COWLEY COLLEGE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

WEBSITE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

April 2021

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Appendix A – 2020 IPEDS Fall Enrollment Data

1. SUMMARY

Cowley College is accepting proposals to design and develop a new college web site. This will be a concept to completion project. The purpose of this RFP is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates, and to provide the candidates with the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.

The existing Cowley web site (see www.cowley.edu) was designed and produced in 2006 based on navigation and design specifications developed by Whispers, a marketing consultant group in California. Minor modifications were made to a few key pages in 2010.

In the summer of 2013, the website was given a creative overhaul to reflect the current templates shown on the existing web asset of today.

2. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

This is an open and competitive process.

Proposals received after 12:00pm/noon PST, **Monday, May 10th, 2021,** will not be considered.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of sub-contractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. In your proposal please provide the name and address of the sub-contractor. Cowley College will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of sub-contractors, but does retain the right to refuse the sub-contractors you have selected.

Provisions of this RFP and the contents of the successful responses are considered available for inclusion in final contractual obligations.

3. CONTRACT TERMS

Cowley College will negotiate contract terms upon selection, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

4. PURPOSE, DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Purpose

Cowley College ("Cowley") currently has a web presence that is outdated in appearance, structure, functionality and in the presentation of content. Outside of edits to text, images, links, html & css, and video content – the existing site functionally has had only minor adjustments for approximately six years. There are approximately 3,500 webpages reported by audits of Cowley.edu; not including additional PDFs, images, videos, and unlinked archive pages.

Multiple web developers have classified our site as text and link heavy; lacking strategy and consistency on most of our academic program pages. An opportunity exists to re-engineer the site to better reflect the mission of Cowley and incorporate the latest web technologies. Upon completion of the development of the site, Cowley will assume full responsibility for web site content maintenance and administration. All content, coding and graphics will become the sole property of Cowley College.

Description

Create a flexible, informative, up-to-date web site that is easy to maintain and is viewable by desktop and mobile devices. In addition to designing a user-friendly site with an intuitive interface, you must also incorporate the web-based, database-driven content management system, OmniUpdate, that allows key personnel to easily update content without directly accessing source code. Our current site uses Dreamweaver. In addition, we are seeking a design partner that provides tools for search engine optimization and social sharing. For pages and content that are not yet in existence, the preference is to have user-selectable, predefined templates to choose from that dictate the layout and color scheme.

Cowley College will consider other hosting options based on recommendations.

To be effective, our web site must be:
- Easy and intuitive
- Visually pleasing
- Informative
- Safe and secure
- Quick to load and operate
- Responsive mobile device and desktop
- Improve Net Promoter Scores and Google Rankings
- Search Engine Optimized with proper Keyword Research

Objectives

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the college was required to move all courses to a virtual learning environment. This disruption created the need for more accessible online resources and mobile capability that were not available with our current website. This reliance on distance learning created a need for tools that could adequately replace the approaches and accessibility used in traditional face-to-face classes. This lack of technology greatly impacted our student's ability to learn and communicate in an online environment. An upgrade to our current website is needed to enable the college to provide the tools our students need to navigate and access critical functions and information needed for learning success in this new environment.

Our new site should engage visitors by presenting attractive visual images, intuitive navigation, and concise messaging, while at the same time increasing functionality and

ease-of-use for existing students, faculty and staff. The tools that are incorporated must allow for timely delivery of content using basic technical skills and limited personnel.

Vision
To meet our institutional goals, our new web site must:
- Serve as an ambassador for the Cowley College brand
- Provide a modern, relevant design update
- Showcase the departments and programs at Cowley College
- Improve customer service and engage site visitors
- Strengthen relationships with community partners
- Provide a scalable, maintainable solution
- Document Cowley College's rich history in education

Strategies
- Utilize responsive design with the latest technologies to provide a consistent user interface across all devices
- Establish a clear path for visitors to access information relevant to them
- Present clear and concise information to end users
- Integrate with Cowley's social media platforms
- Seamlessly direct traffic to Cowley's athletic website: www.cowleytigers.com
- Provide an easy-to-use fit into the OmniUpdate, CMS platform
- Conduct thorough market research, competitive analysis and internal/external focus groups.
- Function as the "hub" for other web-based enterprise systems and student/faculty tools such as our student information system (SIS) and learning management system (LMS)
- Leverage limited human resources through improved efficiencies in web management
- Maximize search engine optimization through strategic mark-up language and content
- Provide an archival system for Cowley College press releases, photos, videos and move historical data to a searchable database

5. TIMELINE

- This RFP is dated **April 16, 2021**. Proposers may request more specific, detailed information by contacting Abby Morris at abby.morris@cowley.edu.
- Proposals are due no later than 12:00pm/noon PST, **Monday, May 10, 2021**.
- Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. During this time we may require interviews (either at our location or via videoconference) with our evaluation team on or about **May 5, 2021**. You will be notified if this is requested.
- The name of the candidate firm who has been selected will be decided on or about **May 17, 2021**.
- Negotiations will begin immediately with the successful candidate and should conclude no later than **May 31, 2021**.
- All other candidates will be notified on or about **June 1, 2021**.
- The completion and delivery dates of the project and its' phases will be mutually agreed upon prior to signing a contract.

6. VENDOR REQUIREMENTS

Please provide detailed information to accomplish the project scope outlined below. The budget and proposal must include all design, production, software acquisition, integration and necessary development and maintenance of the web site.

Proposals must address the following:

Executive Summary

1. Describe your understanding of our current website challenges.
2. Summarize your proposed solution, and how your solution will resolve our current website challenges.
3. Provide a summary of pricing for the proposed services and products.

- **Company Overview** – Tell us about your company, your experience in web design and production for projects similar to ours, and your experience in working with clients in higher education. Provide links to your agency website, online portfolios, and social media.
- **Team** – Identify the team who will work on this project. Include name, title/role, and brief background/experience of each. Include subcontractors if applicable.
- **References** – Provide a list of three references (at least two in higher education) who can speak to services requested in this RFP. Please include contact information and a brief description of work done for those clients.
- **Solutions Menu with Pricing** – Based on the elements included in the Project Scope/Objective section, tell us about your proposed solution in terms of creative design strategy, methodology, plan, and other important aspects of the redesign process. Include all project phases and tasks, along with a line-item breakdown of costs. Total development cost for your recommendations must come in under $180,000. Please be sure to address the following:
- **Project Management Tools** – Your process for tracking and documenting project status.
- **Deliverables** – Outline the products and/or services that will be delivered.
- **Schedule** – Provide the suggested project schedule detailing the time required for each major step or phase of the project.
- **User Training and Support** – Provide details on the user training and support included for our content editors along with the training support format (i.e., on-site/in-person, live web, chat, email, phone-based, hard copy, other documentation, etc.).
- **Hardware** – List any hardware necessary to host and/or support the proposed solution. Also list any recommended configurations for a robust and reliable environment. Include hardware redundancy and/or disaster recovery recommendations.
- **Payment** – Include any requirements or preferences regarding invoicing and payment.
- **Cowley College is moving from Dreamweaver to OmniUpdate**. Thus, the design vendor will be responsible for handing templates off to OU while also fitting new designs to be cohesive with the LMS, SIS, and the academic catalog existing assets.
- Anything else deemed relevant/important to vendor.
- **Include all terms and conditions.**

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7. BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Our Mission
Cowley County Community College and Area Vocational-Technical School is committed to learning excellence and personal enrichment in an open access environment.

Background
Beginning in the basement of Arkansas City High School in 1922, Cowley College has transformed into a cutting-edge institution recognized across the nation for the quality in its classrooms and the success of its graduates. With over 1,200 community colleges nationwide, Cowley College was listed among the top-10 percent of community colleges in the nation in the D.C. based non-profit Aspen Institute's 2011 rankings. Cowley is currently ranked among the top 30 community colleges nationwide for student success.

Overview of Services
Cowley College is a comprehensive community college committed to providing a learning environment that is best-in-class. Cowley currently has six general program areas including: Business and Social Sciences; Health and Human Services; Career and Technical Education; Natural Science, Mathematics and Computer Science; and Humanities. Adult education and college preparatory courses are also offered. Cowley provides students quality instruction, affordable tuition, small class sizes, and support services like tutoring, computer labs, academic advising, counseling, student life activities, and disability accommodations.

Geographic
Cowley College serves four counties in south central Kansas—Cowley, Sumner and the eastern portion of Chautauqua —through its locations in Arkansas City, Wellington, Winfield, and Mulvane with a service center also in Wichita. In addition, through concurrent enrollment and articulation partnerships, Cowley's outreach programs include over a dozen high schools in our service area. Through our extensive offering of online courses and programs, Cowley not only serves students in the south central Kansas region, but also across the nation and around the world.

Demographics
Appendix A outlines the students who were enrolled at Cowley College on the census day or the 20th Day of the fall term. Student information included in this survey includes student level, enrollment status, degree-seeking status, gender and race/ethnicity. Additionally, online learners are reported by degree-seeking status and location.

8. AUDIENCE

The primary audience for the Cowley web site is prospective students, current students, parents & families, businesses & partners, and alumni & friends.

9. SCOPE AND GUIDELINES

The scope of this project is to redesign the existing Cowley College web site (www.cowley.edu), and to provide templates to OmniUpdate for incorporation in the content management system. Cowley College's Director for Marketing will provide the successful candidate firm with the photography and content necessary to populate the new site.

Discovery
Confirm audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, site marketing, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, phasing, and budgetary constraints, resulting in a creative brief.

Design
Disclosure of web site information architecture, graphic look and feel, user navigation, home page and main navigation templates for each of the main navigation links.

Development Guidelines
The web site designed by the successful candidate must meet the following criteria:

- Include templates that incorporate into the content management system that will permit both technical and non-technical Cowley College staff to update web site content on specific pages.
- Once the site has been completed and accepted by Cowley, the site will be maintained centrally by Cowley College's skilled web services team as well as non-professional editors from various campus departments. This should be kept in mind when selecting the tools that are included.
- Convert and revamp substantial amounts of existing content to new web site.
- The site must seamlessly integrate with Cowley's enterprise systems including our Student Information System (SIS) and Learning Management System (LMS). It is essential that data be captured and securely transmitted to the SIS, while providing the capability to retrieve information such as course schedules, calendar items, and personnel contact information from the SIS. In addition, the user interface from the web site to the LMS should transition smoothly. It is the firm's responsibility to work with vendors to build these connections.
- The site must be clean and attractive, with a mix of text and graphics. Visually, the site should be modern, distinctive, memorable, and engaging. It should fit as close to a single displayed page on a typical size monitor as possible.
- Each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The Cowley College logo should be prominently displayed on every page as a common header, and will be provided by the Director for Marketing.
- The use of photography and fonts should be consistent throughout the site, with the layout of each page having a great deal of consistency. Pictures on the front page should be a larger size than other subpages. The sitemap should provide for these photos to be easily changed.
- The site should be easy to navigate, where information is grouped and presented in a logical manner with a minimal number of levels needed for the user to find the desired information. The navigation design should complement the capabilities of touch-enabled, mobile devices.
- Development of templates that adhere to the proposed navigation scheme enabling non-technical users to easily add new sections/pages.
- Provide search capabilities using key words or phrasing that will identify content throughout the site and optimize Google Rankings.
- Build connections to externally hosted library resources.
- Development and delivery of two web portals for the student information system for existing students and faculty/staff
- An assigned project manager will be made available to present information and coordinate with Cowley College staff, including a reasonable number of meetings (either in person or via videoconference) to present design and development solutions alongside the CMS partner, OmniUpdate.
- Once the web site has been completed and accepted by Cowley College, the web site design and all of its contents, software and architecture become property of Cowley College.

Site Specifications
Cowley College encourages creativity in the proposals submitted, but there are certain requirements for the web site project. Your proposal must account for all of these requirements.

- Site must be compatible with current and one (1) previous version of Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome and Safari browsers.
- Web site must not require plug-ins as a default.
- The site should be developed to meet all current federally-mandated ADA access requirements.
- The site must be built in accordance with the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and should also be easily accessible to the novice as well as the experienced Internet user.
- The web site must be designed with a mix of text and graphics such that each page loads in a way that is acceptable to the typical user having an average home Internet connection speed.

Research

Internal and external research including focus groups and a comprehensive review of existing Google Analytics must be included in the scope of the proposal.

Testing

Testing of site on all applicable platforms to ensure that web site works as promised, including explanation of the testing plan.

Delivery

Delivery will be providing approved designs to the CMS provider. Cowley technical personnel will act as the "go between" with our vendor during this time. Provisions for support must be made in order to assist Cowley staff when they are making the site live.

10. AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES/INTEGRATION ISSUES

- We will revamp much of our existing web content. New content will be provided as it is identified during the course of the project.
- We currently utilize Nelnet to process online student payments.
- We use peerTransfer for international students' payments.
- We currently use Acalog by DIGARC for our academic catalog; linking to catalog.cowley.edu
- We currently use Setmore for online bookings.
- We currently use WuFoo for web form builders.
- The Cowley College Foundation site is currently a WordPress site hosted externally: cowleyfoundation.org
- Our Workforce & Community Ed courses are currently offered on: coursestorm.com
- The site may need to embed our Net Price Calculator
- The site will need to embed our Box Office ticket purchasing via Hometown Ticketing, for current example see cowley.edu/boxoffice
- The site will link to our existing social media accounts.
- The site will link to HR department's Job Listings site: paycomonline.net
- The site will link to our Transcript Ordering Center: studentclearinghouse.org
- The site will link to our current, externally hosted bookstore system: http://www.cowleycollegebooks.com
- The site will link to our athletic website: www.cowleytigers.com
- The site will link to our Blackboard Help - Online Support Center
- We currently use QuickLaunch SSO for Single-Sign-On to our:
  - SIS: tigerconnect.cowley.edu
  - Financial Aid portal: netpartner.cowley.edu
  - Blackboard site: cowley.blackboard.com

o   Office 365

11. QUALIFICATIONS

- List five web sites your firm has produced that reflects your work and relevancy to this project. List the role your firm played in each project. Please submit the URLs for these sites, and only currently "live" sites should be included.
- Describe your experience producing sites for non-profit and/or colleges.
- Provide current reference information for five former or current clients.
- Briefly outline your firm's organizational capacity to produce the Cowley web site (such as staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
- Provide company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
- Briefly describe the percentage of your web staff that would be working on this project relative to your entire staff. For example, if you would use three staff on the project and you have ten web designers and developers, the percentage would be 30%.
- What type of team will be assigned to this project? What will each person's role be? Please include a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project.
- Briefly describe your project management process.
- Please detail any hardware/software vendor partnerships you have.
- Provide a detailed timeframe for completion. This will be evaluated and will be part of the contractual agreement, so a realistic time frame for completion is essential.
- Please state how you intend to communicate with the project lead at Cowley during the period of design/development, and at what intervals.
- Describe the support you offer during and after the project.

12. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will form the basis upon which Cowley College will evaluate proposals. The mandatory criteria must be met and include:

Receipt of your proposal must be received no later than 12:00pm/noon PST, **Monday, May 10, 2021**. Your proposal must include a cost proposal as described above. All costs associated with the delivery of the project should be presented in a flat rate, fee for service format.

Deliver proposals to Director for Marketing, Abby Morris, via email at abby.morris@cowley.edu .

Proposals meeting mandatory requirements will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- The proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- Prior work that demonstrates artistic, innovative and user friendly interfaces that engage viewers.
- Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake, and be successful with this project.
- The price is appropriate for the value being offered by the proposer.
- The candidate firm has appropriate number of staff and necessary expertise to develop the site in a timely manner.
- The proposal is presented in a clear, logical manner, is well organized and has the appropriate information the RFP calls for.

13. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Please use the following guidelines to format your proposal:

Length and Font Size
Please use fonts no smaller than 10 point. Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications and costs should not exceed 30 pages.

Title Page to Include
Cowley College, Web Site Design & Development, your company name, address, web site address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.

Cover Letter
Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company.

Proposal
Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. Please include the length of time you feel it would take to deliver the completed project, from the day of signing the contract to completion.

Qualifications
Provide the information requested in the "Scope & Guidelines" and "Qualifications" sections of the RFP.

Costs
List costs as requested above. Identify staff who will be working on the project. Include standard hourly rates for work that may be needed in the future.