MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

NORTHLAND COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
FOR
WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT
March 2021
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
FOR WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

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Notice

This Request for Proposal (RFP) does not obligate the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (Minnesota State) Northland Community and Technical College to award a contract or complete the proposed project and each reserves the right to cancel this RFP if it is considered to be in its best interest. Proposals must be clear and concise. Proposals that are difficult to follow or that do not conform to the RFP format or binding specifications may be rejected. Responding Vendors must include the required information called for in this RFP. Minnesota State reserves the right to reject a proposal if required information is not provided or is not organized as directed.

Northland Community and Technical College also reserves the right to waive minor informalities and reserves the right to:

1. Reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP;
2. Select a proposal for contract negotiation other than the one with the lowest cost;
3. Negotiate any aspect of the proposal with any Vendor;
4. Terminate negotiations and select the next most responsive Vendor for contract negotiations;
5. Terminate negotiations and prepare and release a new RFP;
6. Terminate negotiations and take such action as deemed appropriate.

Any decision to cancel or reject any and all proposals is in Minnesota State’s sole discretion. Minnesota State also reserves the right to change the evaluation criteria or any other provision in this RFP by posting notice of the change(s) on the Vendors and Suppliers at Minnesota State page. Vendors should check the site daily for updates (e.g. amendments, responses to questions) and are expected to review information on the site carefully before submitting a final proposal. Such changes or updates above constitutes written notice to each Vendor.

Definitions

Wherever and whenever the following words or their pronouns occur in this proposal, they shall have the meaning given here:

Minnesota State: State of Minnesota, acting through its Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities on behalf of Northland Community and Technical College.

School: Northland Community and Technical College.

System Office: The central system office of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities located at Wells Fargo Place, 30 7th Street East, Suite 350, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101.
Vendor: The firm selected by Northland Community and Technical College as the successful responder(s) responsible to execute the terms of a contract.

Targeted Group Business (TGB): A business that is at least 51% owned and operated by a woman or person of color.

Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE): Independent business which is at least 51% owned and operated by one or more minority group member (citizen of the United States or permanent resident who is Black, Hispanic, Asian, or American Indian).

Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE): Independent business which is at least 51% owned and operated by one or more women.

Please note, for TGB consideration, Minnesota State recognizes certification from at least one the following certifying agencies:

- State of Minnesota – Department of Administration
- Central (CERT) Certification Program
- North Central Minority Supplier Development Council
- Women’s Business Development Center

Economically Disadvantaged (ED) Business and Individuals: Independent business or persons which is at least 51% owned and operated by economically disadvantaged.

Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (VO): Independent business which is at least 51% owned and operated by one or more veteran.

About Minnesota State and Northland Community and Technical College

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is the third-largest system of state colleges and universities in the United States. It comprises 37 state colleges and universities with 54 campuses located in 47 Minnesota communities. Minnesota State serves approximately 350,000+ plus students each year. Minnesota State employs more than 15,900+ dedicated faculty and staff focused on student success. Minnesota State is an independent state entity that is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees. For more information about the colleges and universities of Minnesota State, please view its website at www.minnstate.edu.

About Northland Community & Technical College

Northland Community & Technical College is a comprehensive college offering many state-of-the-art, nationally renowned programs designed for those looking to join the workforce quickly. Ninety-six various career programs and degree options are available on campus and online.
Northland has campuses in East Grand Forks and Thief River Falls, Minnesota, with an aerospace site located at the Thief River Falls airport. For more information about Northland Community & Technical College, please view its website at www.northlandcollege.edu.

Northland Community & Technical College’s public-facing website, www.northlandcollege.edu, is the digital gateway to Northland Community & Technical College and its primary brand statement. The site is a vital component of the College’s communications strategy; it will be the first experience and interaction with Northland for many. The Northland website functions as a flagship brand website, a portal to academic programs and services, and a resource destination for many audiences. The site hosts content for many College-wide communication initiatives. Northland’s Department of Marketing & Communications, the College’s central communications office, currently manages and maintains the UX/UI visual design and content for www.northlandcollege.edu.

- **Target Audience**
  - Northland does not currently leverage an Intranet-based environment, so the website must work for many audiences. However, the site needs to function as a marketing and recruiting tool that will serve primarily prospective students and their parents. It will also have a strong focus on helping current students.
  - Secondary audiences for this site include:
    - Local Communities
    - Government Constituents (state legislature, city government, etc.)
    - Regional Business and Industry (entities who employ graduates and those seeking College partnerships)
    - Donors and Alumni
    - Athletic Fans
    - Publicly accessible pages that serve faculty and staff

**Authority**

This RFP is undertaken by Northland Community and Technical College pursuant to the authority contained in provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 136F.581 and other applicable laws. Northland Community and Technical College will select the Vendor(s) whose proposal(s), and oral presentation(s) if requested, demonstrate in its sole opinion, the clear capability to best fulfill the purposes of this RFP in a cost-effective manner. Northland Community and Technical College reserves the right to accept or reject proposals, in whole or in part, and to negotiate separately as necessary to serve the best interests of Northland Community and Technical College. This RFP does not obligate Northland Community and Technical College to award a contract or complete the proposed project and it reserves the right to cancel this RFP if it is considered to be in its best interest.
**Project Overview**

Northland Community & Technical College is requesting proposals to develop and build a new website. This project is the third phase of the college’s new website project. The goal is to implement the new design system recently completed during Phase II by a brand agency partner. (Data modeling documentation will be provided to the Vendor to help inform a dev team on building the website in a CMS. A Sketch design file containing designed pages, templates, elements, components, and modules will also be provided. A web style guide will be outlined in an InVision prototype and too detailed documentation provided in Zeplin.)

Northland will be moving from a non-CMS managed website to a CMS-managed website. The site will also be a launchpad for the recently redesigned Northland brand. It will be critical in the refreshed brand’s communication and an essential vehicle for delivering information to prospective students, key stakeholders, and internal audiences. The website is a vital platform for recruitment, storytelling, and fundraising for Northland. Through the contract process, the selected Vendor will be responsible for developing, building, and implementing a public-facing website and supporting CMS that achieves Northland’s project goals. The website is planned to go live in August/September 2021. Upon completion, the selected Vendor will continue in a role providing technical support, maintenance, backup, security checks, and general oversight.

The proposal should include specific tasks and milestones required for the successful implementation of deliverables listed below. The selected Vendor can expect to work collaboratively with the Northland marketing team throughout the project.

**Brand Messaging**

Northland just completed a full brand discovery, redesign, and strategy. It was determined during this work that the Northland website no longer supports our stakeholders’ needs or the college’s brand. Our web development partner’s work is to incorporate the new brand style and message into the rebuild of the college’s website.

**Project Goals**

This project aims to satisfy the following goals:

- Build out the website design (completed during Phase II) on a cloud-hosted WordPress CMS platform. (A CMS does not manage the current website.)
- Transfer the new website to a state System Office hosted cloud web server. (The current website is hosted locally on college servers.)
- Redevelop the site into a marketing hub to attract prospective students to Northland with relevant content, calls to action, and a fresh design. A place that showcases Northland’s refreshed brand and tells our story.
- Develop a modular, component-based approach to allow for greater customization.
- An information architecture that supports the new design and organizes content efficiently and logically for primary target audiences while preserving deeper content structures to meet secondary audience needs.
- A technology platform that is robust and mobile-first in focus, yet flexible enough to continue to grow and evolve with our web presence.
- Ensure the site complies with required federal and state accessibility standards.
- Launch the new website in August/September 2021.

## Technical/Functional Requirements

The new website will do the following:

- Deliver a fully functioning website (front-end and back-end code) according to the completed data modeling documentation, design system (pages, templates, elements, components, and modules), design style guide documentation, agreed-upon site map, and functional requirements detailed below. This design documentation will be provided to the Vendor in PDF (data-modeling), Sketch (design files), and Zeplin (style guide & documentation).
- The site will be coded HTML/CSS to meet Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 AA standards for accessibility. Valid HTML5 markup based on W3C standards.
- SCSS/SASS markup to create CSS.
- Creation of a Content Management System (CMS) with tiered permissions to segmented audience groups. Recommended: WordPress
- Responsive designs developed for various screen sizes and devices (smartphones, tablets, desktop monitors). The design has taken a mobile-first approach.
- Where possible, the Vendor should test pages on physical mobile devices: iPhone 12 series devices, iPad Pro series devices, Google Pixel series devices, Samsung Galaxy series devices.
- Be optimized (design, architecture, and hosting platform) for fast loading, particularly mobile devices. Utilize approaches like a CDN, caching, minifying CSS and JavaScript, and “lazy loading” of page elements for optimized page load times. The current Northland site has been challenged with lower page load speeds.
- Pages should be tested for compatibility on all of the major browsers:
  - Mac: Firefox, Chrome, Safari
  - Windows: Firefox, Chrome, Edge, Internet Explorer 11 (low priority due to deprecation but should be tested against latest release)
  - Apple iOS: Safari
  - Android: Chrome
- Incorporate SEO best practices to improve site visibility, including the ability to change meta information/tags on each webpage manually—Page Title, Meta Title, Meta Description, Meta Image, Page Crawl Frequency, ability to hide pages from public/internal search, and sitemap (no index, no follow), clear page name/URL structure (pages URLs all lowercase using hyphen separators), and an automated XML Sitemap.
- Pages should be structured appropriately to use H1-H5 headers. Provide the ability to include a robots.txt file for limiting search engines to some content.
- All website content must be directly displayed as web pages and indexable by search engines, i.e., website content that opens in an overlay that is not directly accessible to website visitors through a URL or search engines should be avoided. Important pages that must be indexable by search engines include homepage, landing pages, secondary pages, event calendar landing page, individual event pages, campus directory landing page, programs, course listings/descriptions, etc.
- Offer content syndication and content sharing—COPE (create once and publish everywhere). Content that is duplicated in multiple places should be updatable and maintained in a single location.
- Develop site in a modular or atomic framework allowing for more flexibility in content design and delivery across site pages. In such a system, the same content component (e.g., student testimonial, brand messages, news stories, content featurettes, videos, lists, events, etc.) can be published in multiple layouts on a page—across one column, two columns, four columns, or six columns. We change our focus in page design from whole pages into parts, making it possible for our website to combine content and design and allow our CMS more control. This will enable us to build out pages in ways that make sense from a visual, administrative, and business perspective. A modular or atomic approach to design and populating content will offer us a more flexible and adaptable site that is agile enough to address changing institutional and visitor needs.
- Be optimized to share web page content to social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- Ability to easily add code to the beginning of and end at the site level and at the individual page level. The marketing department often needs to add or update tracking/retargeting/conversion pixels to our site, and site administrators should be able to do this easily without requiring development support.
- Ability to manage all 302 and 301 URL redirects through a single website redirect module, including the ability to redirect documents to webpages or other documents.
- Website multilingual support should be available via an add-on module.
- Run all website pages and associated scripts, CSS, and assets under an SSL certificate (HTTPS://) for improved SEO and site security. All webpages should be run through a
nonsecure content scan like https://www.jitbit.com/sslcheck/ before launch. Have the ability to redirect all HTTP:// traffic automatically to HTTPS://

- Use non-proprietary programming and frameworks for interactive features.
- Follow best practices for website development, including a code repository, dev or staging website, and a production website. Manage source code in source control using Git or an alternative solution.

Deliverables
The Vendor must produce the following project deliverables:

Project Kickoff
- Coordinate with Northland to schedule a project kickoff meeting. Participate, contribute, and collaborate with Northland key stakeholders, led by Northland’s marketing department, to develop a baseline initial project plan.

Information Architecture & Web Governance
- Assist the college with setting up a sustainable website governance structure that works with the CMS and will support Northland moving forward.
  - Two employees of the college manage and maintain the current website content.
- Assist the college with a plan to maintain the site’s SEO. Train the marketing team on things to look for and practices to be avoided.
- Efforts to establish Web governance have failed in the past; therefore, the Northland website is not governed by a Web policy. Developing a Web Governance Policy is a priority.
- A project team will make final decisions regarding the proposed effort.

Integrations
- The Northland website has system apps and database integrations that this project may impact. It is expected the Vendor will assume responsibility to:
  - Troubleshoot technical issues that could arise.
  - Provide specifications or solutions to replicate integrations on the new site structure.
  - Develop the new templates, components, and modules for WordPress with the flexibility to accept a variety of future Integrations.
  - Integrations present on the current website that must be taken into consideration for the proposed effort include, but are not limited to:
Oracle Service Cloud CRM
- Class scheduling system
- Search
- RightNow chat feature pop-up component
- Custom embedded apps: virtual tour, online housing application
- Library databases
- Emergency alerts and notifications
- Social media embeds

Content Management System

- An existing Content Management System does not manage the current Northland website.
- No major website revisions have occurred since 2008, but many enhancements have been completed.
  - Note: This project **does not** include any Northland websites that will remain outside of the .edu CMS including, but are not limited to the Northland Pioneers athletics website, Northland Store website, Z-Degree campaign micro campaign site, virtual tour, and Northland Stories website.
- The new college website must be built on a CMS offering multi-tiered user permissions.
- During project Discovery (Phase I), WordPress CMS was the recommended solution based on price, feature, and stakeholder conversations.
- Setup and configure a WordPress environment. It shall be the most current stable release.
  - The college is moving from a non-CMS-managed environment.
  - Currently, there are two primary editors college-wide with roles ranging from Admin, Editor, & Publisher.
    - We would like this refreshed/streamlined to meet our needs better. We would have two different workflows dependent on portions of the site.
      - Workflow 1: Editor->Publisher->Site
      - Workflow 2: Direct Publish
    - Provide the login capability through a secure backend for designated areas of the site.
    - Enable permission settings for authorized users
- Data modeling documentation obtained during project Phase II will help inform the Vendor dev team on building the new website in a CMS.
- The Vendor shall address how a code repository, development or staging site, and production website workflow will be used for maintaining and tracking changes to the website’s codebase.
**Design/Build**

- The new website will be built using a modular approach to design to allow for greater customization. Designing a website with a modular or component-based system maximizes flexibility for content creators. Instead of all pages having to conform to a template with predetermined fields, users can simply add components one at a time to build a page that fits the content.

- The new website design system is made up of templates, components, modules, and utilities.
  
  - **Templates** – There are two primary templates, one for overview pages and one for content-heavy pages. Each template has a library of components and modules available only for that template. In addition to the templates listed above, there is a template for Program pages as well. This template is similar to the content template but with slight adjustments tailored for Program pages.
  
  - **Components** – Are elements that live on a page where you add the data/information specific to that page with a blank or contentless component.
  
  - **Modules** – Similar to a component, but the data is pre-populated and dynamically embedded. An example of this would be a module that displays the upcoming events in a calendar.
  
  - **Utility pages** – Consist of pages with unique designs to accommodate that specific page’s purpose and functionality. Examples of this would be the Events Calendar or the Program Finder.

  Additionally, multiple pages use custom code and databases to serve content into pages on the current website that will need technological development to bring some of these data points into the WordPress instance:

  - Canceled Classes
  - Event Calendar (ability to add, edit, cancel events in WordPress)
  - Alerts and Emergencies (ability to turn off/on global alerts in WordPress)
  - Employment Opportunities (3rd party integration)
  - Student Employment (3rd party integration)
  - Program Pages/Program Factsheets - printable

  - This is an essential piece that needs work. The cost should be factored into the proposal for the necessary work and development.

  - Employee Directory
  - A to Z Index

- New or reinvented site features and functionality to be scoped include:

  - **Event Calendar**: Northland’s calendar system uses custom code and a database to pull event information into pages on the current website. The system is no
longer meeting the college’s needs. A new calendar solution must be recommended or developed by the Vendor.

- **Academic Program Finder**: One frustration for current users is the lack of comprehensive academic program information. The proposal must include a development solution of a robust academic program finder and filtering needed to display the more than 80 academic programs offered at Northland.

- **Academic Program Pages** - This task aims to create a streamlined one custom template where prospective students can conveniently review academic program information and take the next steps while still providing faculty the capability to publish program-specific details for multiple audiences. This is further defined in Phase II documentation.

- **Site Search** - The college currently leverages Google Search Console as the search tool for the current website. One of the existing challenges with the current site is the efficacy of our search. A more robust search feature/indexing capability is required. The selected Vendor will give recommendations on possible solutions. Search results will also be filtered by result type: all, programs, and people.

- **Alerts & Emergencies** – In an emergency or campus closure, the website must display a banner message on the home page and across the website. A system is needed for displaying alerts. There are alert “types” that are color-coded, and the messages can be customized for the alert type. Examples include promotional alerts, weather alerts, on-campus emergency alerts, and informational alerts.

- **Employee Directory** – Northland uses custom code and a database to pull faculty and staff directory information current into pages on the current website. Develop a new solution for an updated employee directory finder with search and filtering capabilities. Individual employees will also need access to update and maintain their directory profiles.

- **Northland Today** – Aggregate of campus news, college events, calendar dates, etc. Some site content will pull in specific information about the day and adjust dynamically like weather, time of day, a photograph that changes based on time.

- **Iconography library** – Some components and modules use iconography. To streamline the content entry, there also needs to be a way to add icons as a data entry (not in the media library) so that the components and modules can access them via a dropdown list.

- **Newsroom** – Ability to post news articles, press releases, and announcements.
  - Northland currently uses Oracle Service Cloud as its customer relationship management (CRM) solution.
○ Note: We are currently exploring a new prospective student customer relationship management (CRM) solution.
○ At a minimum, there will be an information request page and forms integrated through several touchpoints on the site utilizing a CRM.

● The college currently uses Google Analytics plans to track site analytics. We also plan to use the services of SiteImprove to track analytics, broken links, accessibility concerns, and SEO rankings.
● The site shall have multilingual functionality (machine translation).
● The site will be coded HTML/CSS to meet Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 AA standards for accessibility. Valid HTML5 markup based on W3C standards.
● SCSS/SASS markup to create CSS.
● Native integration of APIs (e.g., social channels: YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Vimeo, etc.). We primarily use YouTube and Vimeo Pro for videos. We want to be able to control the thumbnail image that is used and remove branding and video information (video title).
● Graphic elements development is required based on the completed design style guide (Phase II).
● Technical implementation of WordPress and integration of design templates, modules, and components/widgets.
● Assistance with the development of WordPress editorial workflows, approval workflows, and site permissions.
● Develop a catalog of responsive interface design options (component, modules, and themes) based on provided design standard style guide and data modeling documentation, including options for all current web browsers and devices. Templates and components should be responsive and adhere to web standards, including web content accessibility guidelines. Possibilities include, but not limited to:
  ○ A variety of content and components blocks with flexible display options (video, audio, image, slideshow, structured content item, and more)
  ○ Custom menus
  ○ Navigation and sub-navigation menus
  ○ Custom menus, lists, and accordions
  ○ Galleries, lightboxes, and slideshows
  ○ Headers and footers
  ○ Responsive tables and forms
  ○ Content bars including text callouts and photo overlays
  ○ Banners, billboards, and cards
  ○ CTAs, promos, and buttons
  ○ Interactive and dynamic elements (motion)
The Vendor will provide knowledge transfer to the Northland team for the HTML project as part of the training that will occur shortly after the site launch.

Content Creation and Migration

Much of the current website content will remain the same; however, there will be changes to many key marketing pages and academic program pages. Content for key marketing pages was developed during Phase II of the project. The Northland marketing team will use its photography database to update photography. The Northland marketing team will also provide new body copy, brand and graphic assets, and video elements.

The Northland marketing team will establish a high-level protocol to audit existing pages and prepare for content migration into the new site templates. The Vendor will serve as a consultant during this process and propose a process for automating/easing content migration, e.g., scripts to export content from our current static site and move to the CMS. The process should support written text, photography, video, and SEO (page titles, meta descriptions, etc.) The Vendor should also plan to assist with deploying the 301 redirects. The Vendor will provide Northland with training and assistance to be used by content developers before and after site launch.

Please describe how the Vendor will support Northland with the migration process of content to the new website.

Website Hosting

Northland Community & Technical College intends to move the new website to a cloud-hosted, managed hosting platform at the state System Office (SO). We expect that the SO hosting environment to have staging, testing, and live server environments. The SO supports PHP/Apache stack and will support almost all programming languages and CMS platforms. Third-party agencies can have admin access to the SO’s servers for website development. The selected Vendor for the development project will help specify and provide recommendations, including content delivery network (CDN), technical setup, storage, RAM, sFTP, etc., to Northland for website hosting the new CMS and associated website applications.

Post-Launch Usability Testing, Maintenance Support, and On-Going Development Proposal

The Vendor is expected to test the effectiveness of the site post-launch by repeating the usability testing conducted in Analysis to confirm the success of the design. The Vendor will also provide proper training and knowledge transfer to Northland on the build-out. Please describe the process and support services the Vendor will provide. This should also include recommendations and a menu of options and pricing for ongoing website support, maintenance, and ongoing development options or packages, e.g., bulk purchase of hours (pre-paid), pay as you go, or per hour pricing (time and materials). The Vendor should detail any warranty of code or bug fixes...
that are identified post-launch. The base proposal should include a minimum of 2 weeks of directly standby development support post-launch.

**RFP Information Contact**

Northland Community and Technical College’s authorized representative for purposes of responding to inquiries about the RFP is:

Name: Angela Menge  
Title: Contract & Purchasing Coordinator  
Address: 2022 Central Ave NE, East Grand Forks, MN 56721  
Telephone: 218-793-2421  
E-mail address: angela.menge@northlandcollege.edu

Other persons are **not** authorized to discuss RFP requirements before the proposal submission deadline and Northland Community & Technical College shall not be bound by and vendors may not rely on information regarding RFP requirements obtained from non-authorized persons. Questions must include the name of the questioner and his/her telephone number, fax number and/or e-mail address. Anonymous inquiries will not be answered.

**Duration of Offer**

All proposal responses must indicate they are valid for a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the date of the proposal opening unless extended by mutual written agreement between Northland Community & Technical College and the Vendor.

Prices and terms of the proposal as stated must be valid for the length of the resulting contract.

**Minnesota State’s RFP Terms and Conditions**

This RFP includes and incorporates Minnesota State’s RFP Terms and Conditions. Vendors should be aware of Minnesota State’s RFP terms and conditions in preparing responses to this RFP. Much of the language reflected in any resulting contract with Minnesota State is required by statute. If you take exception to any of the language in the terms and conditions, you must indicate those exceptions in your response to the RFP; certain exceptions may result in your proposal being disqualified from further review and evaluation. Only those exceptions indicated in your response to the RFP will be available for discussion or negotiation.
Authorized Signature

The proposal must be completed and signed in the firm's name or corporate name of the Vendor and must be fully signed by an authorized representative of the Vendor. Proof of authority of the person signing must accompany the response.

Selection and Implementation Timeline

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Dates</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, March 08, 2021</td>
<td>Publishes RFP notice in State Register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 16, 2021</td>
<td>Deadline for Vendors to submit clarifying questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 18, 2021</td>
<td>Deadline to publish responses to RFP questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, March 22, 2021 4:30 p.m. CT</td>
<td>Deadline for RFP proposal submissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, March 26, 2021</td>
<td>Vendor(s) selected and notified</td>
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Northland Community & Technical College reserves the right to not award a contract. The dates noted above are estimates, but are reasonable for the purposes of presenting deadlines.

Contract Term

Northland Community & Technical College desires to enter into a contract with the successful Vendor(s) effective April 2, 2021 or on the date the last recognized signature is obtained, whichever occurs later. The length of such contract(s) shall be no longer than three months or the completion of the scope of work, whichever is first. If Northland Community & Technical College and Vendor are unable to negotiate and sign a contract by April 2, 2021 then Northland Community & Technical College reserves the right to seek an alternative Vendor(s).

Proposal Deadline

Submitted proposals must be received at the following address not later than: 4:30 p.m. CT on Monday, March 22, 2021:

Institution: Northland Community & Technical College  
Name: Angela Menge  
Title: Contract & Purchasing Coordinator  
Mailing Address: 2022 Central Ave NE, East Grand Forks, MN 56721  
Street Address: (if different than mailing address)

Format of Proposals and Submission

The Vendor shall submit one (1) printed copies of its RFP response and one copy on digital media with the RFP response in PDF format. Proposals are to be sealed in mailing envelopes or packages.
with the Vendor’s name and address clearly written on the outside. One copy of the proposal must be unbound and signed in blue or black ink by an authorized representative of the vendor. Proof of authority of the person signing must accompany the response.

Proposals received after the Proposal Deadline date and time will not be considered. Fax and e-mail responses will not be considered. Proposals made in pencil will be rejected. Alterations in cost figures used to determine the lowest priced proposal will be rejected unless initialed in ink by the person responsible for or authorized to make decisions as to price quoted. The use of “white out” is considered an alteration.

**Proposal Content**

Vendors must submit the following information:

1. **Expressed understanding of proposal objective and work plan:** A description of the deliverables to be provided by the vendor along with a detailed work plan that identifies the major tasks to be accomplished and be used as a scheduling and managing tool, as well as the basis for invoicing.

2. **Qualifications of Vendor and its Personnel:** An outline of the vendor’s background and experience with examples of similar work done by the vendor and a list of personnel who will conduct the project, detailing their training, and work experience. Resumes or other information about project personnel should not, if possible, contain personal telephone numbers, home addresses or home email addresses. If it is necessary to include personal contact information, please clearly indicate in the proposal that personal contact information is being provided.

3. **Timeline for project start and delivery.**

4. **Cost/Value:** Identify the level of Northland Community & Technical College’s participation in the contract, as well as any other services to be provided by Northland Community & Technical College and details of cost allowances for this participation.

**Terms of Payment**

Payment shall be made by Northland Community & Technical College promptly after Vendor’s presentation of invoices for services performed and acceptance of such services by Northland Community & Technical College’s authorized representative. All services provided by the Vendor pursuant to the resulting contract shall be performed to the satisfaction of Northland Community & Technical College as determined at the sole discretion of its authorized representative, and in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations. The Vendor shall not receive payment for work found by Northland Community & Technical College to be unsatisfactory or performed in violation of any applicable federal, state or local law, ordinance, rule or regulation.
Required Documents and Forms

1. Affidavit of Non-Collusion. Each Vendor must complete the Affidavit of Non-Collusion and attach it with the response.

2. Conflicts of Interest. Vendor must provide a list of all entities with which it has relationships that create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest with the work that is contemplated in this request for proposals. The list should indicate the name of the entity, the relationship, and a discussion of the conflict.

3. Minnesota Department of Human Rights Workforce – Affirmative Action Certification (if proposal exceeds $100,000, including extension options).

4. Minnesota Department of Human Rights Equal Pay Certificate Form (if proposal exceeds $500,000, including extension options)

5. Veterans Preference Form (if applicable).

6. Targeted Business Inclusion Form: Respondent must provide certification(s) that at least 51% of the business is owned and operated by a woman or minority.

Selection Process

The selection process includes the Director of Marketing and Communications, members of the Northland’s council group, members of the web team, student services staff, and facility group will evaluate the proposals and make the final decision.

RFP Evaluation Factors

The following factors and their identified weight will be used by Northland Community & Technical College to evaluate the responses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Evaluation Factors</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Expressed understanding of proposal objective and work plan:</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Timeline for project start and delivery</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Quality of robust digital product experience and development</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Targeted Business Inclusion; respondent is a certified TGB and/or respondent commits to sub-contracting 10% or more of the value of the contract to a certified TGB</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Preference to Economically Disadvantaged Business and Individuals, if applicable*. 6%

7. Preference to Service Disabled / Veteran-Owned Business and Individuals, if applicable*. 6%

*Preferences are to be applied by adding 6% to the final cost proposal submitted by non-TGB/ED/VO respondents.

Northland Community & Technical College reserves the right to name a date which all responding Vendors will be invited to present demonstrations or participate in an interview.

Northland Community & Technical College does not agree to reach a decision by any certain date although it is hoped the evaluation and selection will be completed by the date identified in the Selection and Implementation Timeline.

A proposal may be rejected if it is determined that a Vendor’s ability to work with the existing infrastructure will be too limited or difficult to manage.

**Supplier Diversity**

Pursuant to policy 5.14 and Minn. Stat. 16C.16, Minnesota State Colleges & Universities is committed to taking affirmative action to ensure that minority-owned (MBEs) and women-owned (WBEs) businesses are given equal opportunity to provide their goods & services to Minnesota State. Targeted Business inclusion is a part of the criteria for this request for proposal to facilitate Minnesota State’s fulfillment of this commitment.

For all goods & services contracts estimated to be in excess of $50,000, all responding Vendors are required to complete the attached **Targeted Business Inclusion Form** and attach hard copies of TGBs certificates verifying that the Vendor is certified by one of the certifying agencies recognized by Minnesota State (see acceptable certifications in the definitions section of this RFP). Vendors are not required to include TGBs in their bid response; however, it should be noted that TGB inclusion is ten percent (10%) of the total proposal criteria.

**ED/VO Preferences:**

For information regarding certification, contact the OEP at 651-201-2402 or you may reach the Helpline by e-mail at procurement.equity@state.mn.us. For TTY/TDD communications, contact the Helpline through the Minnesota Relay Services at 1.800.627.3529.

**Economically Disadvantaged (ED) Business and Individuals**

In accordance with Minnesota Rules, part 1230.1810, subpart B certified Economically Disadvantaged (ED) Businesses submitting proposals as prime contractors shall receive the equivalent of a six percent (6%) preference in the evaluation of their proposal. Eligible ED businesses must be currently certified by the Minnesota Department of
Administration’s Office of Equity in Procurement (OEP) prior to the solicitation opening date and time.

Veteran-Owned (VO)

In accordance with Minn. Stat. § 16C.16, subd. 6a, (a) Except when mandated by the federal government as a condition of receiving federal funds, the commissioner shall award up to a six percent (6%) preference, but no less than the percentage awarded to any other group under this section on state procurement to certified small businesses that are majority-owned and operated by veterans.