



RFP: 50CAN websites redesign and maintenance

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Summary

50CAN: The 50-State Campaign for Achievement Now seeks proposals from web development teams to work with our graphic designer and in-house online communications manager to overhaul the information architecture, design and user experience for our four state websites (www.nycan.org, www.marylandcan.org, www.minncan.org, and www.ri-can.org). Our state campaign sites all follow the same structure and features. We hope to better align the state sites with the aesthetic and structure of the 50CAN website (www.50CAN.org), which launched in September 2011. The site redesign will also include an overhaul of the structure and features of the existing sites to reflect a change in our advocacy model: we are shifting from a mass-broadcast style of online engagement to one in which a smaller, more involved group of advocates is intimately engaged and connected with one another. The four websites will be identical in look and functionality, aside from cosmetic differences primarily in color scheme and logo. Using the new website template, we will also want to work with the firm to launch three new state websites for our next three expansion states. After the websites redesign, the firm should offer ongoing website maintenance and technical support and be available for potential work on additional website builds and other projects as 50CAN expands.

The purpose of this RFP is to offer a fair and competitive evaluation process for candidates, give an overview of the projects and outline the criteria 50CAN will use to select a web development team.

About 50CAN

50CAN: The 50-State Campaign for Achievement Now (www.50CAN.org) is a newly-launched, national nonprofit advocacy organization that recruits and supports local education reform leaders who build citizen movements in their states to ensure that every child has access to a great public school.



50CAN is built on ConnCAN's (www.conncan.org) groundbreaking accomplishments in Connecticut, but operates as a separate 501(c)3 organization. 50CAN operates four campaigns in Rhode Island (www.ri-can.org), Minnesota (www.minncan.org), New York (www.nycan.org) and Maryland (www.marylandcan.org). We aim to launch 12 state campaigns by 2013 and reach half of the country by 2015. Our headquarters are in the Gramercy Park neighborhood of New York City.

We have a long-standing relationship with Montreal-based graphic design firm House9 Design (<http://www.house9road47.ca/>), who handles both our print and online design work, including website design. House9 will design this website template, but we will look to the web development team to offer feedback on the designs. We also employ an in-house online communications manager, Clairelise Rodriguez, who has a solid knowledge of our Drupal CMS platform and manages day-to-day upkeep of all of our websites. The website developer or development team will liaise directly with Clairelise, who also manages our relationship with House9.

Project overview

We are looking for a website development team to pair with House9 Design and Clairelise in redesigning the template for our state websites to in time for an October 1, 2012 launch. That launch will include the four existing state sites (Rhode Island, Minnesota, New York and Maryland) and three new launch state sites, to be announced. We are looking for both front-end development and CMS integration using Drupal. Our current sites are in Drupal 6. The websites, which should reflect the 50CAN.org aesthetic, should have the following features, some of which are CMS capabilities:

- School Report Cards with graphical representations of the data for every public school in Minnesota, Rhode Island, Maryland and New York. More details below.
- Code is written in a way that anyone with the skill and knowledge can change any and all aspects of it.
- Site structure fosters a robust online community in which our advocates can deeply engage with us and with other advocates in their state. This will include a member's area, with easy signup, login, password retrieval and ability to communicate with other members either through wikis, conversation threads or other tools to allow cultivation of community between education reform advocates in our states.
- Graphic designs faithfully implemented.
- Search engine optimized.
- User-centered design and structure
- Site structure and user experience foster community.
- Ability to automatically import new member information into our Salesforce database.
- Send new members an automatic, personalized welcome and confirmation message.
- A redirection system that transfers top 30 trafficked links from old website to new site.
- Search function.
- Mobile device optimized. (Given the change in focus of our website interaction please propose your approach for optimizing the websites for mobile users. We are open to the full spectrum of options.)
- A Merchant Account system to receive donations.



- Built using the Drupal 7 CMS platform.
- Blogging capabilities for multiple users and commenters.
- Blogging comments system using Facebook log-ins.
- Ability to embed video and audio snippets.
- Photos can be automatically resized.
- Photos can be automatically changed to sepia tones.
- Social media feeds such as twitter automatically fed in.
- Each page is easily shared on social media sites.
- Hosted on a platform that is optimized for multi-site Drupal hosting (current host is Omega8)
- Migration of some content from the current sites to the new sites.

School Report Cards in detail

50CAN's school report cards will provide letter grades and rankings for all public schools and districts in its existing four states (Minnesota, Maryland, New York and Rhode Island). New versions of these report cards, using the latest available data, are scheduled to be launched along with the redesigned websites on October 1, 2011. We will also launch school report cards for our three new states along with the launch of their websites on October 1, 2011, but these versions will not include letter grades. We do not assign letter grades to schools and districts in the first year of the report cards in order to use the year to collect feedback from the community before issuing grades. The report cards for all seven sites will have four main sections: school & district report cards, school rankings, district rankings, and about report cards.

The information for the report cards is gathered from public websites run on behalf of the states' education departments, which publish annual data on the performance of students. It also draws upon descriptive information published by the departments on things like school size and student demographics. We work in partnership with GreatSchools (<http://www.greatschools.org/>) to collect the data from the states.

School report cards are made available to anyone who signs up on the website. While the structure of the school report cards will largely follow the existing report cards on the current state sites (see example: <http://www.conncan.org/learn/reportcards>), we plan to hire a data visualization specialist to work with our graphic designer to optimize the way information is displayed. The website development firm will be expected to work with this data visualization graphic design firm in addition to House9 to implement their designs and provide feedback on user experience and search engine optimization.

Sample spreadsheet for report card data is available upon request.

Scope of work

Deliverables include a master theme to be used for the state campaign sites as well as slightly modified themes for all seven state sites. Website needs to be a multi-site configuration in Drupal 7 all running off of the same Drupal 7 instance.



Timeline

- Proposals are due on March 15, 2012.
- We will evaluate submitted proposals and contact finalist candidates for interviews by April 1, 2012.
- We will notify the selected candidate by April 16, 2012.
- Selected team should expect to begin work either immediately upon hire, or shortly thereafter. Redesign process will culminate in an October 1, 2012 launch for all seven sites.

Budget

One of the factors we will be using to make our decision is your budget proposal. This section is meant to provide a rough sense of our expectations. We encourage proposals that come in below our range, but do not want to count out high-quality, talented developers, so please engage in an open dialogue with us about the budget.

- 1) Redesign of state websites, including report cards. Budget range: \$30,000-\$80,000 total.
- 2) Ongoing maintenance. Budget range: \$50-\$150 per hour.

Developer characteristics

- Demonstrated knowledge and experience with Drupal 7
- Commitment to keeping up-to-date on the latest Drupal upgrades and modules.
- Demonstrated ability to faithfully implement designs and work collaboratively with graphic designers.
- Demonstrated expertise in user experience and SEO.
- Demonstrated knowledge in creating mobile-friendly websites.
- Demonstrated expertise with implementing data visualizations similar to the following examples:
 - <http://awesome.good.is/transparency/web/1109/trends-in-higher-education/flash.html>
 - <http://thewhyaxis.info/egypt/>
- Milestones of how we will see that you're completing your work.
- Timeline of completion for each project.
- The ability to start work as soon as possible.
- Ability to complete work on stated timeline.
- Ability to accurately estimate project timing.
- Use of online project management tool to track progress and communicate with clients.
- Availability on short notice to resolve ongoing maintenance issues.
- Three recommendations that show capability and work ethic.
- Location near New York to come for meetings/interview (optional).



Ownership

- 50CAN owns the code and content of all websites and programs.
- Websites exist in their entirety on 50CAN's hosted server (Omega8).

Application process and submission guidelines

We are glad to answer additional questions about the scope of this engagement. Responses to this RFP are encouraged to be short form and to the point. An appropriate response will:

- Summarize the processes to be used in achieving the stated outcomes, including any intermediate milestones to be generated, as well as required resources.
- Describe how you meet the desired developer characteristics.
- Give an inclusive price quote that corresponds to the processes proposed. If the price quote excludes certain fees or charges, those excluded fees must be listed along with an explanation of the nature of the fees.
- Describe approximate timeframes for the engagement and availability.

Prompt replies are appreciated. Please send replies, as well as any questions, to clairelise.rodriquez@50can.org.