

HOW-TO GUIDE

WRITING A WEBSITE RFP

Drafting an RFP for your Chapter Website – A guide

When planning to create a new website or redesign an existing one, you may need to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP). This is a document that articulates your needs and requirements and invites vendors to apply for the job of designing your site. The more detail you can provide, the easier it is for a vendor to understand your goals and fulfill your requirements.

An effective RFP will include these general categories:

- Intro/project overview
- Chapter/organization overview
- Your audience(s)
- New website objectives or vision statement
- Current website deficiencies you want to address (if you are redesigning)
- New website functionality requirements
- New website wish list
- A wireframe outlining your preferred site navigation (or a list of websites that have features or elements you like or want to model after)
- Current technological requirements for existing site (how many pages, files, space required for hosting, etc.)
- Budget details
- Proposal requirements
- Project timeline

This is a non-exhaustive list of suggested content to provide your website creator after you have accepted their proposal:

- A Welcome page with a letter from your Chapter President
- An About section explaining what ASDA is
- ASDA's Mission Statement
- Chapter officer bios and their pictures
- A calendar of events for your chapter's activities
- Links to resources and benefits on National ASDA's website
- Links to your chapter's social media profiles
- Pre dental information and events along with a way to join (if your chapter recruits pre dentals)

Tips for a successful RFP:

- The more specific you are, the easier it is for a vendor to understand your needs and price the project correctly.
- Be clear about the scope of the project: are you designing a completely new site, or just refreshing the home page? Do you want help with a content strategy, or are you leaving the

current menus and content in place? Are you moving your site as-is to a new hosting platform, or reimagining the site from scratch?

- Be honest and direct. If your current site has features or offerings that don't work, state what they are.
- Do some research about the vendors you're interested in before you issue your RFP. Look for websites you like that are similar in scope to yours and see if the web developer is listed in the footer. Check social media and customer reviews, and consider calling the company to find out if they will take up a project of your scope and budget.

Take a look at the sample website RFP on the following pages.

SAMPLE CHAPTER WEBSITE RFP

BACKGROUND and AUDIENCE PROFILE

Hawaii ASDA is a student-led organization of 300 current and prospective dental students at the University of Hawaii School of Dental Medicine. Our mission is to introduce students to the dental profession through involvement in advocacy, service, organized dentistry and activities. We have an existing website that was created approximately three years ago consisting of 10 static website pages with approximately two photographs per page. The goal of our site is to inform current members about events, initiatives and opportunities, and to make clear the appeal of ASDA membership for future dental students.

OBJECTIVES

Hawaii ASDA would like to expand its website by creating approximately 50 new pages. Hawaii ASDA will provide all content as Microsoft Word files* and all pictures as JPGs or PNG files.

The website should accomplish the following:

- Provide our members and visitors with information about our organization and the benefits we provide.
- Have a consistent look and feel to all pages (fonts, graphics and color schemes).
- Load rapidly and provide easy navigation between pages.
- Be mobile-responsive.
- Contain working links to other related websites, including the national ASDA website (asdanet.org) (provided by ASDA chapter).
- Be search engine optimized so the website can be found when Internet users search for the website using keyword phrases (provided by ASDA chapter).
- Have the ability to add e-commerce and email newsletter capabilities in the future.
- Use a Content Management System (CMS) capable of being maintained and updated easily by chapter officers.
- Allow users to create a login with a custom username and password to complete e-commerce transactions or access private resources
- Allow chapter officers to easily create, upload and manage new pages and images as needed.

FUNCTIONALITY AND DESIGN

The website should have a modern, contemporary design while maintaining the existing Hawaii ASDA logo and color scheme. The new website should use several main navigation links or graphics, with drop-down lists of sub-pages so the user can easily navigate to any page within the website.

HOSTING

Proposals should include information on your capacity to host COASDA's site, in addition to design and programming.

REQUIRED FEATURES

The website should include:

- A Contact Us form page with form fields and/or drop down lists so visitors can send comments, questions and other information. Form information should be captured into a database and should be sent via email to the chapter officer specified.
- A robust search feature to help visitors find content within the site.
- A member login feature, allowing for users to register and create their own usernames and passwords. This information should be stored in a database.
- Social media feeds, pulling in content from our Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND EVALUATION

Firms submitting proposals shall be responsible for any and all costs and/or expenses associated with preparing such proposal.

Proposals will be evaluated based on previous experience creating similar websites, quality of previous work, time to completion and price.

CONTRACTOR'S QUALIFICATIONS

Provide the following information when submitting your RFP.

General Company Information

- 1) Provide a brief history of your company, including the number of years your firm has been in business and the number of years of experience in the website design field.
- 2) Describe your company's mission.
- 3) Provide a brief summary of your company's operations.
- 4) How many employees work for your company and how many would be dedicated to this project?

Experience

- 5) Describe your company's experience with similar programs/projects.
- 6) What distinguishes your company and your products from your competition?

Project Specific Information

- 7) Provide a description of the work plan for redesign of our website.
- 8) Describe your process for responding to information requests and providing updates from HIASDA.

9) Please provide your proposed total fee for the redesign of our website as outlined in this RFP.

REFERENCES

10) Please list the organization name, contact person, email address and telephone number of three (3) references for similar projects, as well as a brief description of each project.

OTHER

11) Provide any other information that you believe is pertinent to this Request for Proposal.

BUDGET

Hawaii ASDA has a budget of \$4,500 to spend on website redevelopment. We welcome suggestions for how to spend this most efficiently to create the best possible site.

DEADLINES

Our timeline:

April 1, 2016 – RFP issued

May 1, 2016 – vendor proposals due

June 1, 2016 – vendor selection completed, vendor notified

January 1, 2017 – preferred launch date

CONTACT INFORMATION

John Doe, ASDA Hawaii Chapter President, will be the main contact for this project. All responses to the Request for Proposal should be sent by **May 1, 2016** to his attention at:

ASDA Hawaii
123 ABC Street
Honolulu, HI 12345
John.Doe@gmail.com
888-555-1212