

Northern New Mexico College  
RFP#2022-002  
Website Design, Build, and Implementation

Response to Written Questions  
Posted – December 3, 2022

1. *Are you accepting proposals from Canadian web solution companies?*

Answer: Offerors must be eligible to receive federal contracts at the time the contract is awarded. This includes having a US tax identification number, a valid DUNS number and being registered and in good standing on SAM.gov.

2. *Are you open to scheduling calls with proponents to discuss their questions or would you prefer email only?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we are only responding to submitted written questions per the sequence of events.

3. *Are you open to staying on the WordPress CMS for the new website?*

Answer: We are open to a WordPress CMS or any other CMS that addresses the goals, requirements, and scope of work of our website redesign.

4. *Can companies from Outside Canada can apply for this (i.e. from India or USA).*

Answer: This is an RFP issued for a college in New Mexico which is in the United States. Please see the about information provide in the RFP and see answer to question #1 above.

5. *Whether we need to come over there for meetings?*

Answer: Presentations will be required via Zoom. Please reference the RFP regarding the required concurrence statement for finalist presentations and eligibility requirements addressed in answer for question #1 above.

6. *Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside Canada (like, from India or USA)?*

Answer: Per the RFP, this request for proposals is for services for a New Mexico institution of higher education, located in the US, not a Canadian institution. The awarded company may conduct its work wherever as long as it is eligible for this

contract and can perform collaborative tasks as outlined in the RFP during the work hours of Northern's staff. Please see the answer to question number #1 above regarding eligibility for federal awards.

7. *Can we submit the proposals via email?*

Answer: Per the RFP, only emailed requests will be accepted. Please refer to the RFP for details on mandatory specifications and submission requirements.

8. *Budget – Please provide a budget or budget range for this project. Alternatively, what is the anticipated not-to-exceed amount and/or budget range?*

Answer: Northern realizes that this is a sizable project and we ask that offerors provide fairly priced bids that provide the best value and price. Finalists will be engaged in Best and Final negotiations, to ensure proper 'scale' of the project, prior to the finalization of the contract. Funds for this project will come from both federal, state, and institutional sources. Cost will be evaluated per the guidelines of the RFP and are 20% of the total available evaluation points

9. *You mention the current CMS as WordPress. Although the current theme is no longer supported, do you plan to stay on WordPress?*

Answer: We are open to a WordPress CMS or any other CMS that addresses the goals, requirements, and scope of work of our website redesign.

10. *If you prefer to change your CMS, do you prefer a proprietary CMS or open source CMS? Have you demo'd any other CMS platforms?*

Answer: We are open to a WordPress CMS or any other CMS that addresses the goals, requirements, and scope of work of our website redesign. It is likely that our website redesign will require some proprietary features.

No, we have not demo'd any other CMS platforms.

11. *One of your requirements is that you want CMS implementation and ongoing web developer support, in addition to design expertise. Do you expect the Design vendor to implement the designs into your CMS or are you ok with the design vendor handing off html for the cms provider to implement?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we are looking for a web redesign partner to work with us on both the design and CMS components of the project.

12. *Are you interested in completing any qualitative or quantitative analysis to inform the designs and user experience as a part of the Website Redesign Project? Analysis items*

*may include user focus groups, surveys, heatmaps, engagement review of the current site, audience-based navigation, and content review, and/or online user experience recordings.*

Answer: Per the RFP, we ask that the website redesign partner/vendor work with our internal team to help guide discovery and user research.

13. *You mention that you want the new vendor to provide guidance re: SEO and CRM. What are the expectations surrounding content optimizations for SEO? Will the chosen vendor optimize existing content or is the expectation that we create new content? Will the chosen firm be optimizing a certain number of pages, a specific section of the website (e.g. admissions pages, program pages, etc.) or “tier” of pages (e.g. tier 1)? Or, are you just looking for the chosen vendor to provide guidance only for SEO best practices?*

Answer: We are asking the chosen vendor to optimize both existing and new content for SEO, and for advice on a CRM system that would serve our digital marketing goals. The CRM system itself is not part of the scope of work. Per the RFP, the chosen vendor will work with our internal team to develop several tiers of content including homepage, top level marketing pages, student services pages, and academic program pages.

14. *As a part of the Website Redesign Project, will the chosen vendor be responsible for writing new content or copyediting existing website content? If so, in order to provide an accurate quote, how many pages of content should the chosen vendor plan to copywrite (provide new content) or copy edit existing content?*

Answer: The chosen vendor will work with our internal team to help write and edit existing content and develop new content as needed for homepage, top level marketing pages (ex. landing pages) and student services pages. Academic program page content will largely be developed by our internal team and faculty.

15. *Are you interested in having the chosen vendor provide a Content Strategy that would include a content audit of your high-level pages to help determine what pages to move to the new website, what content is missing, what content needs to be edited, etc? Or will this effort be conducted internally by NNMC?*

Answer: Per the RFP, the chosen vendor will assist with existing content inventory, evaluation and audit, as part of developing a content strategy for the new site.

16. *Do you have a set of User/Audience Personas defined? Or would you like to include Audience Persona Strategy/Creation as a part of the redesign discovery process?*

Answer: We know our student population and community well, but have not yet developed substantive personas. Per the RFP, the chosen web design partner will assist with developing personas.

17. *Are you currently using Google Analytics to measure website engagement? Do you currently manage the GA yourself or do you use a 3<sup>rd</sup>-party?*

Answer: We do use Google Analytics, and currently work with a digital marketing contractor who helps us measure website engagement.

18. *What types of templates do you anticipate requiring for the redesign. Our standard offering generally consists of templates for homepage, landing page, standard/interior page, news listing page, news detail page, program listing page, and program detail page. Are there additional templates needed?*

Answer: This is a good starting list of page templates.

19. *Will you need to have a template for your faculty/Staff directory?*

Answer: Yes.

20. *Are you anticipating that an Event Calendar page/module be included as part of the scope?*

Answer: Yes.

21. *Would you please elaborate on the legacy databases being used and any 3rd party services that will need to be integrated into the site? Are these basic links or other database integrations?*

Answer: Our current database is Banner. Northern's 3<sup>rd</sup> party services are basic links.

22. *Hosting – Is hosting of the production web server part of this project scope? Are you still considering hosting of both the CMS and the web server or do you want the cms and webserver to be hosted by the vendor?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we specify a secure cloud-based website.

23. *What are your timeline expectations for the website redesign/CMS implementation Project?*

Answer: Per the RFP, this website redesign project is part of a two-year investment to enhance Northern's mission, academic reputation and awareness of its offerings, and to

increase student enrollment, retention and graduation. The website redesign will be coordinated with expanded, data-driven, digital marketing campaigns.

*24. What stakeholders are involved in decision-making throughout the duration of the redesign project? Names aren't required, but an understanding of the titles/roles they hold at the college (IT, admissions, marketing, advancement, etc.) would be helpful.*

Answer: NNMC's Web Team (lead by the IT Director and Communications/Marketing Creative Director), Administration, Academic and Finance leadership, and Strategic Enrollment Management team.

*25. Do you have a governance plan for the current website content and workflow? If yes, will that same flow be used for the new site?*

Answer: Northern currently has a web team lead by IT and Communications & Marketing. We are in the process of developing a Web Governance plan.

*26. What is your estimated budget for this comprehensive redesign? Alternatively, what is the anticipated not-to-exceed amount and/or budget range? Please separate out investment expectations for redesign efforts vs. CMS costs (if a new CMS is expected as part of this redesign).*

Answer: Please refer to question # 8. We have not specified separate amounts for redesign and CMS costs.

*27. The NNMC site has many identified target audiences. Have you established user personas for any/all (particularly external) audiences?*

Answer: We know our student population and community well, but have not yet developed substantive personas. Per the RFP, the chosen web design partner will assist with developing personas.

*28. Are you planning for new photography and/or videography for the redesign? If so, who will be providing those visual assets and what is the timing for procuring them?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we have an extensive photo library and Northern will be responsible for new photography and videography. We have a photographer on contract, but videography will require more time and planning.

*29. You are currently utilizing WordPress (albeit with an obsolete theme). Are you planning to remain with WordPress or are you considering other CMS options as part of the redesign?*

Answer: Please see questions #3, 9, and 10.

30. *If considering new, do you have a preferred CMS (or even open source vs. proprietary), or are you expecting CMS consultation/recommendations from your agency partner?*

Answer: Please see question #3, 9, and 10.

31. *If considering new, have you been part of any CMS demos or evaluated any CMSs? If so, which systems have you examined?*

Answer: We have not been part of any CMS demonstrations nor have we evaluated any CMS products.

32. *Content page expectations for the selected partner appear to be fairly numerous—from the home page and beyond. For the roughly 700 pages of the current site, what proportion would you estimate (we won't hold you to it; a comprehensive content inventory will be undertaken for the redesign) fitting in the following categories: completely new content, heavily optimized/reworked, lightly optimized/reworked, deleted/archived?*

Answer: Guestimate:

Completely new: 25, heavily reworked: 25, lightly optimized/reworked: 50,

Deleted/archived: 200+

Placed in an intranet: 100-200

33. *For nonchanging content, please detail your expectations (number of pages) for content migration (manually moving content from the old site to the new). Will the selected agency be responsible for migrating these pages?*

Answer: Guestimate: 30 non-changing pages

Per the RFP, we request that the web design partner assist our internal team with content migration.

34. *What, if any, CRM options have you qualified/reviewed? What is the timeline for procuring a CRM?*

Answer: We are not well acquainted with CRM options, which is why we are asking for professional recommendations.

35. *Has NNMC conducted any recent (past two years) user needs research? If so, will research findings be provided?*

Answer: There are some student satisfaction surveys, and data reports regarding our enrollment, demographics, and academic programs, but no recent research regarding the website (most recent is 2016).

36. *Although current content contributor numbers might be small, how many people do you plan/hope to manage and update content on a regular basis with the new site?*

Answer: We hope to train 10-12 content contributors, especially from academic departments.

37. *Assuming a mid-February 2022 start date, what is your anticipated/desired launch date?*

Answer: We hope to launch in Summer 2023.

38. *Per item N.4 Offeror's Company Experience, "insurance coverages." What insurance coverages do you seek?*

Answer: Basic business liability coverage.

39. *The current [nmmc.edu](http://nmmc.edu) site uses WordPress. Is the College open to recommendations for alternate content management systems?*

Answer: Yes, please see questions #3, 9, and 10.

40. *The RFP mentions that the current site is hosted on-site with on-premise servers. Should proposals include pricing for cloud hosting services?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we request a secure cloud-based solution.

41. *Has the College identified a system to replace Google Calendars for event calendar integration?*

Answer: No.

42. *Please confirm that the donor giving portal (page 4) will remain a clickoff from the main site, and is considered out of scope for this project.*

Answer: Confirmed—the donor giving portal will remain a clickoff from the main site.

43. *The RFP mentions that NCAM contracts with an SEO/Digital Marketing firm. Do you envision the selected website design partner will work directly with the contracted firm for SEO and keyword strategy for the new site?*

Answer: Yes, in coordination with our internal team.

44. *Why is now the time for the College to prioritize a website redesign? Please share any upcoming initiatives that may impact our work—for example, strategic planning, capital campaigns, etc.*

Answer: Please refer to our RFP — in particular, pages 1 & 2 introducing Northern New Mexico College, the potential and promise of the current environment, the need to support and expand our digital marketing, plus the limits of our existing website.

45. *Is there an incumbent agency participating in this process?*

Answer: No.

46. *Are there any backend systems currently integrated into the website—beyond clickoffs to off-site domains such as Banner System, Degree Works, and Blackboard?*

Answer: No.

47. *The RFP suggests the selected vendor should advise regarding an appropriate CRM system (page 7). Has the College started vetting CRM options as part of a selection process? If so, which options are being considered?*

Answer: No.

48. *The RFP indicates that many of the 700+ pages on the current site hold content better suited for an intranet (page 4). Please confirm that design and development of an intranet is **not** considered part of this initial project scope.*

Answer: Confirmed — An intranet is NOT considered part of this project scope.

49. *Has the College defined a budget range for this initiative?*

Answer: Yes.

50. *Typically for projects of this scope and scale, we recommend a two-phased approach. Would NNMC be open to receiving proposals that outline Phase I scope and pricing for research, website strategy, and design—with Phase II scope and pricing provided as a range to be defined depending upon various factors determined in Phase I (such as CMS selection, site strategy, technical requirements, etc).*

Answer: Yes, absolutely.

51. *What is driving the reason to switch to a new CMS?*

Answer: Please refer to question #44.

*52. What optimizations would improve your experience with current CMS?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we are looking for a new CMS that will address the goals, requirements and scope of work of our website redesign. Our WordPress site has limited functionality. Please refer to section D in the RFP re: Northern's current website, and Site Pain Points.

*53. What areas of current CMS do you find most challenging?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we are looking for a new CMS that will address the goals, requirements and scope of work of our website redesign. Our WordPress site has limited functionality. Please refer to section D in the RFP re: Northern's current website, and Site Pain Points.

*54. What are your strategic objectives for the website in 2020? (number of visits, apps completed, enrollment targets?)*

Answer: Please refer to section E in the RFP re: Scope of Work and Project Goals and Priorities.

*55. Objectives of the redesign/new CMS?*

Answer: Please refer to section E in the RFP re: Scope of Work and Project Goals and Priorities.

*56. How will you measure success of this project?*

Answer: We will measure success to the degree our project goals and priorities are met.

*57. What is driving the dates of this project?*

Answer: Please refer to our RFP — in particular, pages 1 -3 introducing Northern New Mexico College, the potential and promise of the current environment, the need to support and expand our digital marketing, plus the limits of our existing website.

*58. Do you prefer a commercial or proprietary CMS?*

Answer: We are open to a WordPress CMS or any other CMS that addresses the goals, requirements, and scope of work of our website redesign. It is likely that our website redesign will require some proprietary features.

59. *In regards to content migration:*

1. *Will you require content migration services?*  
YES
2. *Will the entire .edu domain need to be migrated?*  
NO, non-public facing pages will migrate to an intranet, a project which is not part of this RFP.
3. *Are there parts of the site that will not be migrated?*  
YES, the parts that will migrate to an intranet.
4. *Are there additional domains that need to be migrated?*  
NO
5. *In regards to migration, how many different page layouts do you have on your current site?*  
Six that we use
6. *What form of data export is available from your current CMS setup?*  
None that we know of.

60. *Do you prefer that the CMS be installed locally on your own servers, or hosted as a cloud solution?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we are requesting a secure cloud-based solution.

61. *In which format would you like us to submit our proposal: uploaded electronically, or sent in the mail as a physical copy (and if physical, how many copies in addition to the original)?*

Answer: Per the RFP, only emailed requests will be accepted. Please refer to the RFP for details on mandatory specifications and submission requirements.

62. *Which content management system, if any, are you currently using at your institution?*

Answer: Our current CMS is open-source WordPress.

63. *Who currently hosts your website(s)? Are you looking to change this arrangement?*

Answer: Our website is currently hosted on-site. As per our RFP, we are requesting a secure cloud-based solution.

64. *Do you have a budget range for first year and for ongoing annual budget costs?*

Answer: Please see question #8.

65. *How many individuals at your institution will need to use the CMS?*

Answer: Approximately 12.

66. *Who makes the final CMS decision and how is it made?*

Answer: The Evaluation Committee will make our recommendations to the college administration for final decision.

67. *Have you looked at CMS already?*

Answer: No, we have not investigated CMS platforms.

68. *How important is a support plan/option for you with the new CMS?*

Answer: A very important, anticipated necessary component.

69. *What systems do you have that you would like integration with? Is there a priority of system integrations?*

Answer: None

70. *You are currently in Wordpress. Are you planning to stay in Wordpress? If not, what is the desired/ideal CMS?*

Answer: We are open to a WordPress CMS or any other CMS that addresses the goals, requirements, and scope of work of our website redesign. It is likely that our website redesign will require some proprietary features.

71. *What does the development team look like? How many developers are on your team that will support the CMS and NNMC web properties? Who will be involved in the approval process for deliverables and how will that work?*

Answer: We do not have an internal web development team. Per the RFP, our IT Department contracts with a web developer. The Web Team will work closely with the chosen web design firm and will be involved in the process.

72. *Is there any existing audience research available that might contribute to the success of this project?*

Answer: There are some student satisfaction surveys and data reports regarding our enrollment, demographics, and academic programs, but no recent research regarding

the website (most recent is 2016). We need assistance with discovery and user research, per the RFP.

*73. Can you please provide average Monthly Unique Visits (Sessions in Google Analytics) for all sites listed on RFP? What are the most high-profile, or mission-critical sites at NNMC?*

Answer: There is only one site: nnmcc.edu.

Average Monthly Unique Visits: 9.5 to 11K / 43,726 pageviews

*74. Are you planning to adopt a CRM and if so, which one are you considering?*

Answer: We are not well acquainted with CRM options, which is why, per the RFP, we are asking for professional recommendations.

*75. What other websites do you like that are similar in purpose or functionality to your site? Who are your primary competitors?*

Answer: Our primary competitors are our sister public 2- & 4-yr colleges in New Mexico and others in the Southwestern US. For online programs, we like SNHU and Colorado State Global Online.

*76. Has a budget been allocated for this redesign project? Or will you be establishing a budget based on proposals received? Can you please provide us with some budget guidance? (even a target range would be helpful)*

Answer: Please see question #8.

*77. Would it be acceptable if our cost proposal has a range in cost for some project phases, to be refined after discovery and planning?*

Answer: Unfortunately, no. Cost is a weighted evaluation criterion. The contract will be issued for the Best and Final negotiated cost provided by the awarded finalist.

*78. What is your budget range for cloud hosting?*

Answer: No specific amount has been allocated for cloud hosting.

*79. Your RFP mentions, "NCAM contracts with an SEO/Digital Marketing firm, and IT contracts with a web developer. We are currently developing better landing pages and lead forms connected to digital marketing." Is the SEO/Digital Marketing firm or web developer that you work with currently being considered for this redesign project?*

Answer: No.

80. *With the exception of SSO and MFA, could you please characterize the required integrations into the following types, if possible:*

- *Outbound link*
- *Script embed/iFrame*
- *Import from feed or file (e.g. CSV file)*
- *API integration*

Answer: All other required integrations are 'Outbound Links'

81. *If API integration, please provide more information about the nature of the required integration - API availability and details, internal or vendor, required functionality, type of data being transacted (e.g. if personally identifiable such as student information, or course information).*

Answer: N/A Only MFA and SSO are API specific. We are in the process of implementation of DUO MFA/SSO.

82. *What are the requirements for SOC and SOC 2? These certifications are generally available from appropriate hosting providers outside of specific classes of the software vendors.*

Answer: Must be SOC1/SOC2 compliant and must be compliant with all applicable website rules and regulations. SOC Certs are usually with the hosting platforms

83. *Do you have a budget range for this project that you can disclose?*

Answer: Please see question #8.

84. *Are you open to submissions from vendors outside of the US?*

Answer: Offerors must be eligible to receive federal contracts at the time the contract is awarded. This includes having a US tax identification number, a valid DUNs number and be in good standing on SAM.gov.

85. *You mention your site is currently on WordPress, are you wanting to stay within an Open Source platform or do you have a preference for a proprietary system?*

Answer: Please see question #10.

*86. What are the requirements for the admissions journey? Are there any integrations for this? What exists today in this journey and what doesn't?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we are looking to streamline the admissions journey for the user starting with first contact (and lead gen), through the application, financial aid, advisement, and registration stages. Currently, on the website, the separate offices have separate menu links, and much of the journey for student service offices is manual, through the sharing of spreadsheets.

*87. For the event calendar, are there any integrations that will need to be connected to this?*

Answer: We currently use Google. We are looking for an improvement over our current google calendar integration.

*88. Can you provide more information about how the integrations on page 8 and 9 will tie into the user experience side of the website?*

Answer: Multi-Factor Authentication and Single-Sign-on are the required integrations, however, most of the others on this list are either links to external sites or Core System functionality which are also external links.

*89. For the 4 year period following the site launch, are you looking for a fixed-price contract for ongoing support or is this more flexible?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we are only looking for a potential total of four years for this project to include the initial year and then up to three renewal years. The awarded contract will be based on Best and Final negotiated price submitted by the finalists for a fixed-price contract itemized by year with the years two through four set-aside for updates and maintenance.

*90. Is there a physical brand guide?*

Answer: Yes, there is a Northern New Mexico College brand guide.

*91. In order to give our team a sense of the complexity of your current Wordpress website, please share the following:*

*1. Number of pieces of content*

Answer: 8,682 in media library, many of which can be discarded. We are in the process of an internal content inventory.

*2. Number of types of content (different CMSs have different nomenclature, (WordPress calls them "post types", Drupal "content types")*

Answer: Used Post Types include, Events, Calendars, Gallery, Team, Testimonial, and FAQ. Unused: Partner, History

3. *Number of taxonomies*

Answer: Two: Categories & Tags

4. *Number of custom user roles*

Answer: No custom roles.

Answers are listed after each question.

92. *Can you please confirm if you anticipate the following deliverables will be included/excluded from scope:*

1. *Wireframes*
2. *Design Mockups*
3. *SEO/Content Strategy*

Answer: Per the RFP, all three are included.

93. *Is there an incumbent vendor responding to this opportunity?*

Answer: No.

94. *What is the budget for this project? Knowing your budget is critical to help us right-size the project plan.*

Answer: Please see question #8.

95. *What is the timeline for this project? What is driving the timeline?*

Answer: Per the RFP, this website redesign project is part of a two-year investment to enhance Northern's mission, academic reputation and awareness of its offerings, and to increase student enrollment, retention and graduation. The website redesign will be coordinated with expanded, data-driven, digital marketing campaigns.

96. *Stakeholders: is there a designated project champion and core team, and are they prepared to collaborate with us on a weekly basis?*

Answer: Yes, Northern's Web Team and administration.

97. *Are there any initiatives happening that this project is dependent on or related to (i.e. are they also doing a rebrand exercise or some other initiative that this project might need to wait for?)*

Answer: Per the RFP, this website redesign project is part of a two-year investment to enhance Northern's mission, academic reputation and awareness of its offerings, and to

increase student enrollment, retention and graduation. The website redesign will be coordinated with expanded, data-driven, digital marketing campaigns.

*98. How many sites are involved in this project -- just the main site or are there intranets, sign in portals or sub-sites to include in our proposal?*

Answer: No, Just the main site, nnmc.edu

*99. Has any user research been done to inform this RFP? Is the team open to user research during discovery phase to validate the user needs and priorities?*

Answer: There are some student satisfaction surveys, and data reports regarding our enrollment, demographics, and academic programs, but no recent research regarding the website (most recent is 2016).

*100. Are you aware of any major risks to this project or workflow? Are there any known risks a vendor partner should be mindful of?*

Answer: No risks on our side, however we want to be sure the site is compliant with all applicable regulations, per the RFP. We are also in the process of transitioning presidential leadership.

*101. What hosting provider do you use? Are you happy with the hosting provider?*

Answer: Per the RFP, we current host the website on-site.

*102. Is NNMC open to content management systems other than Wordpress?*

Answer: Yes, please see questions #3, 9, and 10.

*103. Do you plan to have your web contractor be part of the development of the new site?*

Answer: Yes, as an internal resource, per the RFP.

*104. How much custom code and Wordpress Plugins exist?*

Answer: Limited custom code on the homepage and directory. 48 Active plugins.

*105. Does NNMC want to stay in WordPress?*

Answer: Please see questions #3, 9, and 10.

*106. What is the budget or budget range for this work? Are there any special billing considerations (like splitting the work between two fiscal years) that we should be aware of?*

Answer: Please see questions #8 for budget. Billing for this contract will be based on progress billing and work completed to date.

*107. What is your desired timeframe for the site launch?*

Answer: Summer 2023.