

Item 14.

Exemption from Tender – SEEK and LinkedIn Job Board Subscription Services

File No: X084308

Summary

This report seeks an exemption from tender to engage SEEK Limited (SEEK) and LinkedIn Singapore PTE LTD (LinkedIn) for job board subscription services for a period of up to five years subject to need and satisfactory performance, which will be reviewed annually. This will support continuity and effectiveness of the City's talent attraction strategy through these platforms, as there are no viable competitors of similar size, market reach and product maturity to invite to tender for these services.

Vacant positions at the City are advertised externally to attract the most competitive field of applicants. SEEK is the main external job board for online advertising, supplemented by various specialist job sites and industry specific job platforms. LinkedIn is used as a primary job board for professional and specialist positions, as well as a networking tool to source passive candidates.

A typical advertising sourcing strategy for a position at the City would include:

- City of Sydney careers site;
- SEEK job board;
- Council Jobs/Careers at Council (Local Government NSW)
- LinkedIn (if suitable for role. Most professional and specialist roles);
- Industry specific job board or professional association (e.g. Planning Institute of Australia, the Fifth Estate); and
- An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job board and/or employment service (e.g. Koori Mail).

Since 2017, the City has engaged SEEK in different ways depending on the packages available at the time. SEEK's performance in 2021/22 saw the City advertise 285 jobs which appeared in over 5 million searches, attracting 149,000 clicks and resulting in almost 10,000 applications.

Since 2021, the City has purchased a recruiter subscription to LinkedIn, which provides 10 job slots that can be rotated as needed. LinkedIn's performance in 2021/22 saw the City post 196 positions, which received 103,917 views and attracted 6,155 applications.

This report recommends that Council approve an exemption from tender to engage SEEK and LinkedIn for job board subscriptions. City staff evaluate the performance of SEEK and LinkedIn subscriptions annually and have the option not to renew if there are more effective ways to secure talent.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve an exemption from tender in accordance with section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act 1993 noting that, because of the unavailability of competitive or reliable tenderers, a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders to provide job board subscriptions;
- (B) Council note that a satisfactory result would not be achieved by inviting tenders for this work because:
 - (i) there is a lack of availability of alternative suppliers;
 - (ii) both SEEK and LinkedIn are unique platforms in the Australian job market without viable competitors; and
 - (iii) both SEEK and LinkedIn are central to the City's advertising strategy to attract talent;
- (C) Council approve entering into contracts with:
 - (i) SEEK Limited, and
 - (ii) LinkedIn Singapore PTE LTD;for job board subscription services for a period of up to five years subject to satisfactory performance, which will be reviewed annually;
- (D) Council note that the total contract sums and contingency for SEEK Limited and LinkedIn Singapore PTE LTD job board subscriptions are outlined in Confidential Attachment A to the subject report; and
- (E) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer the contracts relating to the SEEK and LinkedIn job board subscriptions.

Attachments

Attachment A. Financial Implications (Confidential)

Background

1. Vacant positions at the City are advertised externally to attract the most competitive field of applicants. The Local Government Act 1993 requires the City to advertise positions in a manner sufficient to enable suitably qualified persons to apply for the position.
2. The City relies on advertising as it's main sourcing strategy for talent. The City of Sydney careers site lists every role available but to reach an audience of job seekers that aren't following the City site, online job platforms are used for broader or more targeted coverage.
3. Online job boards vary in size, reach and speciality and are employed according to the vacant position.
4. Every advertising strategy involves a mix of speciality job boards underpinned by those with wide market reach.
 - A typical advertising sourcing strategy for a position at the City would include:
 - City of Sydney careers site;
 - SEEK job board;
 - Council Jobs/Careers at Council (Local Government NSW)
 - LinkedIn (If suitable for role. Most professional and specialist roles);
 - Industry specific job board or professional association (e.g. Planning Institute of Australia, the Fifth Estate); and
 - An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job board and/or employment service (e.g. Koori Mail).

SEEK

5. SEEK is the largest and most frequently used job board for advertising positions at the City of Sydney.
6. SEEK is a market leader in the Australian online job board sector with Ibis World estimating SEEK's market share of online job postings at almost 40 per cent.
7. Other platforms such as Indeed, Jora, and various sector and industry specialty job boards, make up the remainder but none have the reach of SEEK.
8. All externally advertised positions at the City are advertised on SEEK. In 2021/22, the City posted 285 jobs on SEEK. These jobs appeared in over 5 million searches, attracted 149,000 clicks and resulting in almost 10,000 applications.

LinkedIn

9. LinkedIn Talent Solutions is also a unique offering in the labour market and offers a range of packages to assist organisations in attracting talent.
10. The LinkedIn platform allows an organisation to target the right candidate groups, attract passive candidates, build the organisational brand and increase the number of suitable applications.
11. LinkedIn is central to our ability to source talent and start talent pipelining and talent pooling to engage passive talent. Employer branding allows potential candidates to familiarise themselves with the City's vision, benefits and culture to increase the likelihood of high calibre applicants.
12. The content on the City's LinkedIn page is coordinated with the City's media team and extends the reach of the City's social media content strategy.
13. In 2021/22, the City posted 196 positions and received 103,917 views with 6,155 applications from our 10 job advertising slots.
14. SEEK and LinkedIn are unique job market suppliers and are central to the City's recruitment strategy.
15. Issuing a tender where there are no equivalent competitors in the market and requesting approval for individual SEEK and LinkedIn package renewals each time will not serve to add further value.

Performance Measurement

16. The total views and applications will be monitored to assess the continuing effectiveness of these job platforms.
17. Annual reviews will continue to be conducted, competitor performance will be monitored and new platforms will be evaluated to assess any new technologies that emerge in future years.

Financial Implications

18. There are sufficient funds allocated for this project within the current year's operating budget and future years' forward estimates.
19. The financial implications are outlined in Confidential Attachment A.

Relevant Legislation

20. The exemption from tender process has been conducted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

21. Local Government Act 1993 - Section 10A provides that a council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion of information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
22. Attachment A contains confidential commercial information which, if disclosed, would:
 - (a) confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business; and
 - (b) prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.
23. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

24. Subject to Council approval, the SEEK subscription would be renewed immediately on an annual basis. The annual subscription would be able to be renewed four further times, subject to an annual review of the service.
25. The current LinkedIn subscription expires in March 2023. Subject to Council approval, this subscription would be renewed. The annual subscription would be able to be renewed four further times, subject to an annual review of the service.

Options

26. An alternative option is to use job boards with lesser market coverage and purchase individual job places at higher rates. This option is not recommended because the performance of job boards with lower market coverage will not result in satisfactory candidate response rates and limit talent available to hiring managers for selection. Individual postings on these platforms are more expensive and lack the employer branding that comes with an annual subscription.

Public Consultation

27. Public consultation is not required for the procurement of these specialist services

SUSAN PETTIFER

Director People, Performance and Technology

Rodney Waterson, Manager Recruitment and HR Systems

Chris Youness, Chief, People and Culture