RFP for Website Redesign at Normandale Community College

ADDENDUM NO. THREE

RFP DATE CHANGES:

Due to the amount of inquiries received in response to the RFP posted on 11/15/19, Normandale is changing the dates for the deliverables below:

- Proposal submissions due by 4:00 p.m. CT  
  January 6, 2020
- Proposals reviewed and scored  
  February 3, 2020
- Finalists interviewed  
  February 18 – 28, 2020
- Selection process completed and contract acting initiated  
  March 20, 2020
- Contracted work commences  
  April 1, 2020

Responses to questions regarding Normandale’s web redesign RFP

(For a complete list of questions received, as written, please see the end of this Addendum No. 3.)

CMS and web hosting for the current and new sites

- Normandale is currently using Ingeniux’s hosted CMS. The hosting setup is a cluster of load-balanced servers shared with other customers in a private cloud. Our current circumstances have led to frustration among content creators, editors, and managers because of a lack of flexibility and ease of use.
- For the new website, we have chosen to use Cascade (proprietary) as our CMS and we are exploring hosting arrangements. Cascade can be hosted in the cloud by Hannon Hill, but other options are also available. The college’s marketing team has some experience with Cascade, but additional expertise and capacity are needed.

Integration with third-party tools and applications, relationship with college’s intranet

- Normandale’s current website relies on several APIs including but not limited to: Library system, D2L, ISRS, CE/CT (continuing education and continued training), bookstore, and an active directory. The new site must provide a means for users to access these tools, but the tools themselves are outside the scope of the website redesign project.
- Re the course catalog on the existing site: A significant portion of the URLs/pages below http://www.normandale.edu/catalog/ are out of scope for the website redesign project. A limited amount of the content at those URLs, however, will need to be considered for potential migration/integration into the new site as part of the website audit process described below.
- Vendors will not be required to provide college intranet support per se, but some content on the existing site will need to migrate to the intranet. See answers under “Content Migration and Creation,” below.
Content migration and creation

- **Regarding content migration:** Our current website exceeds 14,000 pages. In connection with the audit of the current site (per "Project Considerations" section in the RFP), we expect the selected vendor to work with us on a process and criteria for determining which existing pages, roles, and permissions will migrate to the new website. We anticipate that the work of content migration will be shared between the vendor and college staff. It would be helpful for proposers to include a cost range for migration in their project budgets, taking into account the nature and scope of the content on our existing website and the reality that the distribution of labor between the vendor and college staff must be determined as part of the redesign process.

- **Regarding content creation:** We expect a significant portion of the content focused on current students on our existing website will migrate to the new website, and the college's advancement team and other departments include many skilled writers. Given the existing workload and limited capacity of college staff, however, we expect that our selected vendor will need to help with some of the writing and other content for the current student audience.

Further, a significant portion of the content for prospective students and other external stakeholders, including video and photography, will need to be created, with the selected vendor playing a major role. It would be helpful for proposers to include a cost range for content creation in their project budgets, taking into account the nature and scope of the content on our existing website and the reality that the distribution of labor between the vendor and college staff must be determined as part of the redesign process.

Content Workflows

- **Normandale's current CMS uses versioning control to keep track of different versions of content.**

- **A key challenge of the current website is that content is produced by a wide range of faculty, staff, and students at every level of the college, with few control mechanisms in place. This leads to outdated and abandoned information, lack of consistent voice, and other issues that detract from our brand and our ability to communicate effectively.**

As part of the redesign process, we need to lay the foundation (through structure, policies, procedures, practices, and training) for a new website that strikes the right balance between a completely centralized approach to content creation and management on the one hand, and the practical realities of our institution on the other. These realities include the fact that our website must serve prospective students, current students, and a variety of external stakeholders as described in the RFP. Please refer to "Campus Needs and Benefits" in the RFP.
• Content creators, editors, and maintainers are frustrated by our current site's lack of flexibility and ease of use. Please refer to "Campus Needs and Benefits" in the RFP.

Features and functionality of the new website

• We do not send automated emails from our current website, but we would like the new website to include this functionality.
• Re requirements for more than the default language: the new site may require multi-language support in the future.
• We are not currently using an events system, but we are open to considering it.
• Content produced by Normandale or provided by third-party developers will conform to the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative’s (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA conformance, or updated equivalents.

Permissions

• User management leverages group based permissions in Normandale's existing CMS.
• As noted above, we expect the selected vendor to work with us on a process and criteria for determining which existing pages, roles, and permissions will migrate to the new website.

Development

• Normandale's CMS is hosted in a dev/staging/production setup to roll out updated APIs as versions to different environments or applications.
• In response to the question confirming whether we expect the selected vendor to help develop a new Information Architecture per page 5 in the RFP: yes.
• In addition to reviewing existing information (e.g., personas previously developed by the college), we expect the selected vendor to undertake qualitative and quantitative analysis to inform the designs and user experience.
• We expect the selected vendor to recommend the number and type of design templates based on the audit of the existing site and our related decisions about which content will migrate to the new site and what kind of new content will be created.

Training

• Normandale anticipates training up to 30 - 40 users on various aspects of the technology. The extent to which content management will be centralized versus decentralized is a matter we will decide as part of this project. The number of people to be trained will flow from that decision.

Authentication

• Normandale's CMS relies on LDAP to authenticate users.

Search and SEO

• Normandale's SEO strategy includes optimized page URLs, rich content and videos, keywords, program marketing, geo-targeting, and optimizing local SEO.
• We will need to develop an SEO migration strategy as part of the project.
• We may require external search engine capabilities. This will also be determined as the project moves forward.

Analytics
• Normandale currently uses Google Analytics to track transactional data across the website. The data aligns with campaign data provided by media vendors. We will share all relevant data with our selected vendor.
• Normandale is benchmarking several key performance indicators, which include but are not limited to brand awareness and marketing goals.
• Normandale will provide traffic data, including unique page views, percent of users using desktop tablets and mobile, etc. to the selected vendor.
• Normandale will work with the selected vendor to determine the best approach to building analytics based on KPIs and the college's goals. This approach will include Google analytics.
• Normandale has Google Analytics JavaScript that likely will need to migrate to the new website.

Marketing and Branding
• Normandale has created audience personas. We will share this information – and all relevant marketing plans – with the selected vendor.
• We expect to sustain our current branding in the website redesign but look forward to any recommendations the selected vendor may present for refining and refreshing the expression of our brand as the project unfolds.

Vendor Selection and Proposal Requirements
• Re existence of an “incumbent” vendor: Normandale plans to select a vendor based on the strength, responsiveness, and competitiveness of proposals received in response to our RFP.
• Re non-local vendor eligibility: Normandale will consider proposals from all vendors who demonstrate relevant expertise and an ability to carry out the work outlined in the RFP.
• Re composition of the vendor selection committee: we are assembling a selection committee to ensure cross-functional representation (including student and academic affairs) at a leadership level.
• Per the RFP, the vendor we select must (a) submit proposals that are responsive to the RFP and (b) demonstrate:
  • Considerable expertise and proven success in higher education.
  • Understanding of the current and potential positioning of Normandale Community College and the Minnesota State system within the competitive higher education environment in the metropolitan Twin Cities region.
  • An unambiguous track record of applying originality, creativity, and innovative thinking on behalf of their clients.
• Prospective vendors do not need to include insurance certificates with their proposals. Only the selected vendor will be required to provide a certificate.
• Forms listed in the RFP need to be signed by the awarded vendor at contract stage.
• Re feasibility of submitting a redacted proposal: Normandale will not accept proposals with redacted information.
Team

- The audit of the current site (described above and in the RFP) will identify the actors interacting with our current CMS.
- The current website is managed by the college’s marketing team with support from information technology staff and content contributed by a wide range of faculty, staff, and students at every level of the college. As part of the redesign process, we need to lay the foundation (through structure, policies, procedures, practices, and training) for a new website that strikes the right balance between a completely centralized approach and the practical realities of our institution. Please refer to "Campus Needs and Benefits" in the RFP.
- The core project team comprises the Chief Institutional Advancement Officer (CIAO), Director of Marketing, and other members of the marketing team, with significant support from the college’s information technology department. At key points in the redesign process, we will strategically engage other members of the college's leadership team as well as representatives from various academic and support departments in hearing recommendations and providing input into critical decisions. The selected vendor will have ongoing contact with multiple members of the marketing team, with the CIAO and Director of Marketing sharing the "project lead" role.

Workflow/Project Management

- Normandale will work in a Waterfall or Agile environment based on the best approach to meet project outcomes.
- Normandale will work with the selected vendor to define acceptance criteria for the project deliverables identified in the RFP.
- Normandale does not have a preferred project management tool for this project.
- The marketing team has not used ticket-writing or user stories.

Project Budget

- The college is prepared to make a substantial (i.e., six-figure) investment in the website redesign project and looks to proposers to specify and justify the budget required to achieve the deliverables and success criteria outlined in the RFP, given the project considerations and additional information provided in the answers above.

Uncategorized Responses

- Normandale has capped scoring at 100% for the project.
- Normandale's last website redesign occurred nearly ten years ago. The website is in need of redesign to respond to the needs and expectations of constituents.
- Normandale's target launch timeline is December, 2020 as stated in the RFP. We recognize that some content may continue to be added and refreshed after that date.
Questions regarding Normandale’s web redesign RFP, as received from potential proposers:

- Is there a particular CMS that the college has considered?
- Does the college prefer an open source CMS?
- Is the college interested in a proprietary or closed source solution?
- Is the college open to paying a license or subscription fee for the CMS?
- What is the size of the content?
- How many pages or discrete pieces of content exist right now?
- Of the above, how many pages would be migrated to the college intranet?
- The college intranet is out of scope but what support, if any, would be required of us?
- How is user management done on the existing CMS?
- How many user roles will the site require (both authenticated and anonymous users)?
- What is the present version control system? Is there any preference from your internal team for the version control system?
- What are the current challenges in managing content on the current system?
- What are the things that bother content editors the most right now?
- Is the current site hosted in a dev/staging/production setup with code managed via Git or similar?
- Does the current website do any sort of load balancing?
- What external authentication or SSO system is required, if any (CAS, LDAP, SAML, etc.)?
- Will an external search engine like Solr search needs to be configured? If so, can you share requirements for search?
- Will the site require more than the default language? If so, how many additional languages?
- What service is used to send transactional email from the website?
- What service is used to send promotional/marketing email?
- Will the proposed solution need to integrate with a 3rd party marketing automation system?
- Can you share your marketing automation plan?
- What analytics suites does the college currently employ or plan/desire to employ on the current or new site?
- How confident are you with the accuracy of your website analytics data (e.g. Google Analytics data)?
- What are your key performance indicators (KPIs) for benchmarking and goal setting, e.g. operational efficiencies, customer loyalty, marketing goals, revenue goals, communication goals, etc.?
- Can you share site traffic numbers (Unique Pageviews, Percentage of users using desktop tablet and mobile)
- Tell us about your SEO strategy. How well are you performing against your SEO goals? What do you attribute that performance to?
- Have you developed an SEO migration strategy?
- Is there an incumbent vendor?
- Do you have an existing relationship with a vendor included in the bidding process?
- Can you list all actors interacting with your system (human and machine) and the types of information that flows between each actor and the system?
• What are the most important qualities you are seeking in a partner for this project?
• Does your team currently working in a Waterfall or Agile environment and is there a preference for this project?
• How will project decisions be made (functional requirements, technology, etc.), by a single stakeholder, product owner, project committee, or broad organizational acceptance? Who has ultimate decision-making authority and what will be their accessibility and interaction with the project be?
• What is the structure of the approvals process for key deliverables once the project is underway? Does each requirement include acceptance criteria that state the user role, functional requirements and/or performance requirements?
• Does your team have a project management tool that they prefer (JIRA, Asana, Trello, etc.)?
• Is your team familiar with ticket-writing or user stories?
• Can we perform tasks (related to RFP) with team members outside the USA?
• Has a budget been allocated for the project?
• Can the allocated budget be disclosed?
• Is the scoring capped at 100% or is there a possibility to score over 100% given the military and target group preference?
• Are you leaning one way or the other regarding a CMS? Does your team have any background in any specific systems?
• Could you list all third party integrations / tools currently in use and whether or not they are linked to, or integrated within, the current site?
• Could you describe the size, and roles of the team, eventually responsible for managing the new website?
• Could you describe your current hosting setup and any thoughts you have on cloud hosting or potential managed hosting partners moving forward?
• Are there any budget parameters to be aware of when estimating this project?
• While the planning phases of the project will likely help determine this, do you anticipate being able to reuse and migrate a lot of content, or will much of it likely be created from scratch?
• What are your biggest pain points with the current site?
• Do you have plans for a branding exercise or are you sticking with the current branding?
• PG 6. Project Considerations #5. You reference “leveraging information from stakeholder interviews” as a part of the process. Have you completed a round of stakeholder interviews? How long ago was this process completed, and are you able to provide a sample of the interview findings during the RFP response process?
• PG 6. Project Considerations #6. Are you able to provide a rundown of the current ‘decentralized approach’ that you are currently using to manage your website properties?
• PG 6. Project Considerations #7. Are you able to provide a full list of the external web-based properties that you need to integrate into the new?
• PG 7. Out of Scope: While the ‘Employee Intranet’ site is out of scope, are there any integrations needed from the new site to the employee intranet?
• PG7. Out of Scope items: Can you provide additional requirements for each of the items listed in the second out of scope bullet and how they need to integrate into the new site? For example,
is there a documented API that we can interface with in order to access and surface the ‘course catalog’ data, etc.?

- Success Criteria: “Meet ADA compliance standards” - do you have detailed Accessibility standards that need to be met? For example, WCAG 2.0 AA or WCAG 2.1, etc.? We’re happy to meet any specific standards, but want to ensure we estimate the appropriate lift for the stated requirements.

- In order to better evaluate scope requirements, please provide approved budget or budget range for this project. This will give us a better idea of what we can do to meet your needs, and help us determine the timeline we can complete it in.

- You mention on p.5 of the RFP that you are transitioning to a new CMS - please confirm the chosen CMS?

- Please confirm that you expect the chosen vendor to help develop a new Information Architecture (rfp, p.5)?

- Are you interested in completing any 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, and/or online user experience recordings.

- Have you conducted, or do you need to conduct, a content audit?

- 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: Copywrite (provide new content) and Copy edit existing content?

- Has Normandale created any audience personas? Is persona development part of the scope of this response?

- Will the client or the vendor be responsible for migrating the existing content into the new site?

- Can you please list and briefly describe any third-party integrations which may be included in this project?

- Please confirm how many design templates that you are requesting as part of the redesign. We are assuming that you will need a Homepage, Landing Page, and an interior page but not sure how many other templates you are including in the scope. Do you want the vendor to include a News Listing and Detail Page, Calendar, Faculty/Staff Director, or a Programs Page?

- What are your expectations for Google Analytics in terms of consulting and migration to the new site?

- Is there a single piece of Google Analytics JavaScript or are there additional snippets that need to be transferred? Will it be the same tracking code that is on the existing website? Is there a single piece of Google Analytics JavaScript or are there additional snippets that need to be transferred? Will it be the same tracking code that is on the existing website?

- Can you describe the SEO efforts taken on your site so far? What is your current SEO strategy?

- The RFP indicates an anticipated launch of 12/31/2020. Is it your expectation that all existing content will be fully migrated and that all new content will be created by that time?

- CMS Training – how many people will need to be trained?

- Would you be open to a non-US based vendor completing this work? Do you have a preference towards domestic vendors?

- Can you disclose a budget range or budget cap for this project?
• Do you have a preference towards either Open-source or a proprietary CMS? Are you willing to consider open source solutions?
• Do you require hosting services or hosting recommendations for this project?
• What is the size of your website? How many page URLs and how many documents?
• Does the new site require any specific customization, API Integrations, etc.?
• How many visitors and page views does your site get each day?
• Will there be any restrictions that would prevent access to your servers during the project?
• Current catalog (http://www.normandale.edu/catalog) - Will the digital catalog need to be integrated into the new design or will that remain off site? (https://eservices.minnstate.edu/registration/search/advanced.html?campusid=156)?
• What is the current content management system (CMS) being used by Normandale Community College?
• Does the current budget for this project exceed $100,000?
• How large is the existing set of files and are they structured, tagged, indexed, or formatted?
• What resources from Normandale Community College will be available to assist or take full
• Who will be maintaining the new site for Normandale Community College?
• What is the selection committee comprised of that will be evaluating vendor proposals? What are their levels of technical knowledge?
• What CMS does the College currently use?
• Will the selected vendor be working with one project lead from your team, or will it be ruled by committee approach where we regularly meet with the committee and collectively come to consensus on tasks/matters (which will take more time)?
• Must the vendor’s primary place of business be in MN to qualify as a Veteran Owned Business if it is through a different state, as well as a Federal SDVOSB for the potential 6% preference?
• Who is the current incumbent?
• What is the budget/budget cap for this project?
• Have you completed any market research or interviews within the past 2 years that could be made available to the selected vendor?
• When did you last complete a content audit? What were the results?
• In order to estimate the time required for a content audit, could you please confirm the number of active pages are on the current website?
• In order to estimate the content migration, can you estimate approximately how many pages of content you expect that you may need to be populated on the website by the vendor? If this number is not known, would you like to specify a number of pages that all vendors can use for pricing (to allow you to compare the estimates more easily)? Or would you prefer a daily rate? Or can you give some guideline in comparison to the number of pages on your current website (e.g. there will be considerably more than the current site, slightly more than the current site, approximately the same as the current site, slightly less than the current site, considerably less than the current site)?
• Are you able to estimate approximately how many pages of content you will need the vendor to develop/write? If this number is not known, would you like to specify a number of pages that all vendors can use for pricing (to allow you to compare the estimates more easily)? Or would you prefer a daily rate?
• Please clarify the requirement on page 6 for “integration with other systems”. Specifically, what integrations will the vendor be responsible for as part of the scope of this project? For each integration, describe the type of integration required (e.g. pull data to display, link to application, push data into the application) and/or use cases for the integration.
• IT is stated that the course catalog is out of scope. Please confirm whether this is all URLs/pages below http://www.normandale.edu/catalog/, or whether it is a specific portion of functionality of this catalog that is considered out of scope.
• Do you have a year one development budget?
• Do you have a preference for an open-source or a commercial solution?
• Is your current web environment hosted in house or externally? If externally, who is the provider? What is your current setup?
• On page 10 you ask for proof of authority of the person signing, please advise what proof will be satisfactory?
• On page 17 you ask for three hard copies of the RFP response (and one soft copy). Can you please confirm that the unbound and signed copy is one of the three copies?
• From page 18 on there are a number of sample forms, can you please confirm which forms need to be signed and included with our proposal or are these forms to be signed by the successful bidder at contract stage? If forms are required, can you please send a non-watermarked version?
• We understand that the employee intranet is out of scope. Can you confirm if the quasi-intranet for current students (pg. 5) is part of scope for this project? If it is, can you please share your expectations for the current student intranet? If migration of this content is required, can you please share the number of pages?
• What is the project budget?
• What specific Marketing consulting services is the College looking for?
• What content will be provided by the College? Will the content be migration ready?
• Will the vendor be required to write content and if so – how many pages of content are expected?
• Current branding and style guide – please specify what style materials are available and required
• Out of Scope” what is the total number of pages and assets on the current website that is required to be migrated to the college employee intranet? Will the vendor be expected to provide this service.
• Total # of assets and pages to be migrated from the current website to the new website.
• What 3rd party applications need to be linked to the new website.
• Is the College looking for post deployment off-page SEO services and SEO management
• Can you please list your references for the website if any?
• What are the main business factors driving the RFP?
• Does the college have a CMS reference?
• Does Normandale have any research which they could share regarding student motivation or thought processes around applying for college?
• Can Normandale provide any more information on specific pain points reported by users on the current site?
• Will Normandale be willing to assist in coordinating access to students or other real users as part of user research and usability exercises throughout the website engagement?
• How will Normandale be measuring the success of the new site after launch?
• Website Analytics - Are you able to provide us access to your Google Analytics account? Do you have any HubSpot marketing reports that you could share with us (that would showcase the current website’s performance)?
• External Services - Can you provide a list of all third party platforms that will need to be integrated into the website (tag managers, tracking pixels, cookies, embedded content, etc)?
• Goals - Have the project stakeholders determined any specific desired outcomes for website traffic and performance, or is the chosen partner responsible for establishing KPIs?
• Language - Will content need to be produced or optimized for any languages other than English?
• The RFP states that Normandale currently uses a “decentralized approach” to developing and maintaining website content. Can you describe some of the various distributed roles and responsibilities involved in your current approach?
• Will your internal marketing team be responsible for defining and executing specific marketing campaigns, or are you also expecting the selected partner to assist with this?
• Normandale.edu is the means to access some internal systems which are external to the website itself. Will the new site need to integrate with any of these external systems or platforms in some way (such as sending information to, or retrieving / displaying content from these external systems)? Can you provide a list of the systems that would be associated with the new site in some capacity (online applications, course registration, knowledge management, e-services, library, bookstore, etc), and a description of how each would relate to and be used by the new site?
• Will the new site need to support authentication (i.e. open registration and sign-in) for people outside of the technical and creative staff? If so, which sections of the website would this be used for?
• Would the new site share user authentication functionality with any other existing systems (for example, allowing content administrators to log into the new site and the e-services system with the same account)?
• Will the selected partner be responsible for transferring the current content from normandale.edu’s current website to the new platform, or will content on the new site be entered by Normandale content administrators? Does your current site have any built-in methods for easily exporting content, or would all migration need to consist of custom database scripts and/or manual content entry?
• The RFP states that a portion of the existing site’s content will be moved to the employee intranet. Who will be responsible for identifying and moving this content?
• What types of website optimizations are required - e.g. OpenGraph (social networks-friendly crawling), SEO, etc.?
• Are there any specifics around the type of files that are being uploaded to the system other than pdf, doc(x), xls(x), jpg, png? Does the website need to dynamically generate any files (such as creating a PDF version of a content article, or a CSV version of an event list), or would all files be manually uploaded by a content administrator? Are uploaded files used by the system for anything other than downloading by other users?
• Can you provide any feedback on which areas of the site are most heavily accessed on mobile devices, or which areas may be currently suffering due to lack of mobile support?
• The RFP states the need for facilitating “automated workflow”. Can you provide examples of automated workflows you would need to support?
• The RFP states the need for facilitating an “improved content calendaring / scheduling system”. Is this referring to improvements for scheduling content to be automatically published at specific dates, or is this referring to improvements for things like the community event calendar and scheduling on-campus visits?
• Are there any particular technologies or platforms that Normandale would prefer to use (or avoid) for the new site build? For example, would your IT team prefer the new system to be based on .NET (the same language used on the current site), or would they be open to a PHP-based content management system such as WordPress?
• Accessibility Testing - Should we assume that Normandale content administrators are already familiar with WCAG accessibility standards, and that the site's existing content has been created according to these standards? Are there any known accessibility gaps in the current site / content that would need to be remediated in the new site (and if so, do these gaps stem from any specific procedural or technical limitations in your current system)?
• Performance Testing - Can Normandale provide more information on current site usage metrics, such as average/maximum concurrent site visitors? Are there specific areas of the site that are subjected to unusually high volumes of traffic, or areas that are most critical to remain functional during unusual traffic spikes?
• How many individual staff do you expect will require CMS training for the initial launch? Are you expecting a “train-the-trainer” approach (where the selected partner trains a handful of key individuals who then train the remaining staff), or would you expect the selected partner to conduct all necessary training directly?
• When was your site last redesigned? Did you design it in-house or with an outside firm? If the latter, who did you use? Do you have a current relationship with them now? Are they bidding on your project?
• Why have you decided to redesign the site now? Is there an enrollment problem? If so, please quantify? OR is there something else driving this decision?
• What existing research and analysis has been done to date that we might have access to?
• What sites do you admire and consider aspirational? Please list.
• Will the awarded firm be responsible for front end development of templates? Have you determined how many templates you might need or specific content areas you need addressed?
• Will the awarded firm be responsible for integration of templates into the new CMS and build out structure of the site?
• Will the awarded firm be responsible for any 3rd party integrations? If so, please list all that are confirmed for this project. What level of functionality will be required for each? Please clarify.
• You mention obtaining a new CMS platform. Are you leaning towards a commercial or open source? What platforms are you considering? Would you be open to having the awarded firm review your technical requirements in Discovery and making a recommendation?
• Will you need copywriting services for top level pages? Please clarify.
• Do you require a content strategy? Please clarify.
• Will the awarded firm be responsible for content migration. If so, how many pages are you expecting to be migrated over?
• What type of training will you require? How many people will need to be trained? (We also do unique training like “Writing for the Web”)
• Who is the core team responsible for making decisions, review and approvals? Do you have a dedicated project manager for the project? If so, who?
• You mention Dec. 31, 2020 as your launch date? What is driving this decision and is there any flexibility?
• What are you ideally looking for in a partner? Top three things.
• Please provide a budget range or max for the project. Are you looking to invest north of $200K or less? If the CMS is commercial, is the CMS licence part of this overall budget?
• What integrations does your website have that I need to be aware of prior to completing the proposal?
• It appears that you want automated workflows does this pertain to a marketing automation platform such as HubSpot or Mailchimp?
• The RFP states that you will be creating content as well as asking for some direction when it comes to content creation. Do you know how much content and what type of content you'd like ArcStone performing for this project?
• Lastly, were you aware that your current site lacks an SSL certificate? This opens up Normandale to a huge risk concerning data privacy and accessibility. This is something that I would obviously put into the proposal, but if it were something you'd like to take care of ahead of time it is rather inexpensive to do so.
• What is driving the reason to switch to a new CMS?
• Which content management systems, are you currently using at your institution?
• What optimizations would improve your experience with your current CMS?
• What areas of your current CMS do you find most challenging?
• What are your strategic objectives for the website in 2020? (number of visits, apps completed, enrollment targets?)
• How will you measure success of this project?
• What is driving the dates of this project?
• What happens if you miss any or all of the dates of this project?
• In regards to content migration: Will you require content migration services? Will the entire .edu domain need to be migrated? Are there parts of the site that will not be migrated? Are there additional domains that need to be migrated? In regards to migration, how many different page layouts do you have on your current site? What form of data export is available from your current CMS setup?
• Do you prefer that the CMS be installed locally on your own servers, or hosted as a cloud solution?
• Who currently hosts your website(s)? Are you looking to change this arrangement?
• How many people are on your web team?
• How many developers do you have to maintain the new CMS?
• How many individuals at your institution will need to use the CMS?
• Who makes the final decision on this RFP and how is it made?
• What are the main needs of each of the committee members as it relates to a new design and CMS?
• Are there budget parameters you can share?
• Are you interested in an open-source or commercial solution for the CMS?
• How important is a support plan/option for you with the new CMS?
• What systems do you have that you would like integration with? Is there a priority of system integrations?
• On page 6 under project deliverable, you mentioned recommendations for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the site, including the staff structure, capacity, and expertise needed to develop and maintain fresh content on an ongoing basis. Can you please elaborate more on this?
• What is the College’s current CMS?
• Do you have a preferred CMS (or are you continuing with your current CMS), or are you open to (or seeking in this engagement) CMS recommendations from your agency partner?
• Have you been part of any CMS demos or evaluated any CMSs? If so, which systems have you examined?
• What is your estimated budget for this work? Alternatively, what is the anticipated not-to-exceed amount and/or budget range?
• Approximately how many pages of content exist on the current site? What percentage of these pages is expected to be carried over to the new site?
• Please detail your expectations for content migration (manually moving content from the old site to the new). Will the selected agency be responsible for migrating all pages or only certain sections and/or tiers?
• You mention content development will be a shared responsibility. Do you have a sense of how many pages (new and/or heavily or lightly edited) might be expected of your partner firm?
• How many people at NCC manage and/or update content on a regular basis?
• Budget: Could you share a budget or range of acceptable costs for the project? (e.g. under $50k, $50k-100k, $100-250k, $250k+). Knowing your budget or at least a range of potential costs helps determine if we’re a good fit for the project, how we should approach it, and a sense of your expectations as well.
• Marketing Consultation: Can you be more specific as to what marketing deliverables you are looking for, or marketing expectations? What do you view as tasks for your internal marketing department vs the vendor? Is the outside vendor to be responsible for developing the marketing for recruiting and retention of students, and if so, in what way(s)?
• Website Audit -- are you asking for full content audit, or just a high-level audit? Analytics review? Content governance? Are there any technical components or integrations to audit?
• Stakeholder interviews -- approximately how many groups do you anticipate participating in these? Do you anticipate doing multiple rounds of stakeholder interviews throughout the project, or just at the beginning?
• Useability Testing/QA -- can you explain more about your expectations for formal usability testing with multiple groups of stakeholders? How many groups/people do you hope to target? Will the usability tests occur more than once?
• Migration: Many of our clients see a major web rebuild on a new CMS as an opportunity to clean up content, remove old pages and files, and to do a general refresh. Is this in your plans or are you expecting a straight 1-to-1 migration of all current content and navigation on your site as it stands today?

• Integrations: Can you describe any external integrations with other sites or data sources more complex than an iFrame or embed code? This gives our team a better idea of the technical and design requirements for the project, and where you might need additional consulting.

• CMS: Do you have any preferences for what system to select, or a CMS you wish to avoid? If so, why?

• Current System: Which CMS is the site currently using (if any?) Is the content stored in a database that can be used to facilitate a content migration to a new system? Are there significant amounts of hard-coded HTML files? Are there any other known factors that may impact a content migration?

• Hosting: Where is your site currently hosted? If needed for the new CMS, are you open to switching providers?

• Your Team: Who will be involved in the project from your team? Who would be the project lead? Do you have technical staff versed in your current system available to help with migration related work?

• What are your existing website KPIs?

• About how many online applications do you receive a month?

• Existing acceptance rate of online applicants?

• Referral source of online applications

• “automated workflow” section: Could you expand on what you mean by workflow?

• what does the current search function lack?

• content calendaring/scheduling system: is this in reference to scheduling content to publish and expire or an actual website calendar?

• Content Provisioning – How much of the existing website do you see requiring new content? How often would you expect significant content adjustments?

• Can you expand on what you mean by “extendibility”

• What other systems would the website be required to integrate with?

• Out of Scope section - Course Catalog - is there an existing online course catalog besides http://www.normandale.edu/careerprograms?

• The RFP mentions that Normandale is transitioning to a new CMS. Has the CMS been selected, or is Normandale looking for recommendations from the vendor?

• If the CMS is proprietary, what will our relationship as a vendor be like with the CMS developer? Will we have access to support representatives, forums and/or documentation during the configuration process?

• On page 6 of the RFP it states that the vendor will be expected to assess web-based applications, such as class schedules and registration, and ensure seamless access via the website. On page 7, it lists several applications that are out of scope, mentioning they will just need to be accessible. Can you clarify what sort of assessment you are seeking for class schedules and registration?
Your current site has thousands of indexed pages. Would you be comfortable capping your written content needs at 250 pages, knowing that many pages could be consolidated or transferred without significant edits (ex: news stories, staff entries) during the redesign?

As a Canadian agency that does quite a bit of work in the US, would you be open to the same or do you have a preference for a local agency? We do have a registered EIN for our contracts in the States.

As we are in Canada, there could be trouble in sending across a USB through courier services to the States. Would you accept an electronic copy via e-mail instead of the USB and printed copies sent across as required in the RFP?

Could you let us know what the budget is for this RFP?

Would the College require any hosting, domain management or SSL services?

Would you require any stock or original photography or videography as part of this contract?

Could you let us know if you have a preference for a new CMS?

How much content do you envision we would need to develop for the new site?

Would you be able to let us know what the budget is for this RFP?

when was the current site launched

what cms are you currently on?

Do you want the new CMS to be open source or SAAS

do you have a preference?

who is your biggest competitor?

are you a "pathways" school?

it does not look like you are using an events system, is this something you want to consider?

who designed and developed the current site - was it a firm? If yes, are they participating in this process?

when do you want to launch

what is driving that date

can you share a budget

who is driving this project, i.e. marketing/admissions/IT?

I am inquiring about Normandale Community College's policy in regards to submitting a redacted proposal (in addition to a proposal response) for an RFP. Specifically, Wildcard Corp. would like to submit a redacted version of our proposal for release upon a public records request, in response to the Website Redesign RFP. We prefer to redact information about our references including names, contact information, and a description of the work we have performed. Our reason is to uphold the privacy of our references, and not provide information to the public on the work we do/how we do it for our clients.