Request for Proposals

URBAN & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY INSTITUTE, OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE

Website Design, Development & Hosting

November 30, 2016

Contact
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1. SUMMARY

The Los Angeles Farm to School Network is a program of the Urban & Environment Policy Institute at Occidental College (UEPI). UEPI is creating a website for the Los Angeles Farm to School Network and will be accepting proposals for a Website Development Consultant to design, develop, and host the website. This will be a concept to completion production. There is no existing website but the proposed designs should be in line with the other website properties.

2. BACKGROUND

Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College (UEPI)

UEPI (the client) is a community oriented research and advocacy organization based at Occidental College in Los Angeles. UEPI is dedicated to creating a more just, livable, and green society through program work in food systems, the built environment, and transportation. UEPI has been a leader in the Farm to School movement for nearly 20 years, helping to bring healthy food from local farms to schools and childcare sites while providing students with related lessons on health, nutrition, agriculture, and gardening. Farm to School/Preschool programs help children understand where their food comes from and the importance of supporting their local communities, while encouraging everyday healthy food choices. UEPI’s programs also apply a food justice lens that emphasizes food chain workers’ rights, racial justice, and the environment.

Los Angeles Farm to School Network

Over the years, UEPI has conducted Farm to School initiatives on national, statewide, and local levels. UEPI’s most recent Farm to School initiative is to build a network of Farm to School practitioners and farmers within the Los Angeles County area. This network aims to build relationships among diverse Farm to School stakeholders, highlight best practices in procurement, education, and school gardening, and connect practitioners to appropriate local farmers for procurement, farmer-in-the classroom, or farm visit activities. These resources will be shared with schools and districts throughout the region and housed on an Los Angeles Farm to School Network website.

3. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The primary objective of the LA Farm to School Network website is to connect Los Angeles County schools/school districts with local farmers, connect farmers to the schools, and highlight the collaborative Farm to School work being done throughout the County to increase access to fresh, local and healthy food as well as best practices in Farm to School and garden education.

Goals

UEPI aims to develop a friendly website that can deliver large amounts of constantly changing information to our key audiences, a flexible and informative site that is easy to maintain. In addition to designing a user-friendly site with an intuitive interface, UEPI will require a web-based, database-driven administration tool that allows key management personnel to easily update content without directly accessing source code. The site must also be responsive so as to work on cell phone screen sizes and larger. UEPI will maintain ultimate editorial control of content by using a system with a browser-based user interface. Administration of web content will be based on roles to control access and work flow (e.g. author, reviewer/editor, and publisher). Upon completion of the development of the site, UEPI will assume full responsibility for website content maintenance and administration and all content, coding and graphics will become the sole property of the UEPI/Occidental College.

In summary, the LA Farm to School Network website must:
• Be easy and intuitive
• Be informative and visually pleasing
• Be Safe and secure
• Be Quick to load and operate
• Deliver a consistent image that integrates brand messaging
• Have a scalable and maintainable foundation

Audience
The primary audience for the website will be active and prospective Farm to School practitioners. This includes representatives from K-12 schools/districts or preschools, parents interested in starting or expanding programs, or nonprofits that operate or support Farm to School programs. The website will serve as a home base for the Network to house local informational resources and share best practices. The secondary audience will be farmers interested in partnering with school districts for their Farm to School programs.

Features
Specific website features will include:
• Homepage – great looking first page that invites people to interact with the site. Content on this page will be able to be updated by UEPI.
• Newsletter Sign-up – Visitor will need to be able to sign-up for our newsletters
• Farmer Database – this database will have local Farms and information about each farm. Data will include: Name, contact, address, description, logo, certifications, program participation (i.e.: Farmer in the Classroom participant), list of products and other data fields and related fields.
• Search of Farmer Database and Results page.
• Mapping of Farmers
• School Program database – this database will have local schools that have active Farm to School programs. Data will include: Name, contact, address, description, logo, certifications, program participation and other data fields and related fields.
• Search of Schools Database
• Mapping of Schools
• Blog
• Resource Section that will hold documents
• Administration tool so that non-technical UEPI staff can update the website and the database on the website.

Website Vision
The overall vision for the website is to:

• **Make it easy**
  Maximize web-based technologies and design the site to deliver intuitive navigation, an inviting graphical user interface, and easy-to-find content organization that facilitate the building of farmer and school relationships.

• **Make it compelling**
  Develop easy to use online tools to deliver timely, relevant content that will be of interest to the Farm to School audiences.
- **Make it happen**
  Reinforce the UEPI’s Farm to School mission and give the audiences incentive to take action and connect with each other, promoting involvement in Farm to School programs.

4. **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

The scope of this project is to create the Los Angeles Farm to School Network website. UEPI staff will create/provide all of the site copy and most necessary original and stock photography. The selected firm will handle all required site planning, interface design and production. The site must include a technology solution that allows the in-house staff to easily and cost effectively update content and modify site design after the initial launch. Specific components of the scope include:

**Discovery:**
Confirm audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, site marketing, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, phasing, and budgetary constraints, resulting in a creative brief.

**Design:**
Website information architecture, graphic look and feel, user navigation, home page and main navigation templates for each of the main navigation links.

**Site Definition:**
The website must adhere to the following development guidelines:

- Include a content management system that will permit non-technical staff to instantly update website content on specific pages.
- Easily Updated – Once the site has been completed and accepted by UEPI, the site will be maintained by the Organization.
- Visually Appealing – The site must have an attractive mix of text and graphics.
- Common Theme – Each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The Farm to School Network logo should be prominently displayed on every page as a common header.
- Consistent Design – As stated above, each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The use of photographs, fonts and layouts should be consistent throughout the site.
- Easy to Navigate – The site should be easy to navigate. Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner and require no more than three levels of “drill down” for the user to find the desired information.
- Development of web pages to accommodate the proposed navigation scheme.
- Provide necessary software and licenses to maintain site internally or externally, as decided by the UEPI.
- Provide search capabilities using key words or phrasing that will identify content from throughout the site.
- Gather e-mail, areas of interest and demographic information from visitors in a format that permits UEPI to maintain a single database of users and e-mails each according to their area of interest and profile. Provide training and all necessary support to permit easy use by a selected UEPI staff person.
- Project Management – An assigned project manager will be made available to present information and coordinate with UEPI staff, including a reasonable number of meetings to present design and development solutions.
- Once the website has been completed and accepted by UEPI, the website design and all of its contents, software, and architecture become property of UEPI/Occidental College.
Site Specifications:
UEPI encourages creativity in the proposals submitted; however there are certain requirements for the website project. Proposals must account for all of these requirements.

- Site must be compatible with Internet Explorer 9+, Edge 13+, Firefox 48+, Chrome 53, Android Browser 53, Chrome for Android 53, iOS Safari 10.
- Website must not require plug-ins as a default.
- Fast Loading Pages – The web site must be designed with a balance of text and graphics such that each page must load in less than 5 seconds using GTmetrix for speed testing.

Testing:
Conduct testing of site on all applicable platforms to ensure website works as promised on compatible browsers and platforms listed in the specifications.

Delivery:
Delivery and uploading of site to client for internal hosting, to an outside third party, or hosting by consultant (to be determined).

Tracking:
Implementation of tracking software to produce user defined site reports. UEPI requires a tool to facilitate better understanding and measurement of web visitor behavior to improve website performance and availability. (This may be offered through hosting service.)

- Web traffic analysis
- Path analysis
- Visitor trends
- Page views
- Entry pages
- Top pages
- Exit pages
- Page – length of stay
- Technical analysis: browsers and platforms

Available Technology Resources/ Integration Issues
There are no integrations that need to be done. However, there will be a need to have links to partner websites.

5. QUALIFICATIONS
Competitive applicants must have demonstrated experience in website design, development, and hosting, and be able to meet all project requirements. See proposal requirements section below for details and specific proposal requirements.

Subcontractors
If the execution of work to be performed by an agency requires the hiring of subcontractors these requirements must be clearly stated this in the proposal. Subcontractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. Proposals must include the name, address, and EIN of any subcontractors. UEPI will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors, but will retain the right to refuse the subcontractors selected.
6. TIMELINE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Release</td>
<td>November 30, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal Deadline</td>
<td>5pm PST, December 9, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal Review</td>
<td>Proposals will be evaluated as received. UEPI's evaluation team may request an interview between December 1-15, 2016.</td>
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<td>Estimated Start Date</td>
<td>December 19, 2016</td>
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<td>Project Timeline</td>
<td>TBD based on proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Completion</td>
<td>All project deliverables must be completed no later than May 31, 2017</td>
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7. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

All proposals must be received no later than **5pm on Friday, December 9, 2016**. Proposals must be submitted electronically as Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF files to Sharon Cech, Regional Food Systems Director at [cech@oxy.edu](mailto:cech@oxy.edu). Please use fonts no smaller than 11 point. Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications, and budget should not exceed 35 pages.

All proposals must include the following sections and information.

**Title Page:**
Los Angeles Farm to School Network, Website Development Proposal, company name, address, web site address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.

**Cover Letter:**
Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company (1-2 pages).

**Proposal Approach**
Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. This section should also include a brief discussion of your firm’s project management process.

**Timeline**
Include a time frame for completion of all project components, specifying the various project phases. Time frames will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore, a realistic time frame for completion is requested.

**Qualifications**
To demonstrate the applicant’s qualifications, please:

- Include a list of five websites that best reflect the firm’s work and relevancy to this project. Briefly describe the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation.
- Describe your experience in producing sites for non-profit and/or community-focused projects.
• Provide current reference information for three former or current clients.
• Briefly describe your firm’s organizational capacity to produce UEPI’s website (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
• Please include a copy of your firm’s organizational chart specifying the number of full-time staff employed.
• Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
• Briefly describe the percentage of your web staff that would end of working on this project relative to your entire staff (using full time equivalents). For example, if you would use five staff on the project and you have ten web designers and developers, the percentage would be 50%.
• What type of team will be assigned to this project? What will each person’s role be? Please include a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project.
• Percent of total revenue derived from site developments and other business ventures.
• Explain your business model.
• Please discuss any planned IPOs, mergers or acquisitions.
• Please discuss any hardware/software vendor partnerships.
• Please discuss your testing and support plan.
• Please explain your service level agreement (SLA) structure.
• Process to include input from all program areas. Please state how you intend to communicate with all program areas to gather all of the required information.
• Terms and conditions.

**Budget and Fees**

Please provide several cost proposals to accomplish the scope outlined above. The budget must encompass all design, production, and software acquisitions necessary for development and maintenance of the website.

List pricing for:
• Phase I: Discovery, Requirements Planning & Site Definition
• Phase II: Site Development, Testing and Deployment
• Hosting: One-Year

Identify staff you anticipate working on the project and their hourly rates for work that may be needed for Phase I and Phase II. Hosting will be addressed separately and costs for hosting are not included in the budget for this project. UEPI has a budget of between $6,000 and $9,000 for this project (Phase I and II).

If a candidate wishes to submit alternate solutions, please do so. The price quoted should be inclusive. If the price excludes certain fees or charges, a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees must be provided.

**Attachments:**

Hosting options/information:

• Do you provide hosting? If so, please provide answers to the following questions.
• How often do you backup?
• How often do you have down time?
• How often do you upgrade software/hardware?
• Please describe your technical support.
• Please describe your security.
• Please describe your methodology and service level agreements.
• Pricing, terms and conditions.

If you do not provide hosting, please suggest a vendor/partner to provide this service and provide answers to the above questions.

8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals that meet the mandatory requirements, as stated above, will be evaluated with the following criteria:

• Suitability of the Proposal – the proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
• Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
• Aesthetic Capabilities – prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, user-friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.
• Candidate Experience – candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
• Value/Pricing Structure and Price Levels – the price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposer. As a non-profit institution, UEPI is able to accept pro bono service and recognize the provider accordingly, including naming the proposer within the website.
• Depth and Breadth of Staff – the candidate firm has appropriate staff to develop the site in the time frame needed.
• Proposal Presentation – the information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
• Demonstrated commitment to high service level agreements (SLA).