

## Request for Proposal for a New Website for VITL

### Introduction

Vermont Information Technology Leaders (VITL) plans to launch a new website. VITL seeks a qualified website design and development vendor to partner on this project. VITL may also consider engaging a design vendor and a development vendor separately and we welcome responses from such vendors.

### About VITL

VITL provides secure, high quality clinical data for health care organizations in Vermont to help them care for their patients. VITL is designated by the state to operate the Vermont Health Information Exchange, which receives patient health records from providers across the state and information from pharmacies, labs, and other sources. This offers the opportunity for a more complete picture of individual Vermonters' health than any one electronic health record can provide. By providing a more complete health record, VITL helps providers know their patients.

VITL creates ways for providers to securely access the data about their patients that is in the Vermont Health Information Exchange. These include a secure web portal for looking up patient information, integration with some electronic health records to enable providers to see everything they need in one place, and behind-the-scenes delivery of over 1.4 million clinical messages a year in the form of laboratory results, radiology reports, and transcribed reports.

In addition to providing information at point-of-care, VITL supports health care organizations by providing data for evaluation, quality improvement, and health care reform work. VITL staff also consult with health care organizations to help them meet national data quality and data security standards.

### Project Objectives

VITL offers advanced technology solutions to support health information sharing. VITL is a dynamic, forward-thinking, customer-centered organization and the website must communicate this through both visual presentation and user experience. Users include providers, leaders, and staff in health care organizations (whether current or prospective customers), patients, policymakers, potential employees, and other stakeholders.

The following are some of our goals for the new site:

- Pared-down content and navigation will quickly deliver site visitors to the information they came to the site for. Users will experience the site as being useful, informative, and efficient.
- A look that is current and engaging without becoming the story – the design will show VITL in its best light.
- A content management system (CMS) that is very easy to use for the VITL website administrator and content authors. It must be quick to learn so that any staff member can rapidly become proficient in adding or updating site content without significant prior website management experience. It should require little routine maintenance by web development specialists.

## Project Scope

### Project inputs from VITL

*It may be helpful for interested vendors to understand the elements of this project that VITL will be responsible for.*

- VITL will provide a recommended site architecture for this project (see appendix), based on our understanding of user needs and our goals for deepening user engagement with VITL and its products and services. VITL will ask the selected firm to review and make suggestions to define a final architecture.
- VITL will establish the overall content strategy for the site.
- VITL's technology & security team will review and validate the CMS system and hosting solution recommended by the selected vendor.

### Vendor scope of work – priority elements

*The following are this project's essential processes and deliverables.*

1. **Project management:** The vendor should provide a primary point of contact for collaborative work throughout the project. The project manager will work closely with the VITL team to set expectations, establish timelines, provide progress updates, and problem-solve together. This person may or may not also play a design or development role.
2. **CMS selection:** The vendor will guide selection of a CMS platform. One of the first decisions in this project will be which CMS to use and we are looking for the vendor to advise us on which platform will best support our needs including ease of use by an in-house site manager and content authors. The vendor will also need to advise VITL staff on best practices related to the chosen CMS.
3. **Hosting recommendation:** The vendor will recommend how the website will be hosted. Hosting on VITL's servers is one option, we are interested in understanding others.
4. **Design standard and style guide:** The vendor will establish digital design standards for the website. Design elements must work in all modern mobile and desktop browsers. These may leverage some existing brand identity elements but will also likely need to expand on them (e.g. may use a selection of colors from the existing palette and supplement with some new in order to modernize). A web style guide for content authors will outline use of web fonts, graphics, iconography, (possibly) photography, and page stylization.
5. **Site navigation:** The vendor will design site navigation including main menus for desktop and mobile and a site footer.
6. **Homepage:** The vendor will design the homepage for the VITL site. VITL will establish overall content strategy for the site but hopes to partner with a vendor who can advise on homepage content and who will collaborate with us to determine what to feature here.
7. **Page templates:** The vendor will design, build and implement page templates that effectively showcase the site's planned content and that are flexible enough to support new pages and new content over time. We are looking for the vendor to tell us how many templates this site needs (now and to create some flexibility for adding new content in the future).
8. **Implementation:** The vendor will build out the full site, in the selected CMS, per the site architecture, their newly established design standard, and page templates.

9. **Testing:** The vendor will test the site to ensure all elements are working as intended prior to and immediately post launch.
10. **Analytics integration:** The vendor will integrate Google Analytics into the site.
11. **Training:** The VITL team will require some training on how to use the new CMS.
12. **Post-launch support:** The vendor will be available to make any needed fixes and answer site manager and staff questions. This would likely include more hours in the first month post-launch and then less-frequent support on a long-term basis.

#### Vendor scope of work – optional elements

*The following are elements of this project that may be included in the scope of work based on considerations including vendor capabilities.* Proposals should include information about whether you can provide these services, and the cost for the services.

1. **Site copy:** The vendor will provide copywriting for the website
2. **Analytics reporting set-up:** In addition to integrating Google Analytics on all pages the vendor will advise on the key metrics VITL should track to assess site use and performance. The vendor will set up report templates and provide brief training for VITL staff on running and using these reports.

A successful partnership may also create opportunities for future engagement with VITL on creative and technical development of outreach vehicles like email templates, the organization’s annual report, and more.

#### Website Functionality Requirements

The new VITL website will need to have the following functionality. This is not a complete list but does include some key expectations:

- **Responsive design** – our users will be accessing the site from desktops, laptops, tablets, and mobile devices, and we need the site to work across all
- **Accessibility** – the site must be accessible
- **Search** – the site should be easily searchable
- **Tagging** – launch content should be tagged and content authors should be able to tag and promote new content within the site
- **Document management** – we will have a large document library, and this should be easy to maintain, with the ability to update and replace without needing to reconnect links
- **Media** – we need to be able to embed videos and galleries/slideshows
- **Forms** – we will have some forms on the site, some may be part of our site and others may be served separately for instance via HIPAA-compliant JotForm. Ideally, we would make these all look seamlessly a part of our own site
- **News** – the site will need a news feature
- **Analytics integration**
- **Email and event sign-up** – site users should enable sign-up to receive news from VITL and register for VITL-hosted events
- **Updates sign-up** – site users should be able to sign-up to receive updates to specific pages

- **SEO** – the site should be easy to find by search, though we do not need an aggressive SEO strategy

## Forecasted Timeline

VITL intends to interview selected candidates for this work in August 2020 and to contract with the chosen vendor in September 2020.

## Instructions to Respondents

### Submission of RFP Response.

Each respondent must submit their RFP response in accordance with the following directions:

- Submit your proposal by 5:00 p.m. on August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- Proposals should be submitted in PDF format and be easily printable in 8.5 x 11 format. Send the proposal to [hbanks@vitl.net](mailto:hbanks@vitl.net). Paper proposals will not be accepted. All proposals must be complete. VITL reserves the right to eliminate any bidder whose proposal is incomplete in VITL's opinion.
- Direct all communication to Heidi Banks at [hbanks@vitl.net](mailto:hbanks@vitl.net). Reaching out to anyone other than the primary point of contact for this RFP could be a reason for disqualification.
- All proposals submitted shall be binding for one hundred twenty (120) calendar days following the due date for the proposal.
- VITL reserves the right to award to the bidder(s) that presents the best value to VITL as determined solely by VITL in its absolute discretion.
- VITL is not responsible for any cost incurred by the bidder in either responding to this RFP or in participating in meeting with VITL prior to award.
- VITL reserves the right to conduct discussions with bidders for the purpose of obtaining "best and final offers."
- VITL will make one or more awards for the requested services.
- There is no obligation on VITL's part to award any work packages (tasks) to an awardee.
- VITL reserves the right to reject any or all proposals in part or in full.
- VITL will evaluate its requirements for website design and development to determine which awardee possesses the requisite expertise and ability and represents to VITL the best value for each individual task.
- VITL and the awardee will negotiate the work scope, schedule, and price for each task.
- (Optional) Submit any questions to Heidi Banks before 5:00 p.m. on August 3, 2020. Questions will be answered on a rolling basis. Questions and answers that may be helpful to all respondents will be posted on the VITL website at <https://www.vitl.net/about/request-proposals>.
- Address the following items in your response to this RFP:
  1. **Name and contact information:** for the person at your company who VITL should be in touch with regarding your response

2. **General description of your company**
3. **Services offered:** Please provide a description of your understanding of the scope of the engagement and the work that you are offering to provide. As mentioned above, VITL will consider working with either a vendor offering full-service website design and development or separate design and development vendors. VITL seeks excellence in both areas and is willing to be flexible in our approach in order to achieve this. VITL asks respondents to indicate:
  - Whether your proposal is to provide design, development, or both
  - If your company offers both design and development, whether you are also willing to be considered for work on a design-only or development-only basis
  - If your company is interested in being considered on a design-only or development-only basis, the “relevant examples of your work” (see item six) should include recent work that demonstrates successful implementation of your designs by outside developers or successful development of outside designers’ designs.
  - If your proposal involves the use of any contractors or partners outside of your firm. Please provide information for those contractors in your responses to this section.
  - Please be as specific as possible in your description, including limits on number of templates, hours of training, etc.
4. **Team members and roles:** List all personnel who would be assigned to this project and clearly indicate the role they would play. Include information about any other companies or freelancers you would partner with to complete this project. Let us know what resources we will need to devote to make this project successful.
5. **VITL’s role:** Briefly tell us how we can be a great client on this project.
6. **Relevant examples of your work:** Please point us to a few relevant examples of your work. Briefly indicate the services your company contributed.
7. **Inspiration for this project:** Please share a few websites that you think demonstrate great design and user experience. These do not have to be your own work. These examples could come from an organization or initiative in any sector. Look beyond other health information exchanges (we’re familiar with them already) to show us approaches you recommend we look to as inspiration for this project.
8. **Proposed price:** Be sure to indicate which elements of the scope your proposed budget covers. We prefer that proposals give a fixed price for most elements. Elements 1-9 in the “vendor scope of work – priority elements” above lend themselves well to a fixed-price approach. Other elements (such as site copy, ongoing CMS support, and creation of additional templates) could be included at a fixed price or on a time and materials basis. Please provide an hourly rate for any elements offered on a time and materials basis. If you are proposing to perform design or development separately, please ensure the cost for each is clearly identified and that you indicate whether there is any difference in cost should VITL

select to work with two firms.

9. **Proposed timeline for implementation:** Include key milestones along the way. The timeline should identify time commitments and milestones for VITL staff.
10. **References:** Please provide contact information for three individuals for whom you've completed a similar project in the last three years.
11. **Brief documentation that vendor will be an independent contractor:** Please show that your company will be an independent contractor and not an employee as defined by the State of Vermont's Department of Labor. (The State's 'ABC' test for this is straightforward and the vendor should be able to quickly document that they meet the standards outlined here: <https://labor.vermont.gov/document/who-employee-vs-independent-contractor>.)

### Summary Conditions

THIS IS A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) ONLY to identify vendors that can provide VITL with website design and development. The information provided in the RFP is subject to change and is not binding on VITL. VITL has not made a commitment to procure any of the items released in this RFP and the RFP should not be construed as a such a commitment or as authorization to incur costs for which reimbursement would be required or sought. All materials submitted become the property of VITL and be returned only at VITL's option. VITL reserves the right to reject any or all proposals in part or in full and to waive any technicalities or informalities as may best serve the interests of VITL.

## Appendix

### Draft site architecture

The following is a preliminary draft of the site architecture. This is open to revision; it is included here to communicate the scale of the site and the basic categories of information we will need to include.

Home	Solutions & Services	About the VHIE	For Patients	Resources	About VITL
	Alerts & notifications	What is HIE	Consent website	Participating providers map	Overview/ Mission/Vision
	Accessing VHIE Data	The data in the VHIE		Training Materials	Leadership Team
	- VITLAccess Provider Portal & SSO				
	- Cross community access			Policies	Board of Directors
	- Results Delivery				- Committees
				Technical Support	- Materials
	Submitting data to the VHIE				
	- Connectivity Criteria			Document Library	Financials
					- Financial Policies
	Direct Messaging - VITLDirect			Data Privacy & Security	- Annual Report
					- Report Archives
	Enabling Data Exchange			Who we serve	
	- ACO				News
	- BluePrint			How to work with VITL	
	- VCCI				Careers
	- VDH Immunization registry				
	- National Networks/eHX				Contact Us
	Consulting				
	- Meaningful Use Assistance				
	- Security risk assessment consulting				