

September 2023 CCE RFP – Website Design Questions and Answers

Format & Requirements of Proposal

1. Does your team have a preference on the format of the submitted proposals? Will you be primarily viewing the proposals on a screen or printing them for distribution to your team?
 - The proposal must be submitted in electronic format (MS Word, Excel, PDF) to the CCE point of contact. (RFP p.9). CCE does not have a preference for submission beyond the acceptable formats listed in the RFP, however, the vendor should ensure the information presented follows the submission guidelines and is clear and concise.
2. Is there any predefined Proposal Format?
 - See the RFP (p. 6 Section 3) for proposal submission requirements.
3. We do not provide reference contact information unless we are in the final round of consideration, out of respect for our clients' time (several have asked us for this courtesy). We do have independent client reviews here you can see in the meantime. Is that acceptable?
 - That is acceptable. Vendors may choose to respond to 3.1.2(b) as part of their initial submission – or – send that information if/when they are invited back to participate in an interview/demonstration. While examples of your work (3.1.2(a)) will need to be provided in the initial submission, we will only require reference contact information to be provided by those vendors who are invited to participate in the interview/demonstration phase.

Location of Vendor

4. Is there a preference for local vendors?
 - No, CCE is seeking a qualified vendor that can deliver a cost-effective, intuitive website and assist CCE in its maintenance and operation in a manner that aligns with CCE's business hours and needs.
5. Are you open to accepting proposals from outside of the DC area? We are located in North Carolina.
 - See answer to question 4.
6. Could you please confirm if we are allowed to provide the services outlined in the RFP exclusively from an offshore location? Can a proposal be submitted by a foreign bidder?
 - We require vendors to have a federal Tax ID or EIN in the United States and be able to accept payment into a U.S. financial institution.

Incumbency & Other Vendors

7. Is there an incumbent bidder on this project? Could you please share the name of the agency's incumbent vendor who has been working on the website until now?
 - All bidders are confidential. Yes, we currently outsource the hosting and maintenance of our website, but decline to share their name(s).
8. What factors made your team decide to release an RFP for this project over a direct bid?
 - CCE is seeking proposals that offer creative and cost-effective solutions for a redesigned website that leverages current technology and best practices.
9. What qualities have worked well or made a project successful with past vendor partners?
 - Clear concise communication. Responsiveness. Innovation. Recognizing CCE is a nonprofit organization with a small, non-technical staff and limited resources, and offering solutions that meet our needs and are cost-effective.

Content Creation

10. Are you looking for the vendor to assist with copywriting / copyediting for new content on the site?
 - No, CCE staff will be responsible for content creation, however, the vendor will train CCE users in creating accessible and compliant content. (RFP p. 3 – 2.2.6, RFP p. 2 – 2.2.1)
11. Is there any scope for content creation for the new website?
 - No, content creation is not within the scope of this RFP. (RFP p.2 – 2.1)

Design Inspirations

12. Could you provide examples of websites or designs that you find appealing or relevant to your project?
 - We appreciate the interest in our vision and stylistic preferences, but we are not prepared to discuss those details at this stage. We will be prepared to do so during the interview process and with the vendor selected.
13. Can you share 3-5 websites that you like and believe are high quality? This is helpful for us to use as a reference to some of your design preferences.
 - Please see answer to question 12.
14. Are there any specific design inspirations, branding elements, or websites that you admire and believe could serve as references for our design?
 - Please see answer to question 12.

Budget & Payment

15. Do you have any pre-estimated budget or range for this Project.
 - See RFP (p. 2 Section 1). CCE has dedicated funding of \$25,000-\$30,000 in calendar year 2023 for this project. There is a possibility of splitting payment between CY23 and CY24, based on the contract between the selected vendor and CCE.
16. You have a \$30K budget in the RFP for FY 2023. Is there a possibility of additional being made available for further website work in FY 2024? If so, would you be open to your chosen partner developing an initial MVP in 2023 with a plan to further enhance the site in 2024?
 - Not at this time.
17. The RFP states "CCE understands this (optional requirements) will affect time, cost, and project completion." If that's so, what is your more realistic budget?
 - Please see answer to question 15.
18. Does the budget you shared in the RFP include the costs for maintenance of the website post-launch or will that be a separate budgeted cost?
 - We ask for a proposal that includes the first year of maintenance for 2024. (RFP pg. 6 – 2.5). Beyond that, a maintenance agreement will be a separate budgeted agreement for future years.
19. Can you share what you are currently paying for maintenance and hosting on an annual basis?
 - We are not prepared to share that information. We ask the vendor to propose the level of service necessary for the new site to be designed. (RFP pg. 6 – 2.5)
20. What will be the mode of Payment in case we get selected?
 - Invoices will be paid in USD, via check or ACH payment, within the timeframe(s) defined in the contract between the vendor and CCE.
21. Do you understand that depending on the amount of difference in the new brand, if you do the branding after the website design, there may be significant costs in updating the site to the new brand?
 - CCE is well versed in its own efforts to evaluate rebranding. Vendor proposals should clearly highlight the flexibility and adaptability of the proposed Content Management System (CMS) in support of this and future changes.

Timeline & Launch

22. Please provide an approximate timeline for the Kick-off and completion of this project.
 - Please see RFP p. 10 section 4.2 – RFP schedule. The anticipated start date of this project is November 2023.
23. What is your desired launch date, and why that date?
 - CCE expects this project to be initiated in November 2023. Vendor proposals should include a preliminary project plan that includes deliverables, key milestones, and a timeline. (RFP p. 7 - 3.1.4). We have some flexibility on a launch date in 2024, with a goal to be in early Q2, to some degree dependent on finalization of any rebranded assets and CCE staff's capacity to migrate and upload content to the newly built site. But we will build a realistic launch deadline based on discussions with our selected vendor.
24. The RFP lists a target start date for the project but do you have a desired launch date for the new website?
 - Please see answer to question 23.
25. What's your target website launch date? What is driving this date?
 - Please see answer to question 23.
26. Regarding the potential rebranding efforts, can you share any tentative timelines or decisions that might impact the project's scope or design requirements?
 - We anticipate Board approval of a new brand name in 2023, but we may not have final rebranded visual assets until over the winter. Ideally, the CMS selected and template pages that are designed will be built so that color scheme and/or logo changes can be relatively easily adjusted, if need be. But our goal is to not burden the vendor selected with a complicated overlay related to rebranding, nor to shift our timeline to launch.

CMS

27. What is the current CMS used for the CCE site or is it a proprietary system?
 - CCE's website's current CMS is a proprietary system of our current vendor.
28. Do you have a preference for a CMS platform? (such as WordPress, Drupal, etc.)
 - No, CCE does not have a preference. CCE is looking for a CMS that is both cost-efficient and high-quality to meet our requirements.
29. Could you provide more insights into your preferred Content Management System (CMS) or any specific technology preferences you have for the website?
 - See answer to question 28.
30. Our preferred CMS platform for new websites is WordPress. Are you comfortable your new website being built on WordPress?
 - See answer to question 28.
31. Does your current team have any experience in or knowledge of any of the popular website platforms such as WordPress, Wix, Squarespace, or Webflow?
 - A few members of our small staff have experience making or updating simple pages on a handful of CMSs, but no one on staff should be considered as having significant web design, IT, or other technical skills related to this project or ongoing website maintenance.

Staff Engagement, Skills, & Participation

32. How many staff will be on your website team, and what experience do they have doing a website redesign?
 - We will have at least two people providing part-time engagement to support the website redesign process, including our assigned project manager, as well as intern support.

None have recent experience doing a full website redesign, but all will have familiarity with our content, our goals, and some experience on the back end of website updating.

33. Who would we be working with on this project?
- See answer to question 32.
34. Who on your team will be responsible for managing timelines and feedback?
- CCE's project manager.
35. What do your marketing/fundraising/creative team and resources look like?
- While we appreciate your interest in our organizational model, we're happy to discuss topics like these, as they are relevant, with our selected vendor.
36. How available are you and/or the other members of your team for calls and meetings?
- We expect to be available for up to 1-2 weekly meetings or calls, and will seek to be responsive to items that need an email response or a short phone call discussion within 48 hours.
37. What is your typical turnaround time for reviews and approvals?
- See answer to question 36. Additionally, we will look to you to provide recommendations and requests in your proposal (see RFP p. 2 - 2.1, vendors shall clearly identify what assets CCE needs to supply, anticipated CCE staff time, and identify key checkpoints, timeframes, and milestones. These should be clearly identified in the preliminary project plan submitted with the vendor's proposal. This should include anticipated or proposed turnaround time for CCE reviews and approvals.)
38. Are there any specific expectations we should know about how you like to work with agency partners?
- While we appreciate your interest in our work style, we will be happy to discuss topics like these, and make sure we understand the questions, during the interview process and with the vendor selected.

Audiences

39. Who are your target audiences, and how much do you know about them?
- After a workshop with our staff and Board leaders, we identified six primary audience groups with different demographics and methods of engagement, that divide between "lay" (people impacted by the DC justice system and people who want to better understand the law or become advocates themselves), and "professional" (advocates for impacted people, professionals in the legal/policy community, foundations and donors, and the media) subsets.
 - i. The group designated "Laypeople" may vary widely in demographic characteristics, level of education, and inclination to engage with the more detailed research/policy documents published by CCE, but may skew Black and located in or close to Washington, DC. Due to the heterogeneity of the group, plain language and multiple clear paths to content will contribute to usability. Additionally, cross-linking to related research should be provided for those wanting additional information about a topic. They are less likely to be familiar with the organization and legal jargon or research terms utilized.
 - ii. The Professionals category is believed to be more homogenous in terms of demographics, education, and comfort with the more technical material published by CCE. Demographically, the group is thought to skew white, of working age but skewing older, and equally male and female though possibly skewing toward male. Most members of the category are assumed to have undergraduate degrees, and many to have advanced degrees as well, with a

predominance of law degrees. As such, the audience is likely to understand legal jargon or be able to easily research terms and concepts to support understanding of the material published by CCE.

40. Do you have audience personas developed? Do you have an existing messaging strategy or framework for your personas?
- See answer to question 39.

Content Migration

41. Will content migration be part of the scope of this project for the chosen vendor? If so, can you provide an estimate of the number of website pages, posts, and/or documents that will need to be migrated?
- Yes, some content migration will be part of this scope. CCE staff will curate any original or new content for the new website. We estimate that approximately 15 of the current static pages will need to be migrated, and, ideally, the last 25-30 posts/news articles and approximately 50-60 library documents should be migrated by the vendor, with clear instructions to allow CCE staff to migrate additional posts and library documents themselves.
42. Could you provide an estimate of the size or volume of content that needs to be migrated to the new website?
- Please see answer to question 41.
43. Will you be migrating any existing content from your current website to the new one? If yes, will your internal team be in charge of the migration? Or is this something you'd like the vendor to handle? Please share a sitemap to give us a sense of the volume and complexity of content to be migrated.
- Please see answer to question 41.

Traffic

44. How many visitors does the site get per month?
- Approximately 2K per month.
45. Could you please provide details regarding the expected traffic volume and number of concurrent users for the website? This information will assist in determining the scalability and performance requirements.
- The website gets approximately 2K visitors per month. CCE does not have data on concurrent users at this time. But we expect to make major efforts, in conjunction with this new site relaunch and potential rebrand, to increase our website traffic meaningfully in the next few years.
46. Can you share any analytics about your website such as the number of monthly visitors and which pages are visited the most?
- Please see answer to question 44. News/events, who we are, mission, and donation are among the most visited pages.

Assets & Brand Guide

47. The RFP mentions that you are currently considering a rebrand - if a separate rebrand is not completed, do you have an existing brand guide that would be used as the basis for the website designs?
- We do have branded assets and the colors, but not a structured brand guide.
48. If the current brand is remaining intact on your website, are you able to provide brand guidelines and access to creative assets?
- See answer to question 47.

Page Templates

49. How many separate page templates will be required? (Page template will have its own layout and will be used to build all of the final site pages.)
- This will be determined during the design phase. However, our initial estimate, which is not binding, is that there will likely need to be around 6-10 page template types. We anticipate working with our selected vendor to identify the most efficient set of templates to meet our needs.
50. How many total pages would you like your new site to have?
- This will be determined during the design phase.

Site Features

51. Will users need to be able to register for events directly on the site, or will they be linked out to EventBrite for event registry?
- Users will be linked to the EventBrite site.
52. Can you provide an overview of how the Bloomerang CRM integrates with the website today?
- The website links visitors to the Bloomerang site. Bloomerang provides an Application Programming Interface (API) that allows the CCE website to interact with Bloomerang.
53. The RFP mentions a need for password-protected content - what types of content would be available behind the login screen for members? Outside of exclusive static content, would there be any special functionality needed for members only?
- CCE does not anticipate additional functionality beyond exclusive static content for purposes of this proposal.
54. Can you provide more details on the required features and functionality for the digital library and calendar function?
- CCE anticipates the vendor will highlight the capabilities of its proposed CMS and what digital library and calendar features and functions are available including options and pricing. Additional details will be defined during the design phase.
55. What integrations or third-party systems do you anticipate for the new website? Are there specific APIs or data sources that should be connected, and do you have any technology or platform preferences for these integrations?
- Currently the CCE website links to Eventbrite and Bloomerang. CCE does not have a technology or platform preference for integration but is seeking a solution that will have the ability to integrate with future data sources as the CCE grows.
56. What sort of "modules or external scripts" do you anticipate needing to embed?
- The vendor should clearly articulate how, or if, its proposed CMS can support the requirement or future changes. Further definition will occur during the design phase but may be applicable to serving up personalized content to board members, future payment gateways, Content Delivery Networks, or analytics.
57. WCAG 2.1 is the current standard, not 2.0. Do you want compliance with 2.1 or 2.0?
- WCAG 2.1. The vendor should also briefly discuss compatibility with any major changes it is aware of for the release of WCAG 2.2.
58. For donations, what needs to be done aside from integrating Bloomerang's form on your page? They should be handling the credit card processing.
- CCE currently uses Bloomerang for donations. Consideration should be given to handling donor data and ensuring data transfers are encrypted and any sensitive data that is collected by CCE is stored securely. Specifics will be defined during the design phase.
59. For the requirement "Provides an easy secure way for visitors to donate," do you currently use a 3rd party vendor for donations?
- Please see answer to question 58.

60. What is the reason for including print-friendly styling? It's another layer of additional work that will take up some budget, so if it's not a priority we'd recommend leaving it out.
- We appreciate the feedback on this element, and will be happy to discuss appropriate prioritization – or elimination – of this feature with the selected vendor. Our priority is to make our website as accessible for all users as possible, but we will be happy to reconsider how/whether to provide this functionality after reviewing proposals and discussing it with our selected vendor.
61. For the requirement “Delivers print-friendly content,” as websites have a need to be responsive (i.e. fluidly change based on device size) they can be printed in a legible fashion but generally the result isn't pretty. Can you elaborate on your print needs?
- See answer to question 60.
62. "Integrates website security" ... please explain in more detail what you mean by this?
- Website security is a critical aspect of web development and maintenance. Integrating website security involves a range of measures and best practices to safeguard the website and the data it handles. The specifics will be defined during the design phase but may include encryption, IDS, firewalls, software updates, authentication and access control, file uploads, etc.
63. What is a "cutover process" ? We've not heard that term before.
- Cutover refers to the process of transitioning from an old system or environment (in this case CCE's website) to a new one. This includes setting clear objectives, timelines, and responsibilities including contingency and rollback plans for unforeseen issues.
64. Can you share more information on the Multi-language support optional requirement? Which languages need to be supported? What is the current mechanism used for this requirement?
- CCE's website does not currently have multi-language support, but we recognize multi-language support is vital for reaching a more diverse audience. Implementing a CMS that supports multi-language content either directly or through plugins is a first step towards achieving this goal. We are interested in cost-efficient options, including plug-in options, that may allow users to select from a variety of translated languages for our English-based site. We are not required to provide any other specific languages, but hope to work with our vendor to learn about ways that our site could be translated .
65. The document it is mentioned about multi language support. Can you please help with the languages that need to be supported while considering development.
- See answer to question 64.
66. For the requirement “Multi-language support,” will you be providing translations or would a service like integrated Google Translate be acceptable?
- See answer to question 64.
67. Besides the robust digital library and calendar function, are there any other features you would like to be included?
- Please refer to Section 2 of the RFP for requirements.
68. We were able to find the digital library on your existing site but not the calendar function. Does that currently exist and is it a public facing function, an internal facing function or both?
- We currently do not have a calendar function. The vendors proposed CMS should meet the requirements outlined in Section 2 of the RFP.
69. For the requirement of “Offers infinite menu levels...” best practices for usability purposes recommended that menus not extend more than 2-3 levels deep. Is that acceptable?

- CCE agrees that those menu levels are a best practice, however, there may be certain situations where more than 3 levels are required. The vendor should clearly specify any limitations of the proposed CMS.
70. Are there any other technical or content requirements we should be aware of for this website project? Please list any specific features or functionality, or provide a link if they exist on your current website.
- Please refer to Section 2 of the RFP.

Hosting

71. Are you willing to host on our recommended provider, (*redacted*). They are optimized for Wordpress websites and offer best-in-class service and technology.
- CCE is looking for a qualified hosting provider. The vendor may propose optional hosting services. See the RFP p.5 section 2.4.
72. We currently offer hosting for WordPress only. Is this a hosting service you would be comfortable using?
- See answer above.

Miscellaneous

73. Can you provide information on any challenges that you have with your current website?
- Overall, our CMS is clunky and limited in its features. Additionally, the lack of search and cross-indexing functionality/tagging, difficulty in maintenance, security, and outmoded look and feel.
74. What are some of the challenges your team is currently facing?
- See answer to question 73.
75. Who are your competitor organizations (or organizations you aspire to be like)?
- While we appreciate your interest in our organization's place in the market, we're happy to discuss topics like these, as they are relevant, with our selected vendor.
76. What are your website's current tracking capabilities?
- CCE's current website has limited, rudimentary tracking capabilities.
77. What is the purpose of the new website and what goals does it need to achieve?
- Please refer to Section 2 of the RFP. The goals include an updated, intuitive, and engaging website that reflects CCE's organizational goals and mission, and provides easy and engaging access to our educational and policy resources.
78. What are the main actions you want users to take on your site? (e.g. donate, join, sign-up, download content, etc.)
- Please refer to Section 2 of the RFP for requirements. CCE expects users will be able to download content, sign up for events and newsletter, view current reports, donate etc.
79. I saw your Scope-of-Work section in the Document but can we discuss it in detail?
- See RFP p. 2 Section 2. CCE may, at its sole discretion, invite vendors in for additional discussions. Details can be found in the RFP.