



REGINALD F. LEWIS MUSEUM
of Maryland African American
History & Culture

Request for Proposal:

WEB SITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

FEBRUARY 24, 2010

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1. SUMMARY

The Maryland African American Museum Corporation (MAAMC), which operates the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture, in Baltimore, Maryland, is accepting proposals to design and develop the museum's website. This will be a "concept to completion" production. 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 proposals will be judged. The museum's existing web site (www.africanamericanculture.org) was originally designed and produced in 2003, and modified to greater or lesser degrees periodically since that time. The current site is and has been since inception maintained off-site.

2. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

This is an open and competitive process. Proposals received after 4:00 pm EST on March 22, 2010, will not be considered and will be returned unopened. The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

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

If the execution of the proposed work to be preformed requires the hiring of sub-contractors, the proposal must clearly state this. The proposal must identify sub-contractors and the work they will perform must be defined. The proposal must provide the name, address, and EIN of the sub-contractor. MAAMC will not refuse a proposal based upon the inclusion of sub-contractors. However MAAMC retains the right to refuse any sub-contractors identified.

3. CONTRACT TERMS

MAAMC will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by MAAMC legal counsel, and a project will be awarded upon signing of a contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

4. PURPOSE

MAAMC currently has a web presence which its leadership believes is outmoded in appearance, structure and presentation of content. An opportunity exists to re-engineer the site to better reflect the mission of the museum, while also meeting the experiential and functional expectations of web users. Upon completion of the development of the site, MAAMC will assume full responsibility for web site content, maintenance, and administration. All content, coding and graphics will become the sole property of MAAMC.

Description

Through this RFP, MAAMC will develop and launch a flexible, user-friendly, and informative web site that is easy to maintain, and that can deliver large amounts of regularly changing information to our key audiences.

In addition to designing a user-friendly web site that is visually pleasing, safe and secure, quick to load and operate, with an intuitive interface, MAAMC wishes to develop a web-based, database-drive administration tool, which will allow key management personnel to easily update content without directly accessing source code.

MAAMC will maintain ultimate editorial control of content. MAAMC will efficiently manage web publishing processes, preferably by using a system with a browser-based user interface. Administration of web content will be based on roles to control access and work flow (e.g. author, reviewer/editor, publisher).

Objective for the Project

MAAMC's primary objective with this project is to develop a web site that engages, educates, and informs, while building and reinforcing the museum's brand identity, and fostering awareness and interest in the organization, and the services it provides.

Specific Strategies for the Project

- present comprehensive information and resources in an easy to use format, including text, images, audio, and video
- increase awareness of MAAMC's mission and promote involvement through programs and events
- support retention of current members and program participants, and promote acquisition of new ones
- strengthen relationships with community partners, donors, members, program participants and staff

- integrate brand messaging

The web site developed will feature compelling visuals, intuitive navigation, and concise messaging. By reinforcing the museum's brand and market leadership, engaging this web site should give the user incentive to take action!

5. TIMELINE

This RFP is dated February 24, 2010. Interested candidates may also request a copy of this RFP via email by contacting Lisa Woods at woods@maamc.org. Proposals are due not later than 4:00 pm EST, Monday, March 22, 2010.

Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. During this time MAAMC may require interviews at our office with our evaluation team on or about April 23, 2010. You will be notified if this is requested. The successful candidate firm selected will be decided upon, and notified on or about April 30, 2010. All other candidates will be notified not later than June 15, 2010

Work should begin not later than June 1, 2010. The project completion date and web-site "live" date must not surpass September 30, 2010. The actual completion timeline will be determined after Phase I (see below)

6. BUDGET

The budget must encompass all design, production, and software acquisitions necessary for development and maintenance of the web site. Hosting will be addressed separately and costs for hosting are not included in the budget for this project.

List pricing for*:

Phase I: Discovery, Requirements, Planning, and Site Definition

Phase II: Site Development, Testing, and Deployment

**Hosting: MAAMC has not yet made a decision to host on or off-site. Discussions during the discovery phase will decide the matter.*

MAAMC has allocated \$46,500 for this project (Phases I and II). We will not entertain proposals in excess of this amount. Hosting costs will be addressed separately.

7. BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Our Mission

To be the premier experience and best resource for information and inspiration about the lives of African American Marylanders. The museum seeks to realize its mission by collecting, preserving, interpreting, documenting and exhibiting the rich contributions of African American Marylanders from the state's earliest history to the present and the future.

About the Museum

The museum opened on June 25, 2005, and is named after Reginald Francis Lewis (1942-1993). Born in Baltimore, Lewis was an entrepreneur and philanthropist who served as chair and chief executive officer of TLC Beatrice International, the largest U.S. company at the time owned by an African American.

Now in its fifth year of operation, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum announced in September 2009 the development of a major capacity-building program, *Audiences, Capacities, and Awareness Initiative (ACAI)*, to be carried out through five phases, over two years.

General Facts

The largest African American museum on the East Coast, the Reginald F. Lewis Museum brings Maryland to the world through its extensive permanent collection and the world to Maryland through its educational programs and special exhibitions.

The 82,000 square-foot facility accommodates over 13,000 square feet of permanent and temporary exhibition space, a two-story theater, resource center, gift shop, café, classrooms, meeting rooms, an outdoor terrace, and reception areas. Several of the museum's spaces, including the upper lobby reception area, are available for special events and meetings.

The museum provides dynamic educational programs for both children and adults and is especially proud of its partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education. The museum's education department has developed curricula and provided teacher training to reach more than 850,000 students and 50,000 teachers.

Permanent Exhibitions

The Reginald F. Lewis Museum has three permanent exhibition galleries on its third floor that highlight ordinary and extraordinary history of African Americans in Maryland:

- *Building Maryland, Building America* explores three major types of work in which free and enslaved people of African descent engaged: work on the water, tobacco cultivation, and iron working. These endeavors were essential to building the colony, and later, state of Maryland.
- *Things Hold, Lines Connect* shows how African American families and community organizations provided comfort and support in the face of oppression, while creating environments in which resistance to oppression could be planned and nurtured.
- *The Strength of the Mind* features stories about the creative spirit of Maryland African Americans by focusing on their accomplishments in the arts and education.

Special Exhibitions

In addition to its permanent exhibition galleries, the museum features a variety of special exhibitions highlighting African American stories from the neighborhoods of Maryland, to various regions in the United States, and from throughout the African Diaspora.

Attendance and Engagement

In the short time since its opening the museum's reach has been substantial. More than 300,000 visitors has come through its doors (averaging 60,000 per annum). In addition, a partnership with the Maryland State Department of Education created a curriculum, *An African American Journey*, based on the museum's permanent collections and exhibitions, and allows the museum to impact additional hundreds of thousands of Maryland public school students in their classrooms, along with a growing number of educators and administrators.

Geographics

Nearly 90 percent of Maryland's 5.6 million residents live in the densely populated corridor between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. Jurisdictions in this area with the greatest population densities include Baltimore City and neighboring Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties, and Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. Maryland ranks 8th in

the nation for the size of its African American residents – estimated at 1.6 million.

Member Demographics

Total memberships: 744

Male: 38%

Female: 53%

undesignated: 9% (organizations not designating a primary constituent)

42% Family & Couple memberships

43% Senior/Individual memberships/Student/Comp

15% Corporate, Contributing Members & Optional Benefits

Percentage with email: 65%

8. AUDIENCE

The museum's primary audience consists of current members, donors, school groups, volunteers, parents, community members and employees. The secondary audience includes prospective members, donors, volunteers, Marylanders, and the general population interested in African American History and Culture.

9. SCOPE AND GUIDELINES

The scope of this project is to re-vision and re-engineer the existing MAAMC web site. The museum's in-house marketing department will provide all of the web site copy, images, and other content. A firm that can handle all site planning, interface, design, and production is required. The site must include a technology solution that allows in-house staff to easily and cost effectively update content and modify site design after the initial launch.

Discovery

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

Design

Create web site 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 proposal submitted by the successful candidate must meet the following criteria:

- Feature a content management system that will permit non-technical MAAMC staff to instantly update web site content on specific pages using software to be determined by MAAMC in consultation with consultant
- Convert substantial amounts of existing content to new web site
- Be visually appealing, with an engaging mix of text, graphics, and other features
- Possess uniform “look-and-feel” across all of its pages and elements, with the MAAMC logo used as needed to tie the site to the museum
- Be easy to navigate, with information grouped and presented in intuitive manners, and requiring no more than three levels of “drill down” to find the desired information (unless otherwise discussed with staff project team)
- Provide necessary software and licenses to maintain site internally or externally, as decided by MAAMC
- Provide site search capabilities using key words or phrasings
- Allow for the collection of email address, area-of-interest, and demographic information from visitors, and provide training and necessary support to permit easy use by a selected MAAMC staff person
- Be compatible with, or offer some accommodation of, MAAMC’s ticketing software, and membership software (both Blackbaud products, Patron’s Edge and Raiser’s Edge)

The successful proposal will also feature an assigned project manager from the consultant firm team who will be made available to present information to, and coordinate with, MAAMC staff, including a reasonable number of design and development solutions presentations. Once the web site has been completed and accepted by MAAMC, the web site design and all of its contents, software and architecture become property of MAAMC.

Site Specifications

MAAMC encourages creativity in the proposals submitted. However, there are certain requirements for the web site project that must be accounted for in all proposals considered:

- Web site must be compatible with current versions of most widely used and available browsers
- Web site must not require plug-ins as a default
- Web site should be developed to meet all federally-mandated access requirements adopted by the Federal Access Board under section 508 subsection 1194.22 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Site must be built in accordance to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, and should also be easily accessible to the novice as well as the experienced internet user
- Web site must be designed with a balance of text and graphics such that each page loads in reasonable time

Testing

Web site should be tested on all applicable platforms to ensure it works as promised. The proposal, therefore, should feature a testing plan as part of the development process.

Delivery

Proposal should allow for the delivery and uploading of the web site to client for internal hosting, or to an outside third party, as is to be determined after consultation during the development period

Tracking

Web site should utilize tracking software to produce user defined log reports to be used as a tool for measuring and assessing web visitor behavior toward improved performance and efficiencies. Such capabilities would include, for example, web traffic analysis, path analysis, visitor trends, page views, entry pages, exit pages, lengths of stay, and technical analysis (browsers and platforms).

10. AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES/INTEGRATION ISSUES

The new site will use much of MAAMC's existing web content. Any new content will be identified in the early stages of the project. There are

no existing databases that will need to be imported or connected to the new site. MAAMC does not have existing e-commerce systems, web forums or other tools that the new site should be connected to.

11. STAFF RESOURCES

David Taft Terry, Ph.D., the museum's executive director will serve as the project lead, and is thus responsible for sign-off on key decisions, and providing project steering.

Cherrie Woods, the museum's director of marketing and public relations will serve as the project manager, and as such will be responsible for keeping the project on schedule and within budget, maintaining communication between team members, and with outside stakeholders.

The project also benefits from a Steering Committee and a Content Committee.

12. QUALIFICATIONS

- Proposals should describe candidate firm's experience in producing web-sites for non-profit, culturally-focused, and/or arts organization projects.
- Proposals should include a list of five web sites produced by the candidate firm which candidate believes best reflects its work and relevancy to this project. The URL should be submitted, along with a brief description of the role played by candidate in the site's development. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluations.
- Proposals should provide current reference information of three former or current clients.
- Proposals should briefly describe candidate firm's organizational capacity to undertake this project (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.), as well as a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
- Proposals should identify candidate's team that will be assigned to this project. Please include a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project. More generally, what will each person's role be?

- Proposals should discuss any hardware/software vendor partnerships.
- Proposals should discuss testing and support plan.
- Proposals should explain candidate's service level agreement (SLA) structure.
- Proposals should include a time frame for completion.
- Proposals should include all terms and conditions.

13. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will for the basis upon which MAAMC will evaluate proposals for this project.

The Mandatory Criteria

- Ten (10) copies of the proposal must be received not later than 4:00 pm EST, Monday, March 22, 2010.
- Proposals must include a budget and pricing 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 the attention of:

Lisa Woods, Office Manager
 Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland
 African American History & Culture
 830 E. Pratt Street
 Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Meeting the mandatory requirements above, proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- ***suitability of the proposal*** – *the proposed solutions meet the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.*
- ***candidate experience*** – *candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.*

- **demonstrated aesthetic capabilities** – as evident in prior work; artistic and innovative, user friendly interfaces that engage.
- **project staff** – the candidate firm has appropriate staff to develop the site in the time frame needed.
- **value pricing** – the price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposal. *
- **presentation** – the proposal information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
- **integrity** - demonstrated commitment to high service level agreements (SLA).

*Relatedly, as a non-profit institution, MAAMC is able to accept *pro bono* service and recognize the provider to the full extent allowed by the Internal Revenue Service, including naming the proposer within the web site and other collateral as a MAAMC supporter and partner.

14. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Please use the following as a guideline 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 budget should not exceed 35 pages.

Title page:

"MAAMC Web Site Development Proposal," your company name, address, website address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.

Cover Letter (1 – 2 pages):

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

Proposal (3 – 10 pages):

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. You should also touch on your ability to deliver the project in the timeframe noted in Section 5.

Qualifications (10 – 20 pages):
Provide the information requested in section 12.

Budgets and Fees:
List budgets as requested above. Identify staff you anticipate working on the project and their hourly rates for work that may be needed for Phase I and Phase II.

To view the existing MAAMC web site, please go to:
www.africanamericanculture.org