

Website Redesign Services – RFP2023-P07 - Questions and Answers

1. Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this?
(like, from India or Canada)

- At this time Illinois Valley Community College is not entertaining utilizing companies outside of the United States.

2. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

- Meetings can be virtual.

3. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA?
(like, from India or Canada)

- At this time Illinois Valley Community College is not entertaining utilizing resources outside of the United States.

4. Can we submit the proposals via email?

- I'm fine with proposals being submitted via email, I'd prefer digital copy either way. But I'll support whatever the standard approach is for the college.

5. Page 1 of the RFP indicates that submissions must be mailed in as hardcopies, BUT on page 10 under Proposal Submissions Format it states, "RFP responses must be delivered electronically via email". Which is correct?

- We will accept either method of delivery.

6. The Submittal Requirements on page 8 of the RFP and the Proposal Submissions Format on page 10 have some inconsistencies about what needs to be included in our proposal, and how that should be formatted and organized. Can you provide additional guidance and/or clarification about what information you are expecting to see in the final proposal, and the format and organization of that information?

- We regret that certain sections within the RFP have been duplicated. Please follow the format recommended on Page 10.

7. Is IVCC open to starting this work with a strategic discovery phase so that your selected partner can fully understand your challenges, and engage your target audiences (like prospective and current students) to create solutions that work for them?

- We can indeed take this option into consideration

8. Three questions related to the size of the website:

- How many pages are in the current website?
 - We suggest that the current provider conducts validation due diligence as the website has roughly 4200 pages, including numerous PDF documents. Please note that the estimated page count may vary, and not all pages will be webpages.
 - Of that current total, how many pages do you anticipate migrating to the new website?
 - We suggest that the current provider conducts validation due diligence as the website has roughly 4000 pages, including numerous PDF documents. Please note that the estimated page count may vary, and not all pages will be webpages.
 - Will members of the IVCC web team be available to help the selected contractor create all of these pages within the CMS for the new website or are you looking for the selected contractor to handle this task in its entirety?
 - Ideally, we would like to have the selected contractor to help with the creation of the pages. We will provide a member of the IVCC web team as point of escalation if questions or assistance is needed.
1. The RFP states “IVCC will be responsible for collecting and updating the content as needed.” Several questions on this:
- We’d like to confirm that this means IVCC will not need the selected contractor to provide any brand messaging work, content writing, or copyediting of any kind?
 - Apologies we would like to partner with the selected provider at migrating the data over to the new formats. This statement was meant for ongoing purposes on updating the content after the deployment. As a final solution IVCC would retain ownership of managing the site on an

ongoing basis and is not looking for a managed services type operation. For the scope of this project, we would be looking for a solution provider to migrate all existing content.

- If IVCC staff will be updating content, will they need training on using Modern Campus CMS from our team to facilitate this?
 - IVCC staff are familiar with the usage of Modern Campus.
 - The RFP also states that the selected contractor is expected to “employ current SEO standards”. How do you foresee the contractor fully implementing SEO best practices without leading and facilitating the updating of content through a focused content and SEO strategy?
 - Leverage a proposed SEO strategy leveraging existing content and updating pages as part of this project to deploy the SEO strategy.
2. The RFP states “Successfully pass WCAG 2.0 accessibility guidelines and be Section 508 compliant.” Is this correct? The current best practice is to meet WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards, and the WCAG recently just announced 2.2 standards as well.
- We will support the latest standard at the time of deployment.
3. You mention user acceptance testing at several points in the RFP. Will you provide us with access to members of your target audiences (ex. students and community members) to facilitate this testing?
- We'll collaborate with the chosen solution provider to select a subset of users, who would be considered as the target audience for conducting user acceptance testing.
4. In the RFP you ask for a “sample project timeline”. Can you tell us more about what your ideal timeline and completion date would be, so that we can see if we can build a realistic project schedule to meet those goals?
- Our preferred timeline for launching the website is at the beginning of the January 2024 Term. Therefore, the anticipated scope of work should align with this estimated timeline.

5. You indicate in the RFP that access to appropriate staff will be available “from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm central time M-F except for holidays or other times college is closed.” This work will run through the summer months, when it is common for colleges and universities to be at least partially closed Monday – Friday. Can you tell us a bit more about the summer availability of your staff so that we can present a realistic work plan to you that takes limited availability during these times into account?

- Throughout the Summer hours, our staff will be accessible from Monday to Thursday between 8am to 4:30pm

6. The RFP states “Project costs should ... include the annual recurring costs for support, maintenance or subscriptions.” Can you provide us with more details about the type of support and maintenance you anticipate needing? We are capable of fully managing this site for you if you do not have the internal resources to do so. But we need a better understanding of your exact needs to provide you with accurate costs for this service.

- As different respondents may propose solutions with varying fee structures, we acknowledge that some solutions may entail recurring fees. Hence, we request that such fees be clearly specified as part of the RFP if they are deemed necessary for the proposed solution.

7. Can you share any information with us about the available budget or budget range for this project?

- Currently, we are not disclosing the budget allocation. However, we urge each vendor to offer their most competitive pricing to fulfill the college's requirements.

8. Has a Q&A or an addenda been released yet?

- Releases 2/28/2023

9. Is there a mandatory pre-proposal meeting?

- No

10. Is the due date still the same?

- Yes

11. Do you have a style guide or a brand guide?

- Illinois Valley Community College has its own Style Guides and Brand guidelines that we would like to be implemented in the templates.

12. Does the organization have a CMS preference? Open source? Drupal/WordPress?

- At present, Modern Campus CMS is our preferred choice, and we would like to continue using it. However, we are willing to consider persuasive proposals that demonstrate the advantages of switching to a new CMS for IVCC.

13. Who are your primary and secondary users?

- The primary users of Illinois Valley Community College are the current and prospective students. The secondary users include the staff of the college and members of the community.

14. Would you like detailed research in terms of your audience in the form of an audience needs assessment?

- We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

15. What is the current hosting environment?

- ModernCampus hosts the CMS and the live site is hosted by DataBank.

16. How many pages of content do you anticipate transferring to the new site?

- About 4100 pages.

17. What are your current pain points with the existing website?

- Our current website is facing various challenges, including an outdated design that does not align with our latest Brand Guide and updates. The navigational structure may not be user-friendly, and the functionality requires upgrading. Therefore, we are seeking a modern and refreshing digital presence.

18. What are the current technical challenges (if any)?

- We have been experiencing technical issues with our website, with suboptimal performance being a notable concern. Although we have recently resolved a longstanding issue that has resulted in improved performance, there is still room for improvement in terms of ease of use for staff to manage and update the website.

19. How many site administrators will you have?

- One

20. Will you require different levels of admin permissions?

- Yes – To be determined during the process, but ideally global admin and content editors.
21. Do you expect copywriting or editing services as part of engagement?
- We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.
22. Please specifically define what you seek for the request for “financial ability.” Are agency financial statements required for the response?
- To select a suitable partner for providing modern website solutions, we would like to assess the financial stability of the proposing company. A company's long-term track record of delivering such solutions is an important factor, and demonstrating financial stability can help establish credibility. We are open to various methods that the respondent may propose to prove their financial stability.
23. Regarding “To ensure agreement on the design concept, the consultant will design a minimum of eight (8) pages demonstrating the department landing page template and the detail page template.” Will the consultant also write sample content and select images or will content and images be provided?
- We have an open-minded and adaptable approach and welcome suggestions. However, we propose pulling content from one of the current pages on the website.
24. What is the search tool? Is it a licensed tool or Google search?
- Licensed tool through ModernCampus.
25. What is your plan to handle content (text) optimization, revision, and need for new content that will naturally arise as part of the redesign?
- We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.
26. Does the scope of this project include CMS implementation? **Yes** If yes:
- a) Who will complete the implementation into Omni CMS? IVCC’s internal team or Modern Campus?
- While we are open to exploring different solutions, our preference is to receive a comprehensive proposal that encompasses all migration activities and associated costs as part of this RFP.
- b) If Modern Campus will complete the implementation, do we need to include their cost proposal for implementation and/or content migration along with our proposal for the Website Redesign?
- Yes
- c) Or do you plan to secure the CMS implementation and content migration work directly with Modern Campus outside of this RFP?
- The scope of this activity is subject to interpretation and should be a topic of discussion during the RFP negotiation phase.

27. Under Submittal Requirements (p.8, item 7) – you request vendor to provide cost breakdown for “Implementation including quality assurance testing”. The implementation costs and testing are the responsibility of ModernCampus. Have you discussed this with Modern Campus and are they prepared to provide vendors with this cost?

- If you are creating templates for use with Modern Campus, it will be necessary for you to collaborate with Modern Campus to facilitate the import process. However, if you are designing for a different CMS like WordPress or Drupal, there is no requirement for you to coordinate with Modern Campus for importing your designs.

28. Does the redesign project include the main website only (www.ivcc.edu)? If other sites are included, please include the URL for any subsites, portals, intranet, etc.

- At this time the scope of design is limited to www.ivcc.edu and its sub-pages.

29. Are you interested in having the chosen vendor conduct a content audit of your high-level pages to help determine what pages to move to the new website, what pages to eliminate, what content is missing, etc? Or will this effort be conducted internally by IVCC?

- i. We maintain a flexible approach and are open to suggestions, recognizing that each respondent may have a unique approach to building a solution for the IVCC.EDU website. We welcome your recommendations on how to proceed with the implementation and other associated work.

30. Are you interested in completing any additional qualitative or quantitative analysis to inform the designs and user experience as a part of the Website Redesign Project? Analysis items may include user focus groups, surveys, heatmaps, engagement review of the current site, audience-based navigation, and content review.

- We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

31. As a part of the Website Redesign Project, will the chosen vendor be responsible for writing new content or copyediting existing website content? If so, in order to provide an accurate quote, how many pages of content should the chosen vendor plan to:

1. Our goal is to migrate all existing content from our current website into the new template format. Please use the estimates in this document for assistance.

32. Do you have a set of User/Audience Personas defined? Or would you like to include Audience Persona Strategy/Creation as a part of the redesign discovery process?

- As defined in this document we detail the primary and secondary audience. Although regarding building a strategy, we have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

33. What Omni CMS modules do you currently use on the website?

- Search, Calendar, Maps

34. Are you planning to add any new Omni CMS modules or discontinue the use of any modules as part of the redesign?

- At this time, we do not plan to adjust our module usage of Modern Campus, although we have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

35. Do you have a preferred search engine that you plan to use for the site?

- The Modern Campus provided search.

36. Do you have a forms-builder that you prefer?

- The CMS has a forms builder.

37. Do you currently have embeddable forms on the site?

- Yes, through the CMS form builder.

38. Please expand on the “special topic page template” and how you currently use it or plan to use it.? Is it a marketing landing page that you send people to from your digital advertising?

- The Special Topics Page is intended to be a catch-all page template, and we will provide more specific details once a solution provider has been selected.

39. What tool are you currently using to manage your Events Calendar

- With the redesign, will the events calendar stay as-is?
 - i. While we do not currently have plans to modify this section of the website, we maintain a flexible approach and welcome suggestions.
- Are you planning to use the new Omni Calendar or stay with the existing calendar?
 - i. Currently we use Modern Campus. While we do not currently have plans to modify this section of the website, we maintain a flexible approach and welcome suggestions.

40. How are you managing your faculty/staff directory ?

- Will the directory stay as-is with the redesign?
 - i. While we do not currently have plans to modify this section of the website, we maintain a flexible approach and welcome suggestions.
- Or will it be managed with the Omni CMS Faculty Directory module?
 - i. While we do not currently have plans to modify this section of the website, we maintain a flexible approach and welcome suggestions.

41. Do you plan to use the Omni Blog module?

- While we do not currently have plans to modify this section of the website, we maintain a flexible approach and welcome suggestions.

42. What are the expectations surrounding content optimizations for SEO?

- Will the chosen firm be optimizing a certain number of pages, a specific section of the website (e.g. admissions pages, program pages, etc.), or “tier” of pages (e.g. tier 1)?
 - i. Our current website has limited SEO, and we are seeking a solution provider that can assist in optimizing as many of the main and section landing pages as possible. We are looking forward to partnering with a provider that can help us improve our SEO.
- Are you looking for ongoing monthly SEO support post-launch?
 - i. We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.
- Or, are you just looking for the chosen vendor to provide guidance for SEO best practices during the redesign project?
 - i. We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

43. Item #9 talks about “work with our CMS provider to convert existing IVCC.edu website to the new template ...” – Please clarify your expectations.

- Do you want the vendor to provide support through the implementation of the designs?
 - i. Yes our goal of this RPF is to migrate all content on the existing website to the new templates.
- Are you talking about Migration of Content
 - i. Yes

44. Hosting

- Are you currently hosting the cms and website on premise?
 - i. Both are hosted off-site.
- Do you use OmniCMS cloud?
 - i. Who currently hosts the production website?

1. ModernCampus hosts the CMS and the live site is hosted by DataBank.

- Is hosting of the production web server part of the scope of this response?
 - i. We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

45. What is the budget for this RFP?

- Currently, we are not disclosing the budget allocation. However, we urge each vendor to offer their most competitive pricing to fulfill the college's requirements.

46. Do you have current persona's and/or personalization pathways developed or would you expect your chosen partner to include and provide persona and UX research as part of this engagement?

- We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

47. We've noticed that you have both Universal Google Analytics and GA4 installed on the primary domain with Google Tag Manager. After July 1st, 2023 standard Universal Analytics properties will stop processing new hits. Would it be of value to include estimates to assist with GA4/GTM configuration for tracking and conversion purposes so that data can still be collected and processed on the current site to provide benchmarks for performance as a result of the re-design, which presumably would happen after July 1, 2023?

- We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

48. If as part of the research and content strategy it is recommended to write/optimize updated web copy, is that something you would be looking to the chosen partner to provide for key pages?

- We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.

49. Are there 2-3 community college websites you admire, either from a functional and/or design perspective?

- The designer should come up with a design that is suitable for our college and its audience. We will not be providing sites we admire.

50. We use several methods by which to conduct user acceptance testing. Do you have a preference on tools or a process by which to conduct this testing?

- We have a flexible approach and are receptive to suggestions.