The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay (Alliance) has received multiple comments and questions related to its REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL for a web developer to (1) design and develop a new website for the Alliance and (2) provide maintenance training to Alliance staff to allow for basic in-house website updates moving forward. Questions and comments have been categorized, in some cases summarized, and answered below.

Website RFP Question Response Document - September 4, 2020

Administrative / Budget

Q: Does the Alliance have a budget ceiling or range set for this request?
A: The Alliance anticipates moving forward with a proposal anywhere from $10,000 - $25,000, though proposals outside this range will be considered. The Alliance expects that the proposal price depends on the level of services provided. As indicated in the RFP, the Alliance will favor cost-efficient budgets.

Q: When does the Alliance plan to award the RFP? / When does the Alliance plan to kick off the RFP project?
A: Late September or early October.

Q: Are contractors outside the United States considered for this RFP?
A: No. The Alliance will not hire entities working outside of the United States for this work as per our internal policies.

Q: What are the roles and skill sets of the Alliance staff members who will be responsible for maintaining the site?
A: Alliance staff members who will be working on this project have a basic understanding of WordPress, and routinely update existing pages. These staff members also are experienced in graphic design and communicating on various media platforms.
Site Structure & Appearance

Q: Does the Alliance have any sort of brand book other than its impact document that includes font, color requirements, etc.?
A: Yes, the Alliance maintains and will provide a style guide that details the correct use of our logo, fonts, and colors.

Q: How big is the site? / Do you estimate the size and scale of the new Alliance site will be similar to the existing site? / How many pages is the site?
A: The Alliance expects that the size of the updated website will remain relatively consistent with the size of the current website.

Q: Understanding that the overall style of the site will be updated, how many pages will be transferred over “as is,” with the same imagery and content, and how many will need to be updated with new imagery, text and a custom design? For example would you like to see your Volunteer page stay in the same basic format, or would you like a fresh take on page as a whole.
A: All pages need to be redesigned with updated photos and copy. Alliance staff anticipate providing updated photos and copy.

Q: Are there new pages that will need to be added as part of this project?
A: Yes, the Alliance expects to work with the contractor to re-evaluate the structure of the website map and new pages may be added in the process.

Q: Is creating a membership portion of the site for members to pay/renew online in the scope of this project?
A: No.

Q: Do you require any assistance in terms of copywriting?
A: While this is not a requirement of the RFP, the Alliance will consider copywriting services included in proposals.

Q: How many custom templates does the Alliance require?
A: We currently have 20 templates and anticipate that number will decline.

Site Functionality

Q: Will the Alliance provide access to website analytic data to the awarded consultant?
A: Yes.
Q: It looks like you may be using WooCommerce to collect your donations, if so, is this doing everything you need it to do, or does it need to be enhanced?
A: We will no longer be using WooCommerce. This does not need to be integrated into the new website.

Q: I believe you may be using the Events Calendar plugin for your events; if so is that meeting all your needs?
A: We are using the Events Manager plugin, but would like additional capabilities.

Q: When the RFP talks about improving back-end functionality, is that specific to problems with the Avada theme Fusion Builder, or are there other elements that you’d like to see improved?
A: We are open to suggestions on improving functionality, including moving off of the Avada theme and having a custom built theme.

Q: I found my way to the https://www.chesapeakenetwork.org/ site, which appears to have Group functionality through BuddyPress, and manages some events. Is that site/functionality included in this scope?
A: No.

Q: Do you require any kind of member portal to manage recurring donations/memberships, or perhaps provide member-specific content/discounts?
A: No.

Q: Who does the Alliance currently host its website with and what is the monthly charge?
A: Website hosting is not prioritized in review of these proposals.

Q: Is the Alliance happy with WordPress or does the Alliance need to move to a new CMS?
A: The Alliance is willing to consider alternate CMS’.

Q: The RFP deliverables “Include advanced SEO setup;” are you looking simply for the inclusion of a plugin that will make it easy to enter metadata, or are you looking for a full SEO optimization project in which we’d do research on the best keyword opportunities, and then optimize the copy?
A: Both, inclusion of a plugin and optimized copy.

Q: If you’re looking for a full optimization, I’d love to know if you have any specific targets or pages you’d like to focus on.
A: Yes, our four program area pages which includes Forest, Agriculture, Green Infrastructure and Stewardship and Engagement.
General / Miscellaneous

Q: What are the nonprofit industry standards you’re hoping to meet? Are you referring to general best practices, or something specific, such as ADA compliance?
A: The RFP refers to general best practices for nonprofit website design.

Q: Can you describe the funnel that you’d like to see implemented? If you are looking for a marketing funnel, do you need help creating it?
A: The marketing funnel we would like to implement will be determined once website goals are outlined. We request assistance in creating website goals.

Q: The RFP indicates a difficulty in measuring goals. Is there something specific that you’re hoping the website can do to gauge impact?
A: The current site does not reflect organizational changes outlined in our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan, is difficult to navigate, and inadequately communicates our programs, impact and values.

There were questions relating to the Alliance’s vision of the website, the experience of the use, the Alliance’s pain points and website goals.
A: The Alliance strives to have our organizational vision, mission, and values reflected in our website and reaching our broad audience. Excerpts from our 2019-2022 Strategic Plan:

**Vision**

Clean streams and rivers flowing through resilient landscapes, cared for by the people who live, work, and play in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

**Mission**

The Alliance brings together communities, companies, and conservationists to improve our lands and waters.

**Values**

- Collaborative: We believe in partnering across sectors and regions to achieve a larger, collective impact.
- Inclusive: We are partners who demonstrate integrity and amplify diverse voices for equitable impact.
- Results-Driven: We drive with data, promote informed action, and hold ourselves and our partners accountable for measurable impact.