



Council of State Governments Justice Center Request for Proposals

January 15, 2009

I. About This Request for Proposals

This is a request for proposals (RFP) to provide web development services to the Council of State Governments Justice Center (<http://justicecenter.csg.org/>). The web projects described in this RFP face impending deadlines and require a short development schedule. While the RFP describes multiple projects that can conceivably be developed by multiple contractors, we are interested in contracting with a single web development company, led by an experienced lead programmer/project manager, with the capacity to manage and coordinate these multiple projects concurrently and meet the indicated deadlines. Development of the projects described below must be compatible, both on the front-end and back-end, with our existing web products, as detailed in the “Technical and Infrastructure Requirements” section below.

The Justice Center considers the web to be a crucial medium for disseminating policy recommendations and resources to our audiences. We are committed to devoting the funds and internal resources needed to develop our web assets into a leading-edge platform for addressing critical issues facing the criminal justice system. We expect that the recipient of this contract will have ongoing opportunities to fulfill our web development needs, and thus we look forward to developing a mutually beneficial and long-term professional relationship.

II. About the Justice Center

A. Background

The Council of State Governments (CSG) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that provides practical, nonpartisan advice and consensus-driven strategies, informed by available evidence, to elected and appointed state officials. The CSG Justice Center addresses complex criminal justice problems. Our work is dedicated to increasing public safety and strengthening communities by providing state government officials, other elected and appointed policymakers, practitioners, researchers, journalists, and advocates with technical assistance and a clearinghouse of information on best practices, research, legislation, media, current affairs and events, and more. We translate research, data, and the expertise of a diverse range of criminal justice and social service disciplines into language that is simple, practical, and applicable to policy and program design. The web provides a critical tool in this effort, as our various websites allow our visitors to access and digest this knowledge interactively, and apply the information and resources on our sites to their particular situation.

B. Our Websites

The Justice Center maintains several web sites. The following sites are the most pertinent to, and will be referenced in, this RFP:

- The Justice Center's main site: <http://justicecenter.csg.org/>
- The Re-Entry Policy Council (RPC) website: <http://reentrypolicy.org/>
- The Criminal Justice / Mental Health Consensus Project (CP) website: <http://consensusproject.org/>
- The Justice Reinvestment (JR) website: <http://justicereinvestment.org/>
- The Criminal Justice / Mental Health Information Network site (InfoNet): <http://www.cjmh-infonet.org/>

III. Project Description

There are four major areas of work for which we require web development, project management, and strategic planning: A) migrating the CP and InfoNet websites onto a shared, office-wide back- and front-end system; B) developing an integrated, InfoNet-style database into the existing RPC website; C) managing small projects and routine maintenance; and D) planning, scoping, implementing, and coordinating new and ongoing web development projects as they arise. The web developer or development company must have the internal capacity to concurrently manage, coordinate, and deliver on these four major work areas within agreed upon timeframes.

A. Consensus Project and InfoNet Site Migrations

We require a web developer to migrate the CP website onto a new site architecture (see Section V: Technical Requirements for more information), update the look and feel of the site to make it more consistent with the larger Justice Center brand, and add new, interactive functionality. More broadly, the web developer will assist in the development of a strategic plan/roadmap for unifying multiple websites, combining databases, and sharing content.

We have already migrated one of our sites (the RPC site) onto this new back- and front-end system, and the CP and InfoNet sites will mirror and build upon this development.

B. Reentry Policy Council Information Network

We require a web developer to add front-and back-end functionality to the RPC website so that it can act as a relational database of at least three categories of information, each with its own data model. This database, modeled after our InfoNet, would catalogue program examples, media, and research. Our needs include developing 1) database driven pages to display program examples and the integration of existing media and research databases; 2) updating the administrative interface to account for the new

program examples; and 3) adapting an existing user-managed content system to allow online users to log in and update their own program profiles.

C. Small Projects and Routine Maintenance

We require a web developer to monitor and respond to bugs, glitches, and quick-fixes on all office websites; undertake small projects (e.g. create new topic pages, modify the design of existing pages, develop new charts, etc.) without serious delay of ongoing, larger projects; and provide estimates for larger, ongoing development projects as they arise.

D. Ongoing Development

We require a web developer to scope, estimate, implement, and coordinate new and ongoing web development projects as they arise. Potential projects include developing new interactive charts and tables (e.g., <http://tools.reentrypolicy.org/housing>), redesigning project e-newsletters, developing new “mini-sites” related to new issue areas, and adding additional functionality to existing sites.

IV. Design Requirements

The Justice Center is currently in the process of re-branding its sites to promote a shared identity across different projects. The general look and feel of the new branding can be seen on the JC and RPC sites. The projects described in this RFP will require design planning, in order to mirror existing elements. These projects should be developed using standard, portable CSS techniques so that their look and feel can be readily converted to our new look and feel when ready.

V. Technical and Infrastructure Requirements

The Justice Center has made the organizational decision to focus its web efforts on a single platform and code base. Our newest sites are being developed in *Ruby on Rails* running on *Linux* with a *MySQL* database back-end. All future web development will be built on the shared platform and code base, and will reside on a shared server.

The developer should have demonstrable experience developing professional web sites using *Ruby on Rails* and *MySQL*. We expect all user interfaces to adhere to modern accepted human interface guidelines and design practices, using CSS, DHTML and JavaScript.

VI. Project Management

As a developer on this project, you should anticipate frequent interaction with Seth Prins, a Policy Analyst who is currently coordinating web development across Justice Center projects. These interactions will occur primarily over phone and email, but some face-to-face meetings may be required. You likewise should anticipate close involvement in the development process from non-technical, policy staff, who will review drafts to determine fidelity to project requirements. Seth Prins will be your main point of contact for the duration of your contract and will “traffic cop” interactions with other staff. As a rule, we will ask you to ensure availability in order to meet project deadlines specified by Justice Center staff, and adapt to new target dates as needed.

The Justice Center has a number of non-technical policy staff who have some experience and familiarity coordinating Justice Center web projects. These staff will provide you with advice and guidance to ensure that the development meets the needs of our online users. These staff may also be involved in testing and approving each development project. The Justice Center also contracts with an external developer who is responsible for our most recently deployed websites. You may need to use this developer as a resource for technical assistance and guidance on an as-needed basis.

VII. Budget

Your proposal should be based on an hourly rate; this rate will become a part of the contract awarded. The following is an estimated budget for development of the above web projects, and should be considered a ceiling for these projects.

Consensus Project and InfoNet Site Migration	
Subtotal	\$70,000
Reentry Policy Council InfoNet	
Subtotal	\$10,000
Small Projects and Routine Maintenance	
Subtotal	\$5,000
Ongoing Development*	
Subtotal	\$5,000
RFP Total Budget	\$90,000

*Represents funding available to research and develop scopes of work and more accurate estimates for new projects that will have their own funding sources.

VIII. Anticipated Selection and Development Schedule

TABLE ONE: Selection Schedule

Date	Milestone
1/15/09	RFP released
1/23/09	Deadline for contractor response to RFP
1/30/09	Contractor selected

TABLE TWO: Consensus Project and InfoNet Site Migration

Date	Milestone
2/2/09	Kick-off conference call
2/6/09	Draft scope of work/requirements document
2/13/09	Draft design comps
2/20/09	Draft core functionality
3/6/09	Revised design comps
3/13/09	Revised functionality
3/20/09	Working beta site
3/27/09	Bug testing/fixes
4/3/09	Target launch Date
4/15/09	Project Completion Deadline

TABLE THREE: Reentry Policy Council InfoNet

Date	Milestone
2/13/09	Kick-off conference call
2/20/09	Draft scope of work/requirements document
2/27/09	Draft design comps
3/06/09	Draft core functionality
3/13/09	Revised design comps
3/20/09	Revised functionality
3/31/09	Working beta site
4/3/09	Bug testing/fixes
4/15/09	Target launch date
4/30/09	Project Completion Deadline

IX. Justice Center Contact Information

Any questions should be directed to:

Seth Prins
Policy Analyst
Council of State Governments Justice Center
100 Wall St., 20th Floor
New York, NY 10005
Direct: 646-383-5729
Fax: 212-482-2344
sprins@csg.org

X. Vendor Questionnaire & Submission Guidelines

Please include answers to the following questions in your proposal. In order to manage the volume of responses to this RFP, we would like you to be as brief and direct as possible in your answers.

A. Capacity and Technical Expertise

1. What percentage of your current business is devoted to website development?
2. How many *Ruby on Rails* projects have you completed in the past two years?
3. How many projects which included *MySQL* development have you completed in the past two years?
4. Overall, how many web development projects have you completed in the past two years?
5. How many staff members does your company employ? How many of these employees develop websites, code, and graphic design, respectively?
6. For the employees included in your answer to the previous question, how many years of website design or programming experience does each have?
7. Of these employees, how many are full-time, how many are part-time or freelance?
8. If you are awarded the contract, what percentage of the development work will be done by your internal staff and what percentage through contractor programmers and designers?
9. Please summarize two improvements you would make to the interface design of the Consensus Project website (www.consensusproject.org).
10. Please summarize two improvements you would make to the interface design of the InfoNet (<http://www.cjmh-infonet.org>).

B. Financial & Organization Information

1. How long has your organization been in business?
2. What is your business structure (e.g. corporation, sole proprietorship, LLP)?
3. Are you affiliated with another company? If so, describe your relationship to that company.
4. Do you anticipate any changes in your organizational structure or ownership in the next year?
5. How many clients are you currently working with?
6. In how many of the past five years has your company turned an annual profit?
7. Has your company or its affiliates ever declared bankruptcy or filed for protection from creditors under state or federal proceedings?

C. Client References

Please provide references and contact information for five recent clients. Include examples of your work with each client, including URLs of sites you have recently developed. We prefer to see at least two examples which were built using *Ruby on Rails*.

D. Submission

Your submission should include: 1) your company contact information; 2) answers to the questionnaire above; 3) references and examples of work; 4) a proposed hourly fee schedule and an estimate of the number of hours required to complete the project(s).

Please submit this information by Friday, January 23, 2009 to Seth Prins, whose contact information is provided above. Responses submitted after this date may be given a lower priority due to our tight development schedule.

The Council of State Governments Justice Center is funded largely through grants from, and contracts with, federal agencies and private foundations. Any contract(s) resulting from this RFP will be subject to the terms and conditions of these agreements between CSG and its funding sources. Such terms and conditions will be disclosed during the contract process.