

1. Marketing and PR Services Tender: 30th Anniversary Campaign & Strategic PR Support (2026–2027)

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1. About Pilotlight

Pilotlight is a leading charity unlocking social change by connecting charities with senior business leaders who volunteer their skills to help charities thrive.

As we approach our 30th anniversary, Pilotlight is entering a new phase of ambition transitioning from a respected programme provider to a system-changing platform that champions skills-based volunteering, cross-sector collaboration, and equity-centred leadership.

This tender seeks a creative, strategic Marketing and PR partner to help us:

- Celebrate 30 years of impact
- Reposition Pilotlight for the future
- Amplify our voice as a thought leader
- Support income growth, partnerships, and movement building

2. Purpose of the Tender

Pilotlight is inviting proposals from experienced agencies to deliver:

1. A flagship 30th Anniversary Marketing & PR Campaign
2. Ongoing strategic PR and communications support

We are seeking a partner who can combine strategic thinking, creative storytelling, media credibility, and executional excellence.

3. Campaign Objectives

3.1. 30th Anniversary Campaign Objectives

- Celebrate 30 years of Pilotlight's impact and legacy
- Elevate Pilotlight's brand profile nationally
- Position Pilotlight as a leader in:
 - Skills-based volunteering
 - Cross-sector leadership
 - Equity and lived experience
- Inspire businesses, funders, and senior leaders to engage
- Support income generation, partnerships, and influence

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3.2. Ongoing PR Objectives

- Build consistent, high-quality media coverage
- Strengthen organisation and senior leadership profile
- Support key moments across the year (funding announcements, programme launches, research, policy moments)
- Embed Pilotlight in national conversations on leadership, impact, and social change

4. Scope of Services

4.1. 30th Anniversary Campaign (Core Scope)

Agencies should propose a fully integrated campaign, which may include:

- **Strategy & Creative**
 - Campaign concept and narrative
 - Key messages and storytelling framework
 - Visual and tone-of-voice recommendations (aligned with Pilotlight brand)
- **Campaign Planning & Delivery**
 - Multi-channel campaign plan
 - Key moments and content calendar
 - Stakeholder and audience segmentation
- **PR & Media**
 - Media strategy and press planning
 - Press releases and features
 - Media pitching and relationship management
 - CEO and spokesperson profiling
 - Thought leadership placement
- **Content Creation**
 - Long- and short-form written content
 - Case studies and impact stories
 - Campaign assets (copy and messaging, design and video)
- **Launch & Key Moments**
 - Anniversary launch activity
 - Support for events, roundtables, or announcements
 - End of campaign celebration event
 - Campaign reporting and evaluation

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4.2. Ongoing PR & Communications Support

Following (or alongside) the anniversary campaign, Pilotlight seeks retained PR support including:

- Proactive media relations
- Reactive press handling
- Leadership profiling
- Strategic messaging advice
- Support for:
 - Fundraising campaigns
 - Corporate partnerships
 - Research and insight publications
 - Sector commentary

5. Target Audiences

- Senior business leaders and executives
- Corporate partners and CSR and Learning and Development leaders
- Trusts, foundations, and institutional funders
- Policymakers and influencers
- Charity leaders and the wider voluntary sector
- Existing and prospective Pilotlight volunteers
- Media (national, sector, business)

6. Budget & Contract Term

Agencies should propose **costed options**, including:

- 30th Anniversary campaign (project-based)
- Ongoing PR support (retainer-based)

We welcome tiered or modular proposals.

Indicative contract period:

- Anniversary campaign: 6–9 months
- Ongoing PR: 12 months (with review)

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7. Proposal Requirements

Agencies are asked to submit a proposal that clearly demonstrates strategic understanding, creative capability, delivery credibility, and a rigorous approach to measurement and evaluation.

Proposals must address the sections below. Submissions that do not respond meaningfully to all sections may be discounted.

Please include the following in your submission:

1. Agency Overview

- Relevant experience
- Values and approach
- Experience in charity, purpose-led, or system-change work

2. Relevant Case Studies

- Similar campaigns (anniversaries, rebrands, thought leadership, movement building)
- Media results and impact

3. Proposed Approach

- Strategic approach to the 30th Anniversary
- Creative thinking and narrative ideas (indicative, not full concepts)
- Proposed PR strategy

4. Team & Delivery

- Account team structure
- Senior leadership involvement
- Ways of working and collaboration style

5. Measurement & Evaluation

Pilotlight is seeking a Marketing and PR partner who is outcome-focused, evidence-led, and confident in being held to account. Proposals must set out a clear and credible framework for measuring success that goes beyond activity metrics and demonstrates meaningful impact against our strategic objectives.

Audience Definition and Reach

Agencies must demonstrate a clear and sophisticated understanding of Pilotlight's priority audiences, and a proven ability to reach them.

Proposals should:

- Clearly define primary and secondary audiences for:
 - The 30th Anniversary campaign

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- Ongoing PR and thought leadership activity
- Demonstrate evidence of reach into these audiences, including:
 - Established relationships with relevant media
 - Examples of comparable campaigns or organisations where similar audiences were successfully engaged
- Be explicit about:
 - Which media titles and platforms reach which audiences
 - How messaging will be tailored for different stakeholder groups
- Set out how success with each audience will be measured, including:
 - Relevance and influence of coverage
 - Seniority and decision-making power of readership
 - Strategic value of placements, not just volume

Pilotlight will assess agencies on their ability to reach senior decision-makers and influencers, not solely on overall reach figures.

Definition of “Major Publications”

For the purposes of this tender, “major publications” are defined as high-reach, high-influence titles that are demonstrably read by senior decision-makers, including business leaders, funders, policymakers, and sector leaders, and which materially contribute to Pilotlight’s reputation, influence, and strategic objectives.

Agencies are expected to explicitly name target titles and propose realistic, evidence-based targets for securing coverage.

- **Tier 1: National and Business Media**
Agenda-setting national and business outlets with influence beyond the charity sector.
- **Tier 2: Business, Leadership and Influence Media**
Publications reaching senior corporate audiences (e.g. CEOs, Chairs, HR, CSR, L&D leaders).
- **Tier 3: High-Influence Sector and Policy Media**
Influential voluntary sector and policy publications that support credibility and narrative depth.

For KPI purposes:

- Tier 1 and Tier 2 publications will count as “major publications.”
- Tier 3 publications are considered supporting coverage only.

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The following do not count toward “major publication” KPIs:

- Local or regional press (unless linked to a nationally significant moment)
- Trade or niche newsletters with limited reach
- Aggregator websites without editorial influence
- Sponsored, paid-for, or advertorial content
- Diary listings or brief mentions without substantive editorial coverage

Core KPIs and PR Outcomes

At a minimum, agencies should propose KPIs across the following areas:

- **Media Quality and Scale**
 - A clearly defined number of major pieces in major publications (Tier 1 and Tier 2), agreed in advance
 - Breakdown of coverage by national, business, and sector media
- **Thought Leadership and Profile**
 - High-quality thought leadership placements for the CEO and senior leadership
 - Coverage that positions Pilotlight as a leader in skills-based volunteering, cross-sector leadership, and equity-centred change
- **Strategic Contribution**
 - Clear links between PR activity and brand repositioning, partnership development, income generation, and long-term narrative change

Reporting approach Agencies must outline:

- A clear reporting framework against agreed KPIs
- Regular performance reporting including both quantitative results and qualitative assessment of coverage quality and strategic value
- A commitment to honest performance review and strategic adaptation where KPIs are not being met

6. Costs

- Clear pricing structure
- Any optional or additional services

7. Added Value

- Innovation, partnerships, or pro-bono elements
- How you would help Pilotlight “punch above its weight”

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8. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be assessed against:

- Strategic understanding of Pilotlight's ambition
- Creativity and storytelling capability
- PR and media credibility
- Experience with senior leadership profiling
- Value for money
- Cultural fit and values alignment

9. Timetable (Indicative)

- Tender issued: 12th January 2026
- Clarification questions deadline: 22nd January 2026
- Submissions due: 11th February 2026
- Shortlisting and interviews: 12th and 17th February 2026
- Appointment: 23rd February 2026
- Campaign start: April 2026

10. Submission Details

Please submit proposals electronically to:

Lisa Pearce, lpearce@pilotlight.org.uk

By 11th February 2026

11. Contact

For clarification questions only, please contact:

Lisa Pearce

Chief Executive Officer, Pilotlight

Appendix A: KPI Summary Table (Mandatory for Submission)

KPI Area	Definition	Target (proposed by agency)	Measurement method	Notes / evidence of deliverability
Major Publications – Tier 1	Substantial features, interviews, or authored opinion in Tier 1 national/business media	X placements	Publication list + editorial format	Evidence of prior success required
Major Publications – Tier 2	Thought leadership or features in Tier 2 business/leadership media	X placements	Publication list + format	Named titles required
Total Major Publications	Combined Tier 1 & Tier 2 placements	X total	As above	This is a core success measure
Ceo / Senior Leadership Profile	High-profile leadership coverage	X placements	Interviews / opinion / profiles	Specify spokesperson
Thought Leadership Themes	Skills-based volunteering, cross-sector leadership, equity	N/A	Message tracking	Demonstrate narrative alignment
Sector / Policy Coverage (Tier 3)	Supporting credibility and depth	X placements	Feature/commentary	Does not replace major pubs
Reporting Cadence	Frequency and format of reporting	Monthly / Quarterly	Dashboard + narrative	Include sample if possible