



# Request for Proposal

## Website Development and Design

Innovate 218 is seeking proposals for website development and design. The newly formed entrepreneurship and innovation group, Innovate 218, is part of the Launch MN program located in the Northeast Region of Minnesota. We are a collaborative group with partners from across the region who strive to create a more systematic entrepreneur ecosystem by providing training, networking, and resources as well as our larger goal of establishing funding for the startups and new businesses within the area.

### What We Do

- Provide training and education
- Create networking opportunities throughout the region
- Developing a speaker series and mentorship opportunities
- Attract and grow prospective and current entrepreneurs
- Develop pitch competitions with capital prizes and investment opportunities
- Establish local community capital investment fund
- Promote a strong and vibrant ecosystem through marketing and communication for the Northeast Region

### About Launch MN (<https://mn.gov/launchmn/>)

Launch Minnesota is a new initiative spearheaded by Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). Designed in consultation with legislators from both parties, and alongside dozens of private sector leaders, the program exists to help grow Minnesota's startup ecosystem.

Launch Minnesota will start inside of DEED, and will work with our advisory board and private sector stakeholders to become a public-private organization in the future.

### Timeline

RFP sent: July 14, 2021

Responses due: August 2, 2021 by 5:00 PM Central Time

Send proposal and any questions on the RFP to: Kayla Swanson, Marketing Specialist at [kswanson@itascadv.org](mailto:kswanson@itascadv.org)

Finalist agencies selected & contacted for interview: August 6, 2021

Chosen agency selected & contacted: August 11, 2021

Project kick-off: August 16, 2021

New website launch target date: October 1, 2021



## **New Website Objectives**

Innovate 218 is a collaborative resource network, empowering entrepreneurs to start and grow innovative businesses in northeast Minnesota. Our purpose statement highlights our main objective in our website design and build. The website will act as a clearing house and main communication center for entrepreneurs, partners, and leaders to gain information, learn about events, and communicate with the group.

The primary audience for this website will be entrepreneurs within the Northeast Region of MN. The website will be used as the main marketing tool for the program and must be developed as such.

## **Current Website**

<https://www.itascadv.org/innovate-218>

Currently the website is housed within the Itasca Economic Development Corporation website with basic information about the program. We also have a social media presence through Facebook which our partners share and collaborate through. The current website should not be used as a “cornerstone” or design example for the new site.

## **Project Scope and Functionality Requirements**

The project scope and functionality requirements may be defined during the kickoff process once a design firm has been selected. The marketing and events committee of Innovate 218 has defined the following requirements as necessary and should be considered within the proposal. Additionally, we would like to see recommended items the firm believes are necessary for a functional website in the entrepreneurship space.

- Content development for the entire website with committee support
- Interactive calendar to highlight events such as in-person workshops, networking events, and pitch competitions
- Interactive page to capture information about entrepreneurs and guide them to the right resources
- Blog/ news page to promote articles and information
- Social media links and engagement options
- About page
- Partner page that highlights all partners and links to their pages
- Resources page
- Contact page
- Capital Investment Page with potential to collect funds (How can you fund a venture?)
- Additional features recommended

The design of the website should also follow the brand standards which have already been developed and will be shared with the selected web design firm. Additionally, the website should be under its own domain (already purchased), and function as a standalone website.



## **Budget**

Innovate 218 is funded by multiple grants to kickstart the program, the outlined budget for this project is approx. \$15,000

## **Proposal Requirements**

Please include the following in your proposal response. All responses must be sent in one PDF formatted document to [kswanson@itascadv.org](mailto:kswanson@itascadv.org)

- Overview of your company
- Overview of how you will meet our objectives
- Scope of your work (research, design, development, post-launch errors correction etc.)
- Explanation of your proposed platform/CMS
- Outline of your website design & development strategy
- Proposed website timeline from kickoff to launch
- Details about your team
- Recent design & development examples
- Pricing with optional elements line-itemed
- Terms & conditions

We look forward to your proposal!