



Council for Court Excellence

Request for Proposals Website Redesign

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1. About the Council for Court Excellence

Founded in 1982, the Council for Court Excellence’s (CCE) mission is to enhance the justice system in the District of Columbia to serve the public equitably. CCE uses four core strategies to fulfill our mission. First, we convene diverse stakeholders to address the District’s most pressing justice issues and reach consensus. Second, we evaluate through research to make data-driven recommendations. Third, we advocate for change to advance reforms. Finally, we educate to empower residents and increase civic engagement surrounding the law.

CCE’s organizational model is rooted in cross-sector collaboration; it is central to how we conduct our research, develop policy positions, and design campaigns or educational guides. We recognize that the most innovative, effective solutions are typically created by those closest to the problem, so CCE prioritizes partnering with practitioners, policymakers, service providers, returning citizens, and others involved in or affected by the legal system to build consensus-driven, high-impact, lasting reforms for D.C.

2. Scope of the Project

CCE is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors to redesign, modernize, deploy, and maintain an updated, intuitive, and engaging website that reflects CCE’s goals and mission, and provides easy and engaging access to our educational and policy resources.

CCE has dedicated funding of \$25,000-\$30,000 in calendar year 2023 for this project and will prioritize proposals that are both cost-efficient and high-quality to meet our requirements.

2.1 Resources Provided by CCE

CCE will:

- Identify a project manager and point of contact for this project. The CCE project manager will coordinate with the vendor and CCE staff.
- Provide all branding assets such as logo files, brand guidelines, fonts, and colors.
- Provide all images and graphics including source files.
- Create and provide website content and categories.
- Provide the domain name.
- Coordinate with the existing hosting vendor for deployment and cutover of the new website.

CCE is currently evaluating the possibility of rebranding – which may include a new organizational name and logo. Depending on the outcome of this assessment and timing, these efforts may be integrated, however, website development is not contingent upon rebranding. Vendor responses should address how rebranding would be handled including the new logo, color scheme, and domain name. Vendor proposals should clearly highlight the flexibility and

adaptability of the proposed Content Management System (CMS) in support of this and future changes.

In response to this Request for Proposal (RFP), 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.

CCE will own the website, content, design, domain name, SSL certificates, licenses, any customized source code, and all deliverables resulting from this project.

2.2 Mandatory Requirements

In response to this RFP, vendors will provide a clear and concise approach for designing and deploying a website that meets the following objectives:

- 2.2.1 Organized and designed in an intuitive way that 1) makes it easy to learn about the organization, find CCE's positions on issues of public concern, upcoming events, and the diverse array of resources offered by CCE and 2) helps CCE reach an expanded and diverse audience.
- 2.2.2 Built on a platform that uses current industry best standards and practices and is straightforward, intuitive, extensible, and flexible to meet future changes.
- 2.2.3 The site and platform should have templates and features that can be easily maintained and updated by non-technical CCE staff through a user-friendly interface. Ideally, non-technical CCE staff will be able to embed modules or external scripts without difficulty and create new custom templates or modify existing templates over time.
 - a. Please note, that CCE is currently evaluating a rebranding. Vendor proposals should address how rebranding would be handled including a new logo, color scheme, and domain name, and clearly highlight the flexibility of the recommended CMS in supporting this and future changes.
- 2.2.4 Compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to support access for the visually impaired.
- 2.2.5 Compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 guidelines.
- 2.2.6 Follows best practices, voluntary standards and guidelines developed by the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). The vendor will train CCE users in creating accessible and compliant content.
- 2.2.7 Provides an easy secure way for visitors to donate. Meets the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. Seamlessly integrates with Bloomerang, CCE's current software.
- 2.2.8 Delivers a robust digital library and calendar function that can be easily maintained and updated by non-technical CCE staff.

- 2.2.9 Integrates with back-end databases and mailing lists. Data from forms may be stored in an alternative database. The website should provide seamless integration. CCE currently uses Bloomerang as a CRM and EventBrite for event registration. Other tools or data repositories may be added over time.
- 2.2.10 Is extensible. Enables non-technical CCE staff to embed modules or external scripts without difficulty and create new custom templates or modify existing templates.
- 2.2.11 Supports access by a variety of devices including computers, tablets, and mobile smartphones. The website should deliver an optimized experience to site visitors on their chosen device.
- 2.2.12 Supports and functions with multiple browsers (Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge, Opera, etc.).
- 2.2.13 Delivers print-friendly content.
- 2.2.14 Enables friendly URLs.
- 2.2.15 Supports embedded image and video content, pop-up PDFs, and carousels/sliders.
- 2.2.16 Provides the ability for CCE to easily store, archive, and retrieve content.
- 2.2.17 Delivers intuitive and expansive search capabilities. Vendors should detail and price options to improve standard search features including fuzzy search that allows for text that matches a term closely instead of exactly.
- 2.2.18 Enables content and categories to be quickly and easily created, deployed, searched, and updated by non-technical CCE staff.
- 2.2.19 Supports tagging of content by non-technical CCE staff in multiple categories and supports robust search capability.
- 2.2.20 Provides a dynamic menu structure with the ability to easily add, edit, move, and delete menu items in multiple structural areas of the site.
- 2.2.21 Offers infinite menu levels that allow the addition of an unlimited number of menu levels by CCE.
- 2.2.22 Provides an infinite page structure system that supports the addition of an unlimited number of pages by CCE.
- 2.2.23 Seamlessly integrates data and website analytics with the ability to filter and export overall website statistics, including the ability to view statistics by page or section and present the information in a graphical representation.
- 2.2.24 Integrates website security.
- 2.2.25 Sources SSL Certificate – If necessary, the vendor will obtain one or more SSL certificates.
- 2.2.26 Assists with SEO optimization.

- 2.2.27 Provides documentation on the configuration, management, and setup of the site.
- 2.2.28 Ensures robust quality assurance and user acceptance testing. CCE anticipates a website that launches with no major defects or broken links. All outstanding defects will be tracked, prioritized, and scheduled for fixes as approved by CCE.
- 2.2.29 Includes the provision of testing and staging environments.
- 2.2.30 Meets good response time standards for websites. Meet an average response time between 200 milliseconds and 1 second without degradation during periods of higher volume.
- 2.2.31 Details system uptime, cost considerations, and associated Service Level Agreements (SLA) for 99.5 to 99.9% uptime. The vendor should make a recommendation.

2.3 Optional Features

The vendor shall provide clear and concise cost estimates and timeframes for the following optional features that CCE, at its sole discretion, may pursue.

- 2.3.1 Secure webpage for CCE board members that requires a login and password for access to relevant content. Members once logged in, are presented with personalized content. Website supports automated password reset.
- 2.3.2 Fuzzy search that allows for text that matches a term closely instead of exactly.
- 2.3.3 Blog.
- 2.3.4 Multi-language support.
- 2.3.5 Built-in social media sharing and integration features (tweet, like, share, etc.)/
- 2.3.6 Ability to assign the authoring right to specific users for specific pages/sections of the website.

Some optional features may be included in the initial redesign. CCE understands this will affect time, cost, and project completion. Any changes or additions will be negotiated and included in the final contract.

2.4 Hosting

The vendor will assist CCE in evaluating suitable hosting options. The successful offeror will participate in discussions with CCE and the hosting provider, coordinate with the hosting provider, and provide configuration standards, requirements, and recommendations.

Third-Party Plugins – CCE will allow the vendor to use third-party plugins where appropriate and cost-effective, however, any hosting or maintenance considerations must be clearly identified.

As part of their proposal, vendors may propose and price optional hosting. The term of hosting will be for one base year, with two, one-year options to be exercised at the sole discretion of CCE.

2.5 Operations and Maintenance

The base term of this contract will include one year of maintenance and operations post-implementation. At CCE's sole discretion, it may exercise up to two, one-year options for a total of three years of maintenance and operations during the term of this contract. The vendor shall propose and price ongoing operations and maintenance for the base period and the optional periods.

The vendor's proposed CMS must have qualified and available support included as a part of ongoing services to maintain the website. The vendor should propose a level of support and detail associated Service Level Agreements (SLA) that reflect industry norms for a website of this size, type, and function including coordination with the hosting provider to diagnose and resolve website issues including latency or unavailability. The approach and proposed support services to transition to a new vendor should be detailed in this section.

3. Proposal Submission

3.1 Technical

Vendors must address all items and requirements specified in this RFP. Vendors shall submit a clear and concise proposal that, at a minimum, addresses the following:

- 3.1.1 Executive summary. The vendor should detail its overall understanding of the scope and objectives of this proposal.
- 3.1.2 Vendor qualifications.
 - a) Detail vendor's qualifications including examples of projects with similar scope and size. If the vendor is proposing the use of a subcontractor for any portion of this work, the vendor must clearly identify the subcontractor and provide the qualifications of all subcontractors.
 - b) Provide at least three (3) references from clients for which the offeror provided similar services within the past three years. The information must include the name, address of the firm, contact person with telephone number, a summary of services provided, and the period during which the services were provided.
- 3.1.3 Project management, staffing, and communications plans.
 - a. Explain the project management approach including a detailed description of the tools used to manage the project, exchange information and files with CCE, and track progress, issues, and risks.

- b. Identify personnel assigned to this project, including relevant experience and skills, expected responsibilities, role on the project, and availability.
- c. Describe the high-level communications plan including stakeholder involvement, status reporting, and frequency.

3.1.4 Project Plan and Timeline

- a. A preliminary project plan that includes deliverables, key milestones, and a timeline. Clearly identify the timeline for design, revisions, testing, training, and overall completion. As part of this plan, the vendor will:
 - i. Clearly identify how many revisions it is proposing and the timeline for CCE review and vendor modification.
 - ii. Detail approach to assessment, discovery, and requirements gathering.
 - iii. Define the cutover process and clearly identify any downtime that may be required to transition to the new website.

3.1.5 Design and Functionality Recommendations

- a. Detail the CMS, navigation, security, and analytics.
- b. Specify any hardware, software, or licenses that may be required to implement the proposed website.

3.1.6 Testing

- a. Proposed testing strategy and plan including defect classification and management.
- b. Testing and staging environments and CCE access.
- c. Disability and 508 compliance testing.
- d. Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 guidelines testing.
- e. Quality assurance testing.
- f. Final user acceptance testing and sign-off by CCE prior to website launch. CCE should have the ability to test the final website remotely.
- g. Clearly define what assistance, documentation, and time commitment the vendor expects from CCE resources.

3.1.7 Specify the training approach, timeframe, and training materials (e.g. how to use the website tools, update content, categories, templates, logos, and graphics, running reports or analytics).

3.1.8 Detail the vendor's approach to coordinating with the hosting vendor.

3.1.9 Define levels of post-launch support.

- 3.1.10 Detail operations and maintenance approach including transition to a new vendor.
- 3.1.11 Deliverable schedule.
- 3.1.12 Specify optional hosting approach if the vendor is proposing hosting services.
- 3.1.13 Identify any assumptions.
- 3.1.14 Clearly identify any exceptions taken to the technical requirements and reason. While CCE expects mandatory requirements to be met, if the vendor has a better or more cost-effective option it should be clearly defined to allow CCE to properly evaluate the viability of the option to meet its needs.
- 3.1.15 Confirm and certify that this is work made-for-hire and CCE owns all content, images, licenses, deliverables, domain name, SSL certificates, and customized source code.

3.2 Pricing

Pricing proposals should be submitted as a separate document from the technical proposal. Proposals should include a cost break-down of the solution:

- 3.2.1 Provide a fixed price cost estimate for the overall design and implementation project including all mandatory project requirements. Break down the cost by phase (Discovery, design, training, testing, etc.).
- 3.2.2 Estimated fixed price for each optional feature. CCE recognizes that based on specific requirements this estimate could change. The vendor should make a good-faith effort to ensure the cost estimate is within 10% of the final cost of the change order. Optional features will be developed and implemented at the sole discretion of CCE.
- 3.2.3 If proposed, include a fixed price for optional hosting services. The proposal should show a monthly cost as well as an aggregate.
- 3.2.4 Fixed price monthly fee for basic operations and maintenance. Any optional services or recommendations may be priced separately and clearly defined as enhanced services. The rate card will be used to price any support that is beyond the fixed monthly fee. CCE anticipates that its support needs will be highest in the first year of operation, and reserves the right to reduce support hours in out years. The vendor should clearly define the cost build-up for its fixed monthly fee including hours for each activity.
- 3.2.5 Submit a rate card for change orders for each labor category for the base term and option years.
- 3.2.6 Identify any assumptions made when pricing this proposal.
- 3.2.7 Clearly identify any exceptions taken to the requirements and not priced.

3.3 Submission Requirements

The vendor is advised to review all sections of this RFP and to follow all instructions completely. Failure to make a complete submission as described herein may result in a rejection of the response.

- 3.3.1 Final responses must be received no later than the response date provided in the RFP schedule.
- 3.3.2 Technical and pricing proposals should be submitted as separate documents/files but may be included in the same email submission.
- 3.3.3 Identify the vendor representative responsible for the CCE engagement. This point of contact should be present, and participate in, any discussions and negotiations regarding the initiative with CCE.

4. Proposal Evaluation

4.1 Overview

- CCE assumes no responsibility or liability for any cost the vendor may incur in responding to this RFP.
- CCE reserves the right to negotiate variations in any proposal.
- No reasons will be disclosed for the rejection of a proposal.
- CCE may, at any time, choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to vendors.
- If the vendor fails to address the items as specified above CCE may deem the proposal non-responsive.
- Optional documentation the vendor thinks may be useful to CCE in evaluating its proposal is welcome and should be provided as an addendum. Optional documentation is not a substitute for addressing the requirements in the vendor's proposal.
- Vendors may submit clarifying questions to Misty Thomas misty.thomas@courtexcellence.org via email by the deadline defined in the RFP schedule. All substantive questions and answers will be provided to all offerors.
- All proposals must be presented in accordance with the attached RFP and received no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on the closing date indicated in the RFP schedule.
- The proposal must be submitted in electronic format (MS Word, Excel, PDF) to the CCE point of contact.
- CCE Point of Contact: Misty Thomas, Executive Director, misty.thomas@courtexcellence.org, [202.785.5917](tel:202.785.5917)

4.2 RFP Schedule

CCE's anticipated RFP schedule is set forth below:

- 9/6/2023: RFP release.
- 9/20/2023 (by 5:00 PM ET): Deadline for submitting questions to CCE. The vendor shall submit all questions necessary to prepare its Proposal in one consolidated list to the Point of Contact on or before this deadline. Questions will be submitted by email.
- 9/26/2023: CCE responds to RFP questions. All questions and answers will be issued to all vendors who submitted proposals.
- 10/06/2023 (by 5:00 PM ET): Proposals due.
- At its sole discretion, CCE may request an oral proposal presentation with vendors prior to selection. These may be done in-person or virtually, based on the location and availability of the vendor and CCE staff. Vendors will be given notice no less than three business days in advance.
 - 10/13/2023: Notify vendors selected for interview and/or demonstration.
 - 10/19 and 10/20/2023: Vendor interviews and demonstrations.
- 10/25/2023: All best and final offers are due.
- 10/27/2023: Anticipated notice of award to the successful offeror.
- November 2023 Anticipated project start date.

4.3 Evaluation Criteria

4.3.1 Responses to this RFP will be used to evaluate the capabilities of vendors. CCE will assess vendors based on the following evaluation criteria:

- a. Completeness and clarity of vendor's proposal;
- b. Flexibility and creativity of vendor's proposed solution;
- c. Vendor's ability to convert CCE's objectives and design considerations into a specific tailored solution versus a one-size-fits-all generic response;
- d. Overall cost, competitiveness of rates; and
- e. Information provided by vendor's references.

4.4 Recommendation for Award

CCE reserves the right to make an award, not to make an award, or to cancel this RFP either before or after the date of the RFP response deadline.

4.5 Contract Discussions

CCE will enter into contract discussions with the successful vendor. If the terms and conditions of a contract cannot be successfully established within a reasonable amount of time (as determined by CCE), then contract discussions will be terminated and contract discussions with the next highest-ranking vendor will commence. Negotiations will continue at the sole option of CCE until a contract is signed and approved or all proposals are rejected or the RFP is withdrawn.

4.6 Contract Term

The base contract term will run from project initiation through implementation plus one year of website maintenance post-implementation.

The contract will also include two one-year option periods for operations and maintenance (and hosting if proposed by the vendor) that may be exercised at the sole discretion of CCE.

5. Disclaimers and Acknowledgments

- 5.1.1 CCE makes no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in this RFP or any statements made by representatives of CCE during the procurement process. The vendor is responsible for making its own evaluation of information and data contained in this RFP and in preparing and submitting responses to this RFP.
- 5.1.2 The issuance of this RFP and the receipt of information in response to this RFP shall not, in any way, cause CCE to incur any liability (whether contractual, financial, or otherwise) to the vendor. The vendor is expected to assume all costs incurred in the preparation of its response to this document and in the fulfillment of any other information requested during the evaluation of the responses (including the provision of any oral or written clarifications). CCE assumes no responsibility for these costs.
- 5.1.3 This RFP shall not be construed in any manner to be an obligation by CCE to enter into an agreement or purchase order with any vendor or company. Further, CCE may withdraw or suspend this RFP at any time for any reason. No compensation in any form related to the RFP will be given.
- 5.1.4 CCE reserves the right to accept or reject any response in its sole discretion as well as the right to negotiate once a response has been submitted. All responses received in response to this RFP become the property of CCE, and CCE may use such responses in any capacity in connection with the purposes of this RFP process.
- 5.1.5 This RFP contains information proprietary to CCE. All information contained herein, as well as all information about this website redesign initiative and RFP process, is considered confidential and should be utilized solely for the purpose of presenting information and pricing as specifically requested in this RFP. Any other use of this

information or the disclosure of this information to persons, companies, or organizations without prior written authorization from CCE is strictly prohibited.

- 5.1.6 Vendor is not permitted to announce involvement in, or release any information to third parties regarding, this RFP. This includes all supporting materials and other documentation submitted with the response. Additionally, the vendor should make no references to CCE in any literature, promotional material, brochures, sales presentations, or other materials without CCE's express prior written consent.
- 5.1.7 No communication regarding the vendor's proposal—its promotion, advertisement, or content—shall be made to any CCE Board member, or CCE staff by any member of your organization, its agents, representatives, or subcontractors, except in the course of CCE initiated and sponsored inquiries, briefings, or interviews.
- 5.1.8 The contents of the RFP and all associated documents or information that may be given to vendors are proprietary and shall not be reproduced or revealed in whole or in part except to those members of the Offeror's organization who will be actively assisting in the preparation of the proposal response.