**MCCS Website Update and Redesign RFP**

**RFP Questions and Responses**

**August 14, 2024**

Similar questions about the MCCS Website Update and Redesign RFP have been combined and edited. If your question is not addressed, please refer to the RFP.

**How many pages are on each website?**

Each site has a mix of static content pages, post-style pages (like news and events), form pages, and dynamic content (like course listings). Broadly speaking, that breaks down as:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Site | Pages | News | Events | Other | Media Library | Forms | Courses |
| MCCS | 128 | 290 | 100 | 100 | 1500 | 23 | 1000 |
| CMCC | 221 | 100 |  | 200 | 2000 | 29 | via API |
| EMCC | 272 | 100 | 100 | 50 | 2400 | 55 | via API |
| KVCC | 232 |  | 550 | 50 | 2200 | 131 | via API |
| NMCC | 162 | 350 | 50 | 50 | 2000 | 9 | via API |
| SMCC | 323 | 700 | 150 | 50 | 4200 | 70 | via API |
| WCCC | 270 | 280 | 25 | 50 | 2900 | 5 | via API |

**What version of WordPress are the current websites on?**

The existing sites were built pre-Gutenberg using custom templates; the "Pathways" content on all sites is Gutenberg, using a combination of custom blocks and built-in blocks. Assume that 90% of the content footprint is currently on pre-Gutenberg WordPress, with the exception of the site for SMCC, which is closer to 50%.

**Are the current websites using WordPress multisite? Are we currently using a network install of WordPress?**

The existing sites are running as individual instances of WordPress 6.5.5 with PHP 7.4—multisite is not currently being used.

**What types of plugins are being used on the current websites? Are you looking for integration or links?**

The existing sites use plugins for a variety of functions, including: Forms Management; Email; Spam Prevention; Redirects; Permissions; Popups/Modals; Job Content; Event Content; SEO. Integration whenever possible. A complete list of plugins and integrations will not be provided at this time.

**Are you looking to change the plugins?**

No, but we are updating our SIS and will be adopting new plugins associated with Anthology that are not currently in use on our sites.

**Are you currently using any accessibility testing tools?**

The sites are tested for accessibility using the WCAG 2.1 AA Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Tools include TGP ARC, SiteImprove, WAVE, Lighthouse, and others.

**What are current hosting costs?**

~$100/month for each website – which includes a staging site, automated backups, auto SSL certificates, auto Wordpress platform updates, and auto plugin updates.

We are not using a network install, sites are hosted at WP Engine.

**Is this RFP for a new build or an upgrade?**

Hybrid. It is mostly a new build, but some pages of the college websites have been upgraded to Gutenberg and do not need to be upgraded. We want to leverage our existing Gutenberg pages and optimize the remaining pages to a more modern and responsive design.

**How closely should we stick to the current design of each college’s website? Are there specific design elements or guidelines that must be followed, or is there flexibility for innovation?**

There is flexibility.

**Will sites want visual differentiation?**

Yes. See current sites.

**Are you looking to integrate all seven of these sites into a single site?**

No.

**Is the intent of the redesign to in any way unify the branding, look and feel and user experience for the sites? Will brand guidelines for the website be provided to the winning agency?**

No, we are not looking to unify branding. Yes, branding guidelines for each site will be provided.

**What data security standards must be met?**

We are a public higher education institution in the United States and must meet those federal standards.

**Is there any student data/ FERPA stored on the websites?**

No.

**What video server platforms are used?**

YouTube, etc. We do not host video.

**How are licensing and hosting costs handled?**

Included in this contract.

**How about web maintenance?**

Web maintenance is handled under a different contract.

**Is there a preference for a Maine-based firm?**

See RFP. “The firm chosen should have experience working with higher education clients, with a preference for firms with experience with two-year colleges and/or experience with multiple colleges within a system. The firm chosen should have experience with clients in Maine, or with states with a similar demographic profile of prospective students and state economies.”

**Are you interested in end user discovery or information gathering?**

N/A

**Questions about the timeline.**

The timeline is flexible within reason, the sites do not need to go live at the same time, but the goal is to have the college sites live by Summer 2025, more specifically by August 1, 2025.

**Questions about the MCCS teams and process, and training for MCCS administrators.**

The sites are independently managed. Vendor will work initially with a team from MCCS that includes communications and IT personnel currently managing the sites, and then work with teams at the individual colleges with similar teams. Administrators are currently managing the sites and will work with vendor for appropriate training needs. Core teams will have decision making authority.

**Questions about content from colleges versus from vendor selected.**

Minimal content development from the vendor. Please include an hourly rate for copywriting support. Content migration will include a review. MCCS and colleges have photographers, graphic designers, and other resources available.

**Will you be archiving/sunsetting any content as part of this project?**

Yes, we will be using this as an opportunity to evaluate all content and the expectation is that there will be both additions and deletions. MCCS and the colleges will take the lead on this work.

**Are we using any accessibility testing tools/suites?**

Yes.

**Do the current MCCS primary administrators control access?**

Yes.

**Do you have password-protected pages today?**

No.

**Do you have an intranet and/or portal for current students? If so, is that outside of the scope of this redesign?**

Yes, through Anthology. It is outside the scope of this RFP. This is only for our public facing websites.

**Questions about brand guidelines, design elements.**

Each site has their own brand guidelines and those will be available to the winning bidder. The college brand identities will remain as is. Certain design elements should be included on new websites.

**Questions about budget.**

We are not providing a budget or a range. We are looking for the best possible product at the best price. Payment terms and schedules, including financial penalties for not meeting certain deadlines or milestones, will be negotiated with the winning bidder.

**Questions about mobile design requirements.**

Priority is for efficiency and optimized user experience.

**How will feedback be collected and incorporated during the design and development**

**phases? Is there a formal process for gathering and addressing stakeholder feedback?**

This will be negotiated with the winning bidder.

**What requirements/restrictions do we have regarding the use of specific WordPress**

**themes/builders/plug-ins?**

No requirements at this time.

**Is there a logged-in experience for users beyond administrators and editors?**

No.

**How do you track and measure your website’s KPIs?**

Each site is independently managed and uses their own tools.

**Who is responsible for making the vendor selection decision?**

An RFP review team, using the selection criteria listed in the RFP.

**Refer to the RFP regarding the following questions:**

Details on features and functionalities required for the new sites.

Third party integrations needed to be maintained.

What are the technical requirements?

Is this for seven sites?

Provide more specificity around wireframe layouts.

Will content migration be handled by the client teams or by the vendor team?

What role will pricing play in the decision?

**Miscellaneous Q&A**

No examples of other higher ed websites will be provided.

The colleges work in a collaborative manner.

No examples of SQL queries will be provided at this time.