

ADDENDUM #2

Request for Proposal: RFP # 2022-12-22
WEBSITE RE-DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Addendum Issue Date: January 17, 2023

RFP Closing Date & Time: January 24, 2023 (5:00 pm EST)

To All Potential Bidders:

Addendum #2 is issued to modify the previously issued RFP document and/or given for informational purposes and is hereby an official document of the RFP. Please attach this addendum to the documents in your possession. Per the RFP, the bidder shall acknowledge receipt of any and all addenda, if any, by listing the Addenda by number(s) and date(s) in their proposal.

- 1. Can you clarify what the application deadline is? The cover page indicates Jan. 16 at 5pm EST while section 4.1 and 4.3 have Jan. 20 at 5pm EST as the deadline.**

Ans. The application submission deadline is January 24th, 2023 (5pm EST)

- 2. A 10MB limit for file size is stipulated in the RFP. Can multiple emails be sent with more than one file, each of which can be combined to make one proposal, or is there a preference to only have one file for the proposal?**

Ans. There is no preference. Proponents can send only one or multiple files if they are clearly identified.

- 3. Is there a page limit for the response to ACCES' RFP?**

Ans. There is no limit in the proposal's number of pages.

- 4. Would it be possible to receive the appendix documents that are required to be incorporated in the proposal in Word format? (To save us from reproducing them)**

Ans: To request a Word version of the Appendices below, please email procurement@acesemployment.ca:

- APPENDIX A - Request for Proposals (RFP) Cover Page
- APPENDIX B - Request for Proposals (RFP) Checklist
- APPENDIX C - Conflict of Interest Statement
- APPENDIX D - References
- APPENDIX E - GST/HST Registration - Confirmation of Exemption
- APPENDIX H – Bid Form

5. Is ACCES open to two companies bidding as a consortium, one Canadian and another USA based company?

Ans. ACCES would be open to receiving this kind of bid.

6. Is ACCES open to an east coast agency to do this work? or do you have a local preference?

Ans. ACCES would be open to receiving this kind of bid.

7. Is the agency that built your current website invited to bid on this project?

Ans. As this is an RFP, anyone interested can bid on this project.

8. Do you have an existing partner, and will they be bidding on this project/RFP?

Ans. We do currently work with a Web design development firm. This is an open bid, and we are unsure if they will be bidding on this project.

9. What is the existing Content Management System Platform being used?

Ans. The existing CMS is Wordpress.

10. Do you have a preference for the new Content Management System (Open Source or Commercial)?

Ans. The RFP states that our current site was built using Wordpress and that our preference is to continue with that platform. However, we are open to other platforms if a strong case can be made.

11. Is there a project budget you can disclose? Is this budget inclusive of hosting and support costs?

Ans. We will not disclose the budget.

12. Can you provide a detail list of the of API integration points between your website (including chatbot and job board) and Salesforce? (Would you have any specifications, use case or user flow diagrams associated with the integration work that was done?)

Ans. There is a module on the website that uses an API to fetch event data from Salesforce to populate an events calendar on the website. This API runs on a set frequency throughout the day (not real-time). [Aimee gathering more info re: API for chatbot]

13. Can you tell us more about how your Interactive Job Board currently integrates with Salesforce?

Ans. There is no current integration between Salesforce and the Job Board. We are currently exploring options related to this. The work to build this integration would

not lie with the web development team. We would likely need the web team to deploy a similar set-up to the events page to pull-in jobs data.

14. Can you explain what integration with Salesforce the blog would have?

Ans. There is no current integration between Salesforce and the blog and no plans to have that integration

15. Does ACCES have a library of images that can be used for the website or are you looking to your partner to source those images?

Ans. ACCES would provide a library of images.

16. If rebuilding in WordPress, are you currently happy with the backend management of your job board and event calendar? (can these be used as the foundation for the new site or do they need an overhaul on the backend as well as the frontend?)

Ans. We are currently happy with the backend management of the job board and event calendar.

17. You are currently using WordPress for your Content Management – have you had custom plugin development built for you and installed on your website?

Ans. Yes there has been some custom plugin development particularly for integrations with our chatbot (IBM Watson), CRM (Salesforce), and marketing automations (Mailchimp)

18. P.4 mentions using a WordPress template design. Could you please confirm that ACCES's new website would be designed and developed from a pre-built WordPress theme rather than being a custom build?

Ans. The understanding is that the selected vendor would select and customize WordPress themes to meet with ACCES brand guidelines and subsequent site development would be based on the agreed-upon template.

19. Currently are you using any specific WordPress theme, or it was fully custom development?

Ans. The parent theme is BeTheme, we have made a custom child version of it.

20. Are you using any paid WordPress plugins or services for website which we should be aware about?

Ans.

- The Events Calendar PRO
- Yoast SEO Premium

21. Will you continue to use Google Translate for multilingual support?

Ans. Yes

22. On your website you have a page translator installed – can you provide details on what plug-in you are using for this?

Ans. WPML (WordPress Multi-Lingual Plugin)

23. Do we need to consider multilingual website development or need to use Google Translation tool as on the current <https://acesemployment.ca/> website?

Ans. Yes

24. In the RFP, it notes you are looking for hosting recommendations. If we propose a hosting package, how would you like that reflected in the Bid Form?

Ans. Currently our hosting service is separate from our current website design and development vendor. We would be looking for separate pricing and details on hosting services.

25. Currently which cloud hosting service are you using? Which cloud hosting are you planning to move?

Ans. WP Engine is our current hosting service. We are fine with this service, but we also want to consider recommendations.

26. Do you have a preference for hosting? Options would be you host on-premise, you host on your cloud, or we host on our Sitecore cloud.

Ans. We would prefer cloud hosting services and want to consider recommendations.

27. With your current hosting environment:

a. What is the size of the server?

Ans. The Website uses 3.7GB of storage

b. What technology requirements are included (i.e., hardware, software, firewalls, backups, etc)

Ans. Only requirements are those needed to run WordPress

c. Is email hosting included? If yes, how many email accounts do you have?

Ans. There is no email hosting.

28. Is your phase 1 launch timeline of April 2023 firm? (Confirming your reference to phase 1 in Section 3 – Deliverables and Experience is the launch of the rebuilt website and doesn't align with the phases in the milestone table?)

Ans. We would like to have our new site launched in April

29. How much of your past articles, events and news are you looking to migrate to the next generation website?

Ans. Our Events page is integrated with Salesforce and, as such, is current. Regarding Articles and News, would be looking to migrate approx. 90% of the content.

30. Do you have an internal resource who is writing/creating the content for the website and specifically for the eAcces area of the website?

Ans. Yes. This content is produced by our Marketing and Communications department.

31. How much copy do you anticipate being provided by ACCES versus the bid's winner having to do? Will any existing copy be taken from the current site?

Ans. All of the copy will either be taken from the current site or produced by ACCES.

32. In Appendix G – Key Milestones, you mention that the contract will be awarded in Phase 1. Will you then be asking multiple companies to do Phase 1 as spec work, before awarding the contract?

Ans. We would like the prospective bidders to provide a high-level perspective of methodology and approach. The details of strategic analysis and functional requirement development can happen as part of phase 1 but will happen after the contract is awarded.

33. Is the UX planning included in Phase 1 of the project or lumped into Phase 2 design?

Ans. We envision the details of the UX planning happening in Phase 2, but some articulation of approach in Phase 1

34. Given the website features that have been identified in the RFP, are there any priorities (or are the features ranked in any order as a wishlist), particularly from a budgetary perspective? Are there any mandatories based on this feature list? Would you like our pricing to be broken down based on the feature list?

Ans. We are hoping all the features can be a part of this redesign and that our new site will at least retain and redeploy our current feature set and functionality

35. A launch date of April 15th 2023 is very aggressive, is there anything specific pushing this timeline? Is the ACCES team open to a more flexible/extended timeline? If the launch date is flexible, can you provide a time range of when you expect the work to be completed? If the launch date is firm, is there any scope that can be launched later in an additional phase?

Ans. We are hoping to launch the website in April. We would be open to a more flexible/extended timeline within the same budget, to enable the vendor to complete the full feature set.

36. The RFP states: "The launch of the first phase of the website should happen by April 15th 2023 with the rest of the service contract dedicated to website maintenance, upgrades, and improvements." What would be considered first phase? Is there flexibility in timelines?

Ans. There may be some flexibility in timelines. We would like to launch the redesigned site in April. The vendor we choose will have the opportunity to be the ongoing maintenance and support vendor

37. What is the current technology stack in use, e.g. CMS, hosting environment etc?

Ans. Stack is LAMP and CMS is WordPress

38. How many people would be involved in updating the website and what level of technical knowledge do they have?

Ans. Approximately 5 people. Rudimentary knowledge of WordPress (no coding knowledge), simple creation of pages based on theme/build and utilizing built-in plugins.

39. P. 6 states Custom Admin Areas as part of website functional requirements. What is meant by that? What does it include?

Ans. This refers to customizing the dashboard of Wordpress so that site maintenance and updates are easily accomplished.

40. Would you consider switching from QGiv to another third-party integration service for donations?

Ans. Currently Qgiv integrates with Salesforce, but we would consider recommendations

41. Are there any challenges you are facing with QGiv payment solution? We are asking as it has been highlighted under section 3.4 Website Functional Requirements, like "It would be preferred to integrate the donation form into the website to improve user experience and increase trust in the donation process."

Ans. We've been happy with QGiv. When we first redesigned our site in 2020, we were reviewing our methods for accepting donations. We would listen to recommendations in this area.

42. Regarding the request for demonstrated experience with integration of Chatbots that "performs effectively on desktop, mobile and tablets across all operating systems and multiple browsers," can you tell us about any problems you have been experiencing with the current implementation of your AI Chatbot? We are curious to know if the problems you are currently experiencing are chatbot-specific or more

generally related to the ability to seamlessly customize and integrate 3rd party services into a website.

Ans. Our Chatbot is a recent integration for us. We are learning and we are happy with the performance so far, but we are always engaged in making it better to serve our clients more effectively.

43. Which email service platform are you using? Is it Microsoft 365, Google Workspace or other?

Ans. Microsoft 365

44. Considering COVID guideline, are you open for Virtual meet on Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet or Skype?

Ans. Yes.

45. What kinds of challenges you are facing with your current website?

Ans.

- *Difficulty in finding/navigating pages. There is a lot of bouncing to program pages without a direct way to locate information about specific programs.*
- *The search bar is not apparent at first glance on the homepage, it is not obvious where to look for it.*
- *There is a high bounce rate, so people are not on a page for more than a few seconds without exiting the website.*
- *We have a lot of great content that just needs to be better funneled into categories to make the user experience more seamless without having to click on various webpages to find the answer.*

46. What is a purpose behind this redesign?

Ans. See answer above, including useability improvements, UX redesign and improvements etc.

47. What is your current website traffic?

Ans. In a given month, we average 108,000 users

48. Have you developed custom API to establish connections between AI Chatbot (IBM Watson and Discovery) and Salesforce instance?

Ans. We have developed integrations for IBM's API

49. Is there any CDN or Page Caching service in use like AWS cloud front, Cloudflare, sucuri, WP Rocket?

Ans. The host we are using leverages Cloudflare on top of some other technologies.

50. Are there any other connected services apart from Salesforce, IBM AI Chatbot which we should know and will need to take care while developing website?

Ans. No

51. Currently how many environments are you maintaining for website? Development, Staging/Testing and Production?

Ans. Development, Staging, and production

52. How will you provide us access of current website to migrate them on redesigned website? Will it be in document form, or you will provide us access of your current website backend admin?

Ans. Provide access to website via backend admin

53. Do you have access of all the assets of the current hosted website?

Ans. Yes, we have access to all of the assets.

54. There is a note about Import and Export under section 3.4 Website Functional Requirements. Would you please explain for which purpose do you need this Import and Export feature? It is highlighted as a major components. It would be helpful if you share insights.

Ans. The thinking here is that if there is significant data set or content set that is needed to either incorporate into the website or get from the website (for reporting or analysis), we could do so in an automated, rather than manual, fashion.

55. Please share more insight about Dynamic program date population requirements? Here are you talking about various Event programs?

Ans. We do have this functionality now with our events page and our current integration with Salesforce. We are looking to continue with this functionality

56. Are you using vault system or tool to maintain confidential information and credentials?

Ans. No. There is no confidential information in use at the moment.

57. Are there any specifics that we will need to consider during the post launch maintenance?

Ans. None that we can currently express except for ease of website updates and simple page creation through WP dashboard. We would be looking for a vendor to work with on more complex website changes.

58. How many concurrent users would your team have? Between content authors, admins, developers, etc., how many unique users would be logged in at the same time on any given day?

Ans. We anticipate approximately 5 or 6 unique users

59. Are there any future digital initiatives we should be aware of, such as adding in Personalization, Customer Data Platform, Digital Asset Management, etc.?

Ans. We are currently developing additional pages that will pull content from Salesforce but they will use technology already incorporated into the current site.

60. How many stakeholders will there be from the client-side, and will a project lead be appointed?

Ans. A project lead will be appointed. We will have approximately 5 internal stakeholders.

61. How much content will need to be migrated from old main site to new CMS?

Ans. Most of the site will be migrated. Think 80-90%

62. How much of the current content is to be rewritten vs moved over vs. new content created from scratch?

Ans. The vendor will not have to create content. Our marketing team will lead on that content. We will be migrating much of the content with the option to review, revise, and rewrite some of that content internally.

63. How many web administrators does ACCES expect to have at launch?

Ans. We would expect approximately 5 or 6 web administrators

64. Back in Sept 2020, there was an RFP for website redesign development What happened with this particular project ? Why did it not launch ?

Ans. That project did launch. We redesigned the website. We are now looking to do it again but using much of the technology that was created in the first redesign.

65. Is ACCES open to selecting a CMS platform during planning vs. just a direct recommendation during the RFP process? (This would allow ACCES to review more than one platform through both demos and trial accounts to ensure fit, along with clear visibility into each platform's total cost of ownership.)

Ans. Our thinking was to stick with WP and the technology integrations we created during our last redesign, but we are open to reviews and recommendations.

66. Is it your preference for an Open Source CMS solution ? ie. Word Press, Drupal ?

Ans. Our preference was to continue with WordPress

67. Is there any organizational predisposition to a specific CMS platform or technology stack, i.e. .NET or PHP?

Ans. Our current CMS is WordPress and the Stack is LAMP. We were going to continue in that vein but we are open to recommendations

68. Are their specific Service Level requirements around uptime and resolution response times?

Ans. Answer forthcoming...

69. Do you have any websites of other organizations that ACCES admires and would deem best in class, even if from a different sector or industry, that you could share?

Ans. We do not have examples at the present moment, but could provide some examples early in the process

70. Are there any social media integrations of Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook etc.

Ans. Currently, there is not, but we are interested in this option.

71. Can you please share with us all of the business platforms/ tools (CRM) that you currently use which would require integration?

Ans. Salesforce, Mailchimp, and our AI chatbot that was built on IBM Watson

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