



Northeast Higher Education District

Request for Proposal for Web Development

ADDENDUM NO. 1

The Proposal due date of October 15, 2:00 p.m. Central Time will not change as a result of this Addendum.

CLARIFICATIONS/QUESTIONS:

Questions	Answers
Can companies from the U.S. apply?	Yes. International vendors are free to submit an RFP. The vendor must adhere to the Minnesota State contract terms and conditions .
Is travel required to the campuses for meetings?	No, travel is not required to the NHED campus locations. Presentations, if required, can be conducted via electronic meeting software such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams during US Central Time.
Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA?	Yes, tasks could be performed internationally. The vendor must adhere to the Minnesota State contract terms and conditions .
Can we submit the proposals via email?	Proposals must be received electronically no later than 2:00 p.m. CT, October 15, 2021. Recipient timestamp will be deemed the official time of submission. Proposals must be emailed to the following individual: Molly Nelson, Dean of Enrollment Management Molly.Nelson@rainyriver.edu Responses must be submitted via email in Adobe PDF format. Attachment limits are 25 MB. If file sizes are too large, please create multiple smaller files and email them separately. Hyperlinks to submissions in cloud storage will not be accepted. All pages must be numbered and font size no smaller than 10 point. NHED's email receipt timestamp will be used for submission consideration not the senders. Proposals received after this date and time

	will not be accepted. Fax responses will not be considered.
Are any details available to share regarding the brand identity plan, such as, the wireframe, home page design, navigation plan, and secondary level page templates?	These items are currently under development as part of a separate contract and will be provided upon the awarding of the contract related to this RFP.
Is a sitemap available?	Yes. A sitemap has been created for the new site as a foundation. There may be some changes to the map depending on our development, but the base structure is currently set.
Which form of SEO engagement would you like for us to undertake?	We will look for advisement from the selected vendor. However, based on current standards we would be looking for a basic site optimization or technical SEO mixed with the majority being engagement SEO. (This may be quoted outside of the actual RFP depending on services and longevity of the SEO management. Like an ad on to the original site build bid)
If you do want a content rewrite, how many pages do you anticipate needing written?	Content will be provided. Any rewriting of content will be on a page-by-page basis due to structure, architecture, and form.
What is your not to exceed budget?	Please design your quote to the requirements listed in the RFP. You may also quote additional services as ad-ons if you feel they will be beneficial. Please clearly note any add-on services outside of the base RFP quote.
How many proposals are you hoping to collect? Are you able to share who?	We are planning to collect an array of proposals to find the best fit for our requirements. We will not be listing companies submitting proposals before the opening. There will be a public opening as listed in the RFP schedule.
What is the preferred engagement model (Time and Materials, fixed price, etc.)?	The RFP requests a proposal based on the deliverables requested. When evaluating proposals, total cost will be factor in the decision. This makes the work performed to meet those deliverables a "fixed cost". If deliverables are required outside of the proposal, it can be discussed as a part of the contract phase or as a part of a new contract.
Is the decision to build on the WordPress platform a set decision, or would the clients entertain options/alternatives to WordPress?	WordPress has become the industry standard for our needs, and we have decided this is the platform that we will be using going forward.
Which platform is the site being migrated from? Is it an existing CMS system?	There are currently 5 different sites that will be migrated that currently use different platforms. They are currently built on existing CMS systems.

About many pages or pieces of content will need to be migrated under scope?	There will be around 250 pages of added content. This content will be migrated in several diverse ways as we are migrating from 5 different sites. Content will be reviewed and may also be provided in .doc or .docx formats as well.
Does the new site need to be designed/deployed to be mobile-friendly?	Yes. We expect the finished project to be completely mobile friendly and ADA compliant.
Is the client open to the vendor's approach to project planning and project management? (i.e. user story tracking & sprint planning)	Vendor's approach to project planning and management should be outlined in vendor's proposal.
Is there a minimum browser version that the new site needs to support?	The new site must support all modern browsers, including pads and mobile devices up to three years old (e.g., Edge but not IE, etc.). The site must also support modern screen readers and other assistive technology (tabbed browsing, stylus, pointers, etc.).
Are there any custom content types/data types desired to be implemented in WordPress?	There will be a variety of utilities and applications that we will be looking to implement in the site.
Are there any custom widgets/plugins that would need to be implemented as part of this effort? (i.e. custom site components, carousels, sliders, or similar UI/UX components)	Yes – all the above.
Will the system need to integrate with external systems? If so, what are those systems specifically? (i.e. LMS, CRM, or other CMS systems)	We are exploring integration with an outside calendar, social media platforms, and direct email. Integration with our CRM system is currently performed through existing links.
Will the individual campuses under this site umbrella need to have their own microsities/ subsites as part of this WordPress deliverable? In other words, is this a multisite or single site WordPress deliverable?	This will be a single site deliverable. The site will include an estimated 250 pages which will include individual campus pages or systems, but they will be hosted under one base URL.
How will the Vendor need to access the backend of the site if it is to be hosted on the Minnesota State system? (i.e. VPN or portal)	Minnesota State infrastructure will provide the selected vendor with access to the resources needed to develop the site in Microsoft Azure.
Will the site be hosted on a physical server or VM on the Minnesota State system? Or is this a hybrid-cloud system?	The site is planned to be hosted on a cloud-based web server in Microsoft Azure. (Alternative site hosting may be quoted as an additional feature)
To what extent does the new site need to be tracked by Google Analytics?	We will be looking for reportable site and visitor tracking along with SEO optimization. This is not required to be Google Analytics driven but will need to meet tracking requirements.

What data points and metrics need to be tracked as part of the deliverable?	We will be looking for base metrics. Click through rates, site visits, demographics where available. We will be looking for additional advice from the vendor outside of the base requirements.
Can you share any budgetary information about this project with us, is there any assigned budget for this project?	Please design your quote to the requirements listed in the RFP. You may also quote additional services as ad-ons if you feel they will be beneficial. Please clearly note any add-on services outside of the base RFP quote.
Is there an incumbent company or organization with an advantage for this project?	No. Based on Minnesota State policy, proposals will be accepted from all companies and evaluated equally based on the requirements set forth in the RFP.
Can you provide the list of systems or 3rd party API integrations you might need, beside the social media platforms?	We will be looking to acquire an appointment calendar, social media integration, blog post, calendar, interactive posting site, photo gallery, and additional integrations determined by continued design/web recommendations.
How many pages/assets of content are to be migrated? What format can/will the content be provided?	The new site will be estimated around 250 total pages. This content will be migrated from an estimated 900 current pages. Most data are planned to be farmed from current site structure and modified before being migrated to the new site. Ideally this will be completed in a word document format.
Are there any multilingual requirements beyond using Google Translate or similar?	We will not have multilingual requirements beyond Google Translate. Additionally, the site needs to be ADA compliant.
How many templates do you want us to design?	Six to eight templates will be provided. Additional templates may be required based on the architecture of the site as it is being developed. Modifications to existing templates may also be required.
Do you expect the vendor to create content for the websites?	The vendor will need to potentially modify content to fit a specific area or may need to develop SEO based content. The page content will be provided.
How many visits does the current site have per month?	This will be a merger of 6 current sites. All sites currently have high traffic levels.
What is the targeted 'go live' date?	The website will need to be live for testing by 4/1/2022 and must be fully live by 05/23/2021.
What is the expected duration of the project?	The chosen vendor will give support to the project through test phase and launch. This will put the contracted work through June 2022. Separate from this RFP, we will be looking for a long-term partnership for minimal on-going maintenance via annual contract.
Can you confirm that no hosting services will be required?	We currently have an option for hosting the site through our current server system. Will be evaluating hosting sites during this project with a final determination before our testing and upload phases.

Who are the key stakeholders on this project and what are their roles?	This site will be developed with the focus being on marketing and brand awareness. The site will also need to meet the needs of our current students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders.
How involved will these stakeholders be throughout the process?	The vendor will be provided with initial templates that have been developed from stakeholder and brand development. The vendor will be working with a small web team through the initial build. When we reach the site test, additional stakeholders will be involved in testing and evaluation.
What is the average turnaround we can expect for making decisions on key deliverables?	Key decisions will be made by a small web development team. This specifically has been limited to making the decision process fast with a goal of decisions being made in under 24 hours during the standard work week whenever possible.
What does a successful outcome of working with a website development company look like to you?	An active website meeting the needs of our end users that is optimized for mobile, pad, and computer use and is ADA compliant. A successful company will be a partner in success and provide guidance in their areas of expertise to meet the requirements of our team.
Is there a budget set aside for this project? In our experience, similar projects require a budget of over \$100k. Is there a budget cap that can be shared with us that will allow us to propose realistic and appropriate solutions?	Please design your quote to the requirements listed in the RFP. You may also quote additional services as ad-ons if you feel they will be beneficial. Please clearly note any add-on services outside of the base RFP quote.
For this project is there an incumbent that will be participating in the RFP process?	No. This is a new site and a merger of 5 individual colleges who have worked with a variety of vendors. There is no planned coordination between existing vendors and the successful bidder.
According to the RFP (page 3) the current branding firm will provide “As part of that brand identity plan, the firm is developing a high-level web design plan that includes a wireframe, homepage design, navigation plan, and templates for six secondary level pages.” For estimation purposes, can AVL be provided access to these draft templates and plans? Depending on the complexity of these artifacts, the level of development may vary greatly.	The artifacts will be based on visual design with a focus on the presentation of the site. These templates are in the early development phase and will not be available for review before the RFP but can be assumed to have visual focus. It should be noted these templates may require modifications to fit the build architecture.
How often will the website be updated and why? Is there an established content workflow and approval process? What determines the placement of existing content within the site?	The website will need to be updated by end users through a content management system. There are assumable updates that will be needed daily in relation to the calendar, blog, events, pictures, and updated information. The structure will be updated only occasionally on an as

	needed basis. Separate from this RFP, we will be looking for a long-term partnership for minimal on-going maintenance via annual contract.
How will social media content be integrated on the website? What social media channels are currently leveraged?	Currently there are a variety of social media sites used. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, YouTube, along with one off services. Currently we use picture integration and well as a few news feed integrations for key areas. These usable in the future site as well.
The RFP outlines “Migration of all content to the new website” a major project deliverable. What is the anticipated volume of content that will be moved to the new website? Are there several pages we can use for estimation?	We are estimating around 250 total new pages. This will be coming from around 900 current pages. Staff will be minimizing this data prior or during content migration.
Who will be responsible for developing added content that will need to be developed for the website? In our experience, a new website often requires new (or edited) content to reflect new thinking or website architecture.	Internal staff will be responsible to develop content. The successful vendor will have some level of autonomy to develop content required to meet the needs of the site or architecture. The development team will also have access to the College’s resources to ensure needs outside of their ability will be met in a timely fashion.
The RFP notes that all traffic will be directed to each campus’ unique athletic website. For the sake of this proposal, can AVL assume no development of athletic websites and/or content strategy for these sites is included in this project? Similarly, can we assume other web-based systems like Enterprise Systems (student / faculty tools, LMS and information systems)?	Development of the athletic sites will be included in this web project as well. This is included in the 250-page estimate. Depending on site needs and functionality, these specific pages may be merged with an outside vendor that holds the database for our athletic conference. (Presto)
Will any internal development staff be leveraged for this project? Please list the anticipated resources and the role that they will fill in the project.	Internal staff will help with guidance, site form, and key decision making. Internal staff will not be helping with development.
Can you discuss any current or prospective integrations with outside third-party services or tools? (How many third-party services will be required? What services? Which needs get fulfilled?)	Third party services or tools will be added based on limitations of site development (items that cannot effectively be built into the site with development) currently we use a scheduling integration, calendar, blog, news, slideshow, social media, and various site-specific needs. (Noted many of these are currently hosted through WordPress)
Specifically, for example, is there a CRM used to collect form data and manage contact information?	No. Integrations are currently linked to Minnesota State forms and information. We may be looking to integrate with outside calendars, email systems, social media, and internal platforms.

<p>Can we assume the website will support English language only and will not require multi-lingual support or translation? For estimation, should we assume similar functionality to the five individual college websites including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Calendar / Events ○ Contact Forms ○ News ○ Document Library /Management ○ Staff Directory ○ Search ○ Maps ○ Donations ○ Appointment Scheduling ○ Links to eServices 	<p>Yes. Google Translate can serve as this function. Note the site will needs to be ADA compliant.</p>
<p>As noted in the RFP, the developed website will be hosted by the Minnesota State system IT division. Please describe the current hosting environment and any technical limitations or deployment processes. Does the hosting environment offer development and staging environments?</p>	<p>The new website will be managed using a WordPress CMS on a web server hosted in Microsoft Azure. Deployments to the web server outside of the WordPress setup will be coordinated by Minnesota State ITS and managed according to the specific needs of the requested setup. In some cases, a dedicated SFTP/FTPS can be set up for publishing purposes from an external server (e.g., for publishing from an external CMS) or to deploy code managed in an external repository. If additional application code and/or databases are required for the project, the deployment processes for those applications will be implemented on a case-by-case basis according to the needs of the setup. Development and staging environments are available upon request.</p>
<p>In bringing 5 schools together, will the 5 schools be using the same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calendar/Event system • News Hub • Faculty Directories • Staff Directories 	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>Will the 5 sites be truly merged into one, or will each school retain some of its 'personality'?</p>	<p>A sitemap and content will be provided to the successful vendor. As a part of this map there will be a campus section of the site for specific services offered at that campus only. The focus of the site will be bringing all campuses into one driven experience.</p>
<p>The RFP asks for Migration of all content to the new website, but as the entities merge, do you anticipate being able to curb key portions of content?</p>	<p>There will be a significant amount of data that will be mitigated or combined. Much of the data may also be merged into content from .doc or .docx documents.</p>

Will the iFactory team be able to review the Design and Wireframes prior to creating an estimate?	These items are currently under development as part of a separate contract and will be provided to the successful bidder on this contract when they are completed.
Do you have a budget you can share?	Please design your quote to the requirements listed in the RFP. You may also quote additional services as ad-ons if you feel they will be beneficial. Please clearly note any add-on services outside of the base RFP quote.
What is your vision for Pathways, do you see one single experience for all schools, or will it be different for each?	This will be a singular site with pathways that will allow users to explore individual campuses as well for specific services, but most of the site will be designed to market the college as a single entity.
What is driving the May 23 launch date? Would you consider moving it out?	No. The May 23 rd date is firm as it is the date that the new College will be officially launched. We are designing this process around a brand launch and additional factors. Vendors will be required to meet this date.
Were the wireframe and designs completed by a firm or internal resource? If a firm, can you tell us who did this work and if they are bidding on development?	Six to eight templates will be provided. Additional templates may be required based on the architecture of the site as it is being developed. Modifications to existing templates may also be required.
Were the designs created with the WordPress CMS in mind?	Yes.

The above ADDENDUM shall be attached to and become part of the bid. Receipt of this Addendum shall be acknowledged by including it with the bid. Failure to do so may subject BIDDER to disqualification.

Date This Solicitation Was Posted: October 8, 2021

END OF ADDENDUM NO. 1