

VITL Website RFP
Potential Respondent Q&A
July 30, 2020

The following are questions from potential respondents about the VITL website RFP, with our answers. We are including questions that we think are likely to be relevant to multiple vendors. If you have additional questions not answered here, don't hesitate to send them to our primary point of contact for the RFP, Heidi Banks, at hbanks@vitl.net.

Timeline

1. Q: How long do you anticipate this project taking? Are there any dates driving production/implementation timing to be aware of?

A: Timeline is one of the criteria we will be considering in our vendor selection. We value a process that moves quickly. We also value clarity about what is doable and realistic for your shop. The only definitive answer we have given to timeline questions is that 150 days is too long. There are no specific dates driving either production or implementation timing of this project.

Budget

2. Q: Do you have an expected or desired budget range for this project?

A: We are interested in understanding the cost of website design and development that fulfills the scope outlined in the RFP. Price will be part of how we will assess and compare the value of the proposals. We are not sharing a target budget for this project.

Architecture and content – including visual elements and copy

3. Q: Re: the sample site architecture. The RFP indicates that the client will provide all architecture and content strategy. Is page 7 of the RFP an example of how this content will be provided when final? Or can we expect an overall site architecture document/visual with each page labeled and linking strategy identified, as well as wireframes for each of the key pages?

A: VITL will provide a starting point for the architecture similar to what is shown on page 7. We will look to the vendor for the formalized overall site architecture document/visual with each page labeled and linking strategy identified and for wireframes for all key pages.

4. Q: How much of the (optional) copywriting part of the proposal will be writing brand-new copy vs. editing copy from the current website?

A: Whether we procure copywriting from the same vendor who is doing design and/or development or hire a freelance copywriter, the copy on this project will be all new. We will work with a copywriter to review the site architecture and determine all copy needs, and will provide significant direction as to key messages, tone, etc. We would also indicate what documents (forms, policies, etc., including some from the old site) need to be posted/linked and where. The copywriter would not be expected to edit any of these. But the actual page copy would all be fresh.

5. Q: Can you provide more detail about content needed for this project? Will any content be carried over from the existing website?

A: [See previous question re: copy]. Re: design, we are looking for all new creative for this project and expect that proposals will include pricing for the graphic elements and/or photography respondents recommend to make the site beautiful and useful.

6. Q: How do you see refreshed branding being incorporated and deployed via this site update?

A: We want to be clear that this is not a rebranding project. However, because there is not a well-seated visual identity for the brand currently, there is room to play with new design. This site will be a foundational element in the gradual build of a new look and feel for VITL across touchpoints. But again, this is not a rebranding project.

CMS

7. Q: What CMS do you use currently and have you identified drawbacks or challenges with it? (Another related question) Does anyone on your team have familiarity or experience with Drupal?

A: We currently use Drupal. We have found that it is not as intuitive as we might hope and we have needed to use a vendor for some posting and content updates that we might prefer to be able to make in house. That said, we remain open to a Drupal site. If you recommend Drupal, please talk about your approach to making in user-friendly to staff. As with any other CMS, if you are recommending Drupal, tell us why it's the right CMS for our needs and better than other options.

Training

8. Q: Is the VITL team training expected to be in person or over a remote call? Or do detailed “how to” training guides work?

A: Live remote training is our preference. Detailed “how to” training guides could be helpful in addition to, but not instead of, live training.

Accessibility

9. Q: How is VITL defining “accessibility” when we say that “the site must be accessible”?

A: The new site should meet as many of the WCAG success criteria as reasonably possible. We know many of you are digital accessibility experts and can tell us more about the WCAG standards, how to meet them, and how to measure our site's accessibility.

Other – functionality and integrations

10. Q: We are looking to understand more about the “updates sign-up” functionality – where users can sign up to receive updates to specific pages. What is the use case? Is it a must-have or a nice-to-have?

A: This would allow our clients and other stakeholders to quickly sign-up to reliably receive updates when, for instance, new policies are posted. We have seen this done in the past using “govDelivery” on a Drupal site. We are very interested in similar functionality for our site. If, in developing your proposal, you determine that this functionality would take significant additional time and cost, we are interested in understanding that and how it is contributing to your overall proposal price.

11. Q: The current homepage has links to logins for VITLAccess and myVITL (Salesforce). Are these part of the scope?

A: We will need to think about where these links go in the homepage wireframe, and we will want to redesign the login pages to align with the look and feel of the new site, but no additional integration is necessary.

Other - general

12. Q: Will the contractor be able to access VITL servers directly if they need for the site build (setup, testing, implementation, etc.)?

A: Yes, if the vendor and VITL determine together that hosting on VITL servers is the best approach, the vendor will be able to access those servers directly. If we end up hosting here at VITL we would most likely use Azure.

13. Q: We typically do a series of discovery calls and workshops. How many internal and external interviews do you foresee?

A: Project kickoff and a very brief discovery phase could include VITL staff – at this point we are thinking there are 5-7 of us who might need to be engaged. A workshop would be more efficient than individual interviews. We do not need the vendor to directly engage customers or other external stakeholders on this project. We are happy to brief you on what we are learning from in-progress engagement activities that are exploring our customer and stakeholder needs and/or possibly welcome you to join a few sessions and/or incorporate a question or two to specifically inform website work.

14. Q: How many firms received the RFP and how many plan to submit proposals?

A: Roughly 15 firms received the proposal by email. It is also posted on the VITL website. We have not asked for a head count of who is submitting but expect several and hope for more.

Decision-making

15. Q: How will you be making your choice for the new web partner?

A: We are looking for a partner who makes beautiful, useful websites and demonstrates they can make one for us via a thoughtful and efficient process. Timeline and price are also part of how we will evaluate and compare the value of the proposals.

16. Q: In terms of selection criteria/priority, how important is a) located in Vermont and b) industry experience?

A: The RFP was sent to mostly (but not all) Vermont firms, however, location is not important in our final selection. Industry experience is not very important in our decision.