College Media Association
Request for Proposal
Website Design, Development and Hosting
August 2022

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1. Summary

College Media Association (CMA) is accepting proposals to redesign and redevelop a website for the nonprofit organization College Media Advisers, Inc., dba as College Media Association. This will be a concept–to-completion project. The purpose of this RFP is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates and to provide the candidates with the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.

The existing CMA website (see www.collegemedia.org) was launched in 2013 and underwent a design "facelift" in 2019. Its main components include a content management system, listings module, shared educational content (slideshows, etc.), a database of current members, news postings, embedding social media feeds, and archives of a variety of past honors and awards.

2. Proposal Guidelines and Requirements

This is an open and competitive process.

Proposals received after 12 p.m./noon Eastern time **Oct. 7, 2022,** will not be considered.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

Proposals must be submitted to the CMA Treasurer, Steven Chappell, at steven.chappell@icloud.com. Address all inquiries regarding the proposal to the same.

The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of subcontractors**,** you must clearly state this in your proposal. Subcontractors must be identified, and the work they will perform must be defined. In your proposal, please provide the name and address of the subcontractor. CMA will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors but does retain the right to refuse the subcontractors you have selected.

Provisions of this RFP and the contents of the successful responses are considered available for inclusion in final contractual obligations.

3. Contract Terms

CMA will negotiate contract terms upon selection, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

It is expected that each agency will maintain all materials and data in the strictest confidence during and following the review process. All information contained within this RFP and in future communication between the offering firms and CMA is confidential.

This request for proposal is to be distributed by the recipient only to employees of the offering firm, or to subcontractors, which will be utilized as part of the firm's response to this RFP. The RFP is not to be distributed to any other persons or entities without the express approval of CMA.

Lobbying of CMA, or respective consultants, by offering firms is not appropriate and will negatively impact the consideration of the firm.

This RFP does not obligate CMA or the chosen firm until a contract is signed and approved by both parties.

Any breach of the above will be considered grounds for elimination from the selection process. The identity of the firms participating in the RFP process shall not be revealed. Firms will not be compensated for any costs related to preparing their proposals.

4. Purpose, Description and Objectives

Purpose

CMA's web presence is outdated in appearance, structure, functionality and in the presentation of content. The CMA website has long needed rebooting. It is an old website with too many menus, a stale design template and is not intuitive for the organization's current members to edit. The current site is hosted on a Blox platform provided by Town News, a news website hosting platform that isn't adequate for the needs of a nonprofit organization with an educational mission. The new CMA website needs to be simple yet sleek in its design but also easy for members to update with news postings and event links, and should be portable from one hosting platform to the next. It also needs to support, or be capable of supporting, our back-end AMS platform. All new coding, content and graphics will become the property of CMA.

Description

Create a flexible, informative, up-to-date website that is easy to maintain and is viewable by desktop and mobile devices using responsive design.

The CMA board has established a tier of priorities for what it expects from a redesigned CMA website. We expect the selected agency to create a website that meets the following three tiers of priorities.

Tier 1

- *An intuitive and simple content management system:* A WP hosting solution or something similar is strongly preferred. Both staff and volunteers will collaborate on updates.
- *Affordability:* We are currently in a rolling agreement with a current website provider for in-kind sponsorship value in exchange for website design. We are open to direct payment options as well.
- *Track record*: Examples of work for similar organizations are a strong plus.
- *Password-protected Member Services page* that works with association management software (AMS) system. Currently, CMA's AMS system is Cloverpad/WildApricot, with an anticipated transition to Rhythm later this fiscal year. The AMS has separate website pages that are linked to and from the main CMA website, but there is no integration. We will continue to have a members-only section where users can access a variety of compiled resources and welcome recommendations on the best way to handle this need.

Tier 2

- *Less navigation items at the top of the page:* CMA's current website features nine dropdown categories. We are seeking to reduce the clutter. Our ideal dropdown menu would feature no more than six categories, preferably four or five.
- *Webinar capability*: The CMA website needs the function of occasionally incorporating webinars and other interactive educational functions. We are open to a separate software that can integrate with the site.
- *Mobile translation*: We expect the new website to be easy to understand and navigate on mobile devices.

Tier 3

- *Header/slider based design:* We are looking for a strong header-based design that communicates an active status. While we may include some slides that rarely change (e.g., "Join CMA" or "Register for this convention"), we seek the capacity to incorporate slides that feature our newest developments (a news story or a letter that we may have issued).
- *A full-width design*: We believe our current design does not capitalize on the full space available for the user to view.
- *Brighter colors:* We intend to be in consultation with the selected agency on incorporating a color scheme that suits our current logo, which was redesigned in 2019.
- *Monetization*: A design that prominently attracts users to donate or to buy items but that does not detract from the overall design is a strong plus.

To be effective, our website must be:

- Easy and intuitive
- Visually pleasing
- Informative
- Safe and secure
- Quick to load and operate
- Responsive mobile device and desktop
- Improve net promoter scores and Google rankings
- Search Engine Optimized with proper keyword research

Objectives

The voice of collegiate media and its advisers and media educators, CMA serves student media professionals, students, staffs and programs with education, research and resources. CMA also coordinates educational sessions for webinars and various national conventions and provides a listserv for professors and advisers to discuss various issues pertinent to their jobs.

Our new site should engage visitors by presenting attractive visual images, intuitive navigation, and concise messaging while at the same time increasing functionality and ease-of-use for members and visitors. The tools that are incorporated must allow for timely delivery of content using basic technical skills and limited personnel.

Vision

To meet our organizational goals, our new website must:

- Provide a modern, relevant design update
- Improve customer service and engage site visitors
- Strengthen relationships with members and partners
- Provide a scalable, maintainable solution

Strategies

- Utilize responsive design with the latest technologies to provide a consistent user interface across all devices
- Establish a clear path for visitors to access information relevant to them
- Present clear and concise information to end users
- Integrate with CMA's social media platforms
- Leverage limited human resources through improved efficiencies in web management
- Maximize search engine optimization through strategic mark-up language and content
- Provide an archival system for CMA press releases, photos, videos and move historical data to a searchable database

5. Timeline

- This RFP is dated **Sept. 6, 2022**. Proposers may request more specific, detailed information by contacting Steven Chappell at steven.chappell@me.com.
- Proposals are due no later than 12 p.m./noon Eastern time, **Oct. 7, 2022**. Proposals must be submitted to the CMA Treasurer, Steven Chappell, at steven.chappell@icloud.com. Address all inquiries regarding the proposal to the same.
- Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. We may require interviews (via videoconference) with our evaluation team on or about **Oct. 25, 2022**. You will be notified if this is requested.
- The name of the candidate firm who has been selected will be decided no later than **Oct. 30, 2022**.
- Negotiations will begin immediately with the successful candidate and should conclude no later than **Nov. 30, 2022**.
- All other candidates will be notified on or about **Nov. 1, 2022**.

6. Vendor Requirements

Please provide detailed information to accomplish the project scope outlined below. The budget and proposal must include all design, production, software acquisition, integration and necessary development and maintenance of the web site.

Proposals must address the following:

- Describe your understanding of our current website challenges.
- Summarize your proposed solution and how your solution will resolve our current website challenges.
- Provide a summary of pricing for the proposed services and products.
- Company Overview – Tell us about your company, your experience in web design and production for projects similar to ours, and your experience in working with clients in higher education. Provide links to your agency website, online portfolios and social media.
- Team – Identify the team who will work on this project. Include name, title/role and brief background/experience of each. Include subcontractors if applicable.
- References – Provide a list of three references (at least two in nonprofit management) who can speak to services requested in this RFP. Please include contact information and a brief description of work done for those clients.
- Solutions Menu with Pricing – Based on the elements included in the Project Scope/Objective section, tell us about your proposed solution in terms of creative

design strategy, methodology, plan and other important aspects of the redesign process. Include all project phases and tasks along with a line-item breakdown of costs. Total development cost for your recommendations must come in under $25,000. Please be sure to address the following:

- o Project Management Tools – Your process for tracking and documenting project status.
- o Deliverables – Outline the products and/or services that will be delivered.
- o Schedule – Provide the suggested project schedule detailing the time required for each major step or phase of the project.
- o User Training and Support – Provide details on the user training and support included for our content editors along with the training support format (i.e., on-site/in-person, live web, chat, email, phone-based, hard copy, other documentation, etc.).
- o Host provider – List any host providers and/or support the proposed solution. Also list any recommended configurations for a robust and reliable environment. Include hardware redundancy and/or disaster recovery recommendations.
- o Payment – Include any requirements or preferences regarding invoicing and payment.
- o Anything else deemed relevant/important to vendor.
- o Include all terms and conditions.

7. Background of Organization

College Media Association (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) seeking a responsive website design and development agency.

CMA's mission statement is as follows:

College Media Association's mission is to support student media programs and professionals through education and community.

CMA consists of individual members (faculty and advisers) primarily from the United States (with some members from Canada). The primary activities of CMA are:

- Maintaining an active online community where advisers and faculty can interact for the purposes of camaraderie and professional development.
- Providing educational programming at national conventions in the spring, summer and fall, sometimes as the individual host or often in conjunction with other nonprofit educational organizations.
- Recognizing excellent student work via the annual Pinnacle awards as well as various onsite competitions at conventions, such as the spring onsite Apple Awards at our New York convention.

College Media Association underwent a name change from "College Media Advisers" in 2013.

8. Conditions

- College Media Association is not liable for costs incurred by bidders prior to execution of a contract. All costs incurred as a result of this bid request, including travel and personnel costs, are the sole responsibility of the bidder.
- College Media Association reserves the right to reject any bids that do not address all terms and conditions of this bid request. In addition, College Media Association may reject any and all bids at any time when it is determined to be in the best interest to not make the award from the submitted bids.
- College Media Association expects the selected proposer to develop a solution that addresses user navigation training, system administrator training, content management training and a documentation and user manual such that College Media Association will be able to update and maintain the final website in a timely fashion.
- In the event it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP prior to deadline, College Media Association will provide any addenda necessary to prospective bidders that have already received and/or replied to the initial RFP.
- The bid prices shall include all labor, materials, taxes, and insurance, etc. to cover the finished work called for.
- This RFP does not obligate College Media Association or the selected contractor until a contract is signed and approved by both parties. If approved, the contract is effective from the date it is signed. College Media Association shall not be responsible for work done, even in good faith, prior to the final approval of the proposed contract.
- Contractor acknowledges that a negotiated percentage of payment will be reserved until College Media Association accepts the final work product. Only the College Media Association Executive Director, with permission of the board, is authorized to execute final payment.
- College Media Association reserves the right to use any ideas presented in response to this bid request. Selection or rejection of the proposal(s) does not affect that right.
- News releases or the release of information to media pertaining to this bid request, the service or project to which it relates shall not be made without the prior approval of College Media Association.
- College Media Association affirms confidentiality of all information contained in the bids resulting from this RFP. Only the CMA Board of Directors shall have access to this information and will treat it confidentially.

9. Qualifications

- List five web sites your firm has produced that reflects your work and relevancy to this project. List the role your firm played in each project. Please submit the URLs for these sites, and only "live" sites should be included.
- Describe your experience producing sites for nonprofit organizations.
- Provide current reference information for five former or current clients.
- Briefly outline your firm's organizational capacity to produce the CMA website (such as staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
- Provide company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
- Briefly describe the percentage of your web staff that would be working on this project relative to your entire staff. For example, if you would use three staff on the project and you have 10 web designers and developers, the percentage would be 30%.
- 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.
- Briefly describe your project management process.
- Please detail any hardware/software vendor partnerships you have.
- Provide a detailed timeframe for completion. This will be evaluated and will be part of the contractual agreement, so a realistic time frame for completion is essential.
- Please state how you intend to communicate with the project lead at CMA during the period of design/development, and at what intervals.
- Describe the support you offer during and after the project.

10. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals meeting mandatory requirements will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- 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.
- Prior work that demonstrates artistic, innovative and user-friendly interfaces that engage viewers.
- Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake and be successful with this project.
- The price is appropriate for the value being offered by the proposer.
- The candidate firm has an appropriate number of staff and necessary expertise to develop the site within the timeline negotiated in the signed contract.
- The proposal is presented in a clear, logical manner, is well organized and has the appropriate information called for in the RFP.