



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: Guantánamo Public Memory Website Design

RFP DATE

Friday, September 24, 2010

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE

9 am (EST), Monday, October 25, 2010

SUMMARY

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience is pleased to announce an open call for proposals to design a pilot website to launch its Guantánamo Public Memory Project. The project involves developing the concept and structure of the website, creating the pilot/beta design of the site, and producing 2-4 key multi-media “stories” (content) for the site.

1. ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL COALITION OF SITES OF CONSCIENCE

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience (www.sitesofconscience.org) is a world-wide network of places of memory – such as historic sites, place-based museums or memorials – where people are invited to remember what happened in the past, and discuss how to address similar issues today. Its nine founding members – including Terezín Memorial in the Czech Republic, the Slave House in Senegal, and the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in the U.S. – defined a new vision of “Sites of Conscience,” places committed to 1) interpreting history through site; 2) stimulating dialogue on pressing social issues and promoting democratic and humanitarian values; 3) sharing opportunities for public involvement in the issues raised at the site.

These nine sites launched a new movement in culture and human rights that now has about 250 members from 45 countries and a communications network of close to 3,000. Sites of Conscience have different histories, but share common experience creating new spaces for societies to grapple with deeply contested histories and confront their legacies. In particular, Sites of Conscience commit to creating spaces for open dialogue on these histories and the contemporary issues they raise.

Many Sites of Conscience faced incredible obstacles to opening public access to the places and their stories – from secret cells hidden in plain sight on the streets of Buenos Aires, to impossibly remote GULAG camps in Siberia. The pioneers who first preserved these places recognized that the sites themselves tell a critical story – through their location and architecture, as well as the remnants they contain of the human experiences of prisoners, guards, workers, visitors, and others. They have complemented physical visits to the site with a range of other strategies for building public memory – including virtual tours, websites, school curricula, oral histories, documentary film, and more – all of which still use the place itself as the main teaching tool.

2. THE GUANTÁNAMO PUBLIC MEMORY PROJECT

Today “Guantánamo” has become an international symbol of torture, detention, and national security. It has divided U.S. society; the U.S. and Cuba; and the U.S. and its international allies. But Gitmo has been used and reused for more than a century to contain perceived threats to the U.S. – from immigrants to disease to nuclear attack. As the Obama Administration works to “close Guantánamo,” there is an alarming ignorance of the many chapters of the site’s history that have been “closed” before, only to repeat in new forms. Alongside this history is the unknown human impact --- the many different experiences and perspectives of those who have been held, lived and worked on the Naval Base. The Guantánamo Public Memory Project aims to build public



awareness of the long history of the site in order to help people imagine and address what could happen there – or elsewhere – in the future. It will portray the history of Guantánamo through multiple perspectives in order to shape public understanding of this site’s complex history. In addition, as the current struggles to “close Gitmo” reflect, there is an impasse between those who demand investigations of those most responsible, and those who believe that all allegations of wrongdoing should be forgotten and put in the past. The Guantánamo Public Memory Project aims to open a third space between prosecution and impunity - one that involves a broader global community to address deeper questions of responsibility over a longer period of time, by engaging in open dialogue about Guantánamo – the place and its policies, site and symbol.

Ten years after the Coalition’s founding, its members came together to launch its first global, collaborative memory project: the Guantánamo Public Memory Project. In June 2009, the Coalition convened “Remembering Guantánamo, 1898-Tomorrow”, the first international working group of diverse stakeholders including historians, detainee lawyers, military personnel, and directors of Sites of Conscience to develop the initial framework for the Guantánamo Public Memory Project. Four main principles emerged from the working group. The project should:

- involve the entire history of the site, not only its recent use in the “War on Terror”;
- include multiple voices and perspectives such as recent and past detainees, Haitian and Cuban refugees, military personnel, Cuban workers, and others, aiming to restore the dignity of all as human beings with complex individual histories and backgrounds;
- resist making Guantánamo “history,” but instead raise questions about the present and the future – not only of the site, but of related policies and practices at sites around the world – and inspire open and ongoing public debate for societies everywhere about how to act on the lessons of Gitmo; and
- be international, and offer a space for organizations and individuals to contribute their resources and perspectives.

To be coordinated by the Coalition’s Secretariat office, the project will build on the extensive experience of its membership and Board building public memory of difficult histories as alternative truth-telling and reconciliation processes in societies around the world.

GITMO 2.0: WEBSITE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Guantánamo Public Memory Project seeks a web design firm to help it develop a web platform called Gitmo 2.0 that will: 1) share a sampling of stories from Gitmo’s century long history; 2) invite the participation of people from around the world to share their own stories and materials; and 3) stimulate discussion among visitors on Gitmo’s past, present and future.

Gitmo 2.0 will serve two main functions: public education and public engagement. Working with both historians and people with direct experience of the site, the website will aim to raise awareness of Gitmo’s past through individual human stories from different perspectives and time periods. Utilizing web 2.0 technology, the website will serve as an online forum for people with different perspectives to share their stories and opinions, and discuss the urgent questions Gitmo’s past poses for today’s decisions. Gitmo 2.0 will be one among many public education engagement tools such as documentary and feature films, traveling exhibits, teachers guides, etc.

The objectives that Gitmo 2.0 seeks to achieve are:

- Greater public awareness of Gitmo’s long history and its lessons for today and the future.
- Creation of a user-generated “public memory” or virtual record of Gitmo’s living memory.
- Exchange of views on contemporary questions on Gitmo among visitors with differing views about the site.
- Visitor action / involvement in campaigns relating to Gitmo.

3. PROJECT SCOPE AND GUIDELINES

The Coalition seeks a web design firm to develop an online Beta design (not live) for the Gitmo 2.0 website. This will include: creating the structure of the website; designing the look/style, graphic interface and user-engagement elements of the site; and producing 3-5 multi-media “stories” (content) for the site. A version of the pilot design will be circulated to the project’s Advisory



Council for feedback, and therefore, the design must be self-explanatory. The final design will need to include a plan for launching the website including a timeline and budget.

The International Coalition's Secretariat staff will work closely with the consultant to develop the structure and content of the pilot site. The Coalition Secretariat has researched and gathered the following elements that will provide the pilot content for Gitmo 2.0 and the multi-media stories:

- written narratives of emblematic individual's stories from different time periods of Gitmo's's history;
- more than 800 photographs depicting various experiences and events; and
- more than 400 resources (such as books, archives, films, websites, campaigns, etc.) relating to Guantánamo's history.

Specifically, the contractor will be asked to complete the following:

1. Creative Brief (Due 1/31/10)

- Identifying target audiences (including creation of ideal user profiles);
- Confirming objectives of website;
- Identifying technology needs including functionality requirements for users;
- Defining key elements of graphic look and feel, navigation, and site marketing;
- Visually depicting the different elements of the site, and content envisioned;
- Multi-media story treatment; and
- Developing a clear plan with content needs and timeline for execution.

2. Produce Initial Beta Site Design with Initial Multi-Media Stories (Due 3/31/11)

3. Refine Beta Site Design and Multi-Media Stories (Due 4/30/11)

4. Final Beta Site Design and Multi-media Stories (Due 6/30/11)

5. Plan and Budget for Final Website (Due 6/30/11)

After each deliverable is produced, the consultant must be available to present the deliverable and receive feedback from the client and revise as necessary.

Design Guidelines

The designer will have creative freedom to develop Gitmo 2.0 keeping in mind the following guidelines:

- A "clean", visually engaging and contemporary look is a must.
- Individual multi-media stories will be a key feature, alongside creative ways for people to learn about the site's longer history.
- The structure of the site must facilitate open dialogue among visitors on Gitmo's history and the contemporary debates arising from the site.
- The format of the site must include easy-to-use mechanisms for visitors to share their own stories (via text, photos, videos, audio, etc.).
- The website should use place – i.e. the geographical landscape /architecture of the Guantánamo Naval Base (such as a map or other design elements) to link various time periods/experiences.

Site Specifications

- The website design should be user-friendly - easy to understand, access and navigate by novices or experienced Internet users.



- The site design will need to capitalize on and feed to and from social media sites and tools including FaceBook, Twitter, etc.
- The design and the planned development of the site should include the capacity to track and analyze visitor use of the website.
- Though the initial phase of the website will be in English, it must include the capacity for multiple languages.
- The development of the site must be planned using a simple CMS that will allow non-technical staff to update the website at will.
- The site development should be planned so that it is accessible and stable across a range of platforms and interfaces (all browsers and operating systems) in all countries.
- The site design should include the capacity for users to search using key words and phrases.

TIMELINE

Coalition will contact potential contractors in the beginning of November 2010. A final decision will be made and MOU signed by December 1, 2011.

BUDGET

Up to 20k.

4. QUALIFICATIONS AND APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience seeks a firm specializing in projects focused on public history and education and/or exhibit design using personal narratives and innovative story-telling techniques. Website design experience with a proven ability to engage a wide variety of visitors to participate and take action online is required. Experience in developing internationally-focused projects is critical.

To apply, send a detailed proposal including:

- A two-page description of ideas for Gitmo 2.0 – schematics/visuals welcome.
- A line-itemed project budget.
- The URLs for 4 live websites that your firm has designed that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project.
Include:
 - A brief description of the role your firm played in each project;
 - Statistics or other data that demonstrate the fulfillment of the goals of each website listed.
- The firm's experience producing websites for public education or public history projects, or for museums/memorials or archiving projects.
- A brief description of your firm's project management and creative processes, including how you collaborate with your clients, your communication methods, and your process for gathering all the required information.
- Contact information for 3 references (must include one former and one current client).
- The bios of key members of the firm who will be working on this project.

The submitted proposal must be complete and final, including a quote inclusive of all fees and charges, except for web hosting costs. Please identify the partners/sub-contractors and the scope of the work they will carry out. Work with sub-contractors/partners is the responsibility of the applicant. The International Coalition reserves the right to refuse the sub-contractors, but will not refuse a proposal on this basis. All proposals must be signed by the firm's director or other authorized person. Email submissions to bgabriel@sitesofconscience.org by 9 am EST on Monday, October 25, 2010. No phone calls please.