social.
- Explore opportunities for engagement, co-creation, and community building across the UK.
- Provide guidance and define how community building can support fundraising, awareness, trust, and long-term engagement.
- Define and improve user journeys from and via social media including the bespoke landing pages on the DEC website and engagement with our supporter database.

### **3. Partnerships and amplification. Review opportunities across:**

- DEC member charities
- Rapid Response Network partners
- Influencers, talent and public figures
- Broadcasters
- Strategic allies
- Fundraisers and supporters
- Community organisations

The DEC is undertaking separate work relating to influencers, talent and public figures. Agencies should consider how this activity can support the wider social media strategy, audience development and community-building approach. Recommendations should recognise that the most effective DEC social media model may not rely primarily on DEC-owned channels.

### **4. Content and channel strategy**

- Recommend channel priorities, investment areas and horizon forecasting for audiences.
- Define content pillars and approaches for appeal and non-appeal periods.
- Assess branded, user-generated, and professionally produced content.
- Identify opportunities for cultural relevance, experimentation, and innovation.

### **5. Brand, voice, values and identity**

- Assess how the DEC's tone of voice is adapted across different channels and audiences, including platform-specific execution.
- Identify how we communicate within our brand guidelines and adapt our tone of voice on different channels.

We encourage agencies to challenge assumptions and deliver evidence-led recommendations.

## **Practical deliverables**

We are specifically looking for outputs that show rather than tell. The strategy should therefore include:

- Prototype campaigns, content concepts, community initiatives, and creative examples of organisations you have helped through a similar process.
- Recommend pilot projects and test-and-learn opportunities.
- Demonstrate what success could look like in practice, not just in theory.
- Have a clear two-year implementation roadmap with test and learn and budgetary recommendations where required, with short and longer term growth plans.

## **Ways of working**

The DEC will establish a small consultation group to input on different aspects of the project. This may include external agencies who work closely with the DEC to deliver appeals. Agencies should be comfortable presenting work to a broad stakeholder group.

## Projected milestones

- **10 July 2026:** Deadline for expressions of interest
- **w/c 20 July 2026:** Shortlisted agencies will be invited to hear more about the project and the DEC before they deliver their introductory pitch presentation.
- **August 2026:** Agency appointed to deliver social media strategy within three months.
- **December 2026:** Final feedback, review and set-up for two-year implementation plan. Implementation of the plan will be a separate project.

## Budget

The allocated budget for this project is £30,000.

## Expressions of interest

To be considered for this project, please submit an expression of interest via email, following the below submission requirements to [dlawal@dec.org.uk](mailto:dlawal@dec.org.uk) by **5pm on 10 July 2026**.

## Submission requirements

Expressions of interest should be brief (no more than 4 pages), tailored, and include:

- Your interest in working with the DEC and relevant expertise, e.g. the charity sector.
- Reflections on the project as outlined in the tender - scope, expectations, budget, capacity and timeframe - and what you can reasonably achieve.
- Portfolio or evidence-based case studies of successful strategy delivery.
- Specific relevant examples of work, e.g. organic and paid social content, influencer work, successful brand or appeal campaigns, etc (you can attach links).

We will respond to all shortlisted agencies and invite them to hear more about the DEC and this project before working on their pitch.

## Evaluation criteria

We're looking for agencies that can demonstrate the following capabilities:

- An understanding of the DEC's model and approach to public communications and fundraising.
- Creative capability, and quality of content relevant to our channels, audiences and brand.
- Expertise in social media platforms, audiences and engagement.
- Expertise in measurement and reporting, particular for paid social and digital fundraising.
- Value for money and capacity to deliver within our specified ways of working and timeframe.

## Queries

For any queries related to this tender, please contact: Dami Lawal, Social Media Manager:  
[dlawal@dec.org.uk](mailto:dlawal@dec.org.uk).