

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
WEBSITE DESIGN AND CREATION SERVICES
for
The Office of Undergraduate Admissions
of
Baruch College of the City University of New York

DATE ISSUED: February 8, 2010
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(Bids that do not arrive at the Purchasing Department at 17 Lexington Avenue before the submission deadline will not be accepted. Faxed bids and/or bids sent electronically will NOT be accepted.)

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Submission deadline: March 2, 2010 at 3:00 PM

**Website Design and Creation Services RFP
Office of Undergraduate Admissions**

**Baruch College
City University of New York**

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

- A. The City University of New York is the largest municipal college system and the third largest University in the nation. The University's educational units consist of 19 colleges and more than 100 research centers.
- B. Baruch College, one of the senior colleges of the City University, offers Undergraduate and Graduate programs of study through the Zicklin School of Business, the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Public Affairs. Located in the Gramercy Park/Flatiron neighborhood of Manhattan, the College provides an ideal location for its 15,500 undergraduate and graduate students, more than 8,000 of whom attend full time. These students—from over 110 countries—reflect the ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of the city and nation.
- C. The mission of the Undergraduate Office of Admissions is to recruit, advise, evaluate, and admit a high-ability student body dedicated to scholarship, community, and the realities of a global environment. The Undergraduate Admissions Office is the entry point for students in the Weissman School of Arts & Sciences, School of Public Affairs, and the Zicklin School of Business. Applicants from high school, transfer, and international students alike seek the counsel of the office in steering their academic careers at Baruch College.

Section 2 – Scope of Work

A. Overview

The existing Undergraduate Admissions web site is perceived to be inadequate and poorly representative of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions' mission and profile. Our goal is to improve the overall effectiveness of the Undergraduate Admissions web site by implementing a complete site redesign focused on providing our audiences, including prospective freshmen, Macauley and Baruch honors candidates, transfers, international students, parents, and high school counselors, with the best user experience possible. To this end, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions seeks to procure the services of a contractor qualified and capable of developing a more effective and user-friendly interactive website with improved visual design, site content, and navigation from the home page through to all levels of the site. We also seek design and thematic consistency with other materials we are producing, including printed and digital recruitment materials that are distributed to prospective students.

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B. Deliverables Required

The contractor awarded this contract shall be required to review the existing web site for content, navigational impediments, overall presentation and appearance and complete a needs assessment of the site's primary audiences with key stakeholders and end-users. Under the supervision of an Office of Undergraduate Admissions-appointed committee, the contractor will be required to present alternative proposals for an upgrade and redesign of the homepage, sub-page template, site navigation, and select other website content, specifically addressing the crucial issues of (1) improved, dynamic content, (2) user-friendly navigation of the site, (3) useful utilities, and (4) templates, branding and design of the site that is consistent with the College and UA's overall identity. (5) The contractor will review current content management processes and recommend a solution for on-going content management. (6) The contractor will provide a strategy to support the on-going assessment of the site and recommend tools used to implement this strategy.

- Design should avoid technologies that load slowly or require special plug-ins.
- All images should be optimized for minimal file size while maintaining quality
- All site content must be accessible and usable in all browsers. The design should display as expected in current standards-compliant browsers and degrade gracefully in older browsers as well as in text-only browsers, smartphones, and other handheld devices (e.g. Personal Digital Assistants)
- Standard fonts must be used in design.
- Pages must be accessible to all users regardless of disability or technology used to access pages. Web content must conform to NYS Information Technology Policy "Accessibility of Web-Based Information and Applications", policy number NYS-P08-005, as determined by quality assurance testing. Such quality assurance testing should be conducted by the vendor and will be verified by Baruch College, and the results of such testing must be satisfactory to Baruch College before web content will be considered a qualified deliverable under the Contract or Procurement. NYS P08-005 is available at <http://www.oft.state.ny.us/Policy/NYS-P08-005.pdf>
- Pages must be easily printable, with main page content displaying clearly in a black-and-white printed version.
- Client-side scripts must run without error in all standards-compliant browsers and alternate code must be included for visitors with JavaScript disabled or accessing the site via nontraditional browsing devices.
- Design must be easy to use and to maintain.
- Templates must be provided for second-level pages linked to the homepage, designed in such a way that ongoing updating (read: weekly) by staff of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions is relatively simple and regular web site maintenance is reduced to a minimum.

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- Coding standards should be based on XHTML and CSS and be validated. All scripting should be based on the DOM and ECMAScript.
- Pages must include the following metadata elements specific to each page: title, keywords, and description.
- The vendor will provide a style guide describing the use of all custom CSS styles, and clear and descriptive documentation of all custom programming to allow for on-going maintenance.
- The vendor will deliver all original graphics files in native format used in the site's creation.
- The vendor will oversee and participate in the implementation of the new web site and the cut over from the existing site.
- Video and audio will be implemented in small (<5 min per, ~5 examples) quantities, and must conform to the above guidelines while maintaining clear visibility and fast load times. Possible applications include student internship profiles (video) and an interactive campus tour slideshow (images + audio).
- The website must be able to easily integrate future internet and web services. With the rapid advancements in technology and the web, the College requires the website to accommodate for growth of technology over time.

B-1 Mobile Web Site Requirements¹

A growing number of users have portable devices like smartphones or portable digital assistants (PDAs) that they use to access information on the Web. The Undergraduate Admissions Office expects visits from these portable browsers to increase, and thus requires concurrent design and implementation of a mobile device-friendly website. The W3C Mobile Web Best Practices Draft also has valuable information on developing for mobile devices.

- Validate to XHTML Basic 1.0.
- Minimize the use of images, and limit to smaller than 100 pixels. Specify the image height and width in the source code.
- Ensure that contents are readable without style sheets.
- Keep the CSS simple, and remove extraneous styling information.
- Avoid client side scripting if possible and ensure that content is readable even if scripts are disabled.

¹ *Adapted from "Mobile Web Guidelines" from the University of Texas at Austin
Available: <http://www.utexas.edu/web/guidelines/mobile.html>

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- Use one column layouts and avoid floats. Horizontal overflow can be a problem on handhelds, so make sure wide elements fit the narrow screen.
- Place non-essential links and other marginal content at the bottom of the page.

C. Creative Approach

In the development of this website upgrade, the College is looking for a contractor to provide a professional and strategic approach that will make the website both attractive and accessible to its target audiences. The desired end product to be produced by the contractor shall utilize effective design, imaginative graphics, and useful content to provide the most engaging and valuable user experience possible.

D. Working Relationship

The work described herein shall be accomplished within a team context, as described below. Additional responsibilities, as required, shall be detailed in a specific contract to be signed by the contract awardee at the time of award.

1. A Project Manager will be assigned by both the Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA) and the contractor. Once the Project Manager has been named by both the contractor and the OUA, this individual shall act as the single point of contact. However, all technical decisions related to the development of the website must be approved directly by the College's Chief Communications Officer and the College's Director of Web Services.
2. It shall be understood that the contractor will be required to work with the team(s) designated by the OUA. The Project Manager designated by the contractor shall be required to travel to the Baruch College campus for reviews and meetings as necessary.
3. The contractor shall be required to submit regular status reports and participate in regular status meetings -- on a schedule to be determined -- in person or via teleconference during the term of the contract.

E. Development Process

- The contractor awarded this contract shall submit a detailed development plan with key milestones to be delivered at each stage of the project's development. The development plan should include clearly detailed and defined costs for each stage of the project. In addition to working closely with the College's assigned development team(s) to develop and refine the focus of the website upgrade process.

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F. Website's Specific Features

At a minimum, the following features shall be included:

1. Improved information architecture and site navigation
2. Creation of templates for the home and sub-level site pages that provide for the on-going maintenance and growth of the site
3. Creation of site content that is appropriate, useful and accessible to site users.
4. Integration of existing web forms/data collection tools and the College's site search utility.
5. Compliance with all communications guidelines promulgated by the College's Office of Communications.

G. Conformance to State and CUNY Regulations

This RFP is conducted in compliance with all requirements of applicable New York State laws and statutes. This RFP is intentionally structured with broad guidelines and few mandated components in order to encourage competition and new design ideas. Proposers are encouraged to submit evidence of prior completed or ongoing projects in support of their proposals. Proposers are encouraged to supplement their proposals with any ancillary materials that may help the College to evaluate such proposals.

SECTION 3 – PROPOSER REQUIREMENTS

- A. Proposers shall meet the requirements of this Section 3 and furnish all necessary information with the Proposal.
- B. Proposers shall be required to familiarize themselves with all Baruch College websites currently available online.
- C. Information shall be consistent across submitted documents. The College reserves the right to reject Proposals that contain conflicting information.
- D. Those items for which Proposers have or assert proprietary rights, or which must, under a prior contract, remain confidential, must be clearly indicated and submitted in an envelope, clearly marked "CONFIDENTIAL MATERIALS". Clearly and prominently mark each page of the Confidential Materials "Confidential". The College shall not be responsible for any materials not so marked.
- E. The College reserves the right to determine that a Proposer has substantially met the requirements of the RFP and/or to ask for additional information.

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- F. Failure to comply with these requirements shall be grounds for rejection of a Proposal.
- G. Proposer shall include, with Proposal, detailed information regarding Proposer's qualifications and information on members of the team.
- H. Proposer shall submit with Proposal a minimum of three (3) references for work described of similar size, nature, and scope to that described herein, including a description of each project, and the client's company name, address, telephone number and contact person and the title/role of such contact person.
- I. Proposer shall submit with Proposal a list of current and former college, University, educational, governmental, institutional, and other Clients, with a current contact reference at each such client.
- J. Proposer is encouraged to attach copies of any materials, and particularly samples of any other website proposer has designed, that would facilitate evaluation of its firm.
- K. Proposer shall include a suggested project timeline, in addition to complete pricing information attached to the COST ANALYSIS AND SIGNATURE PAGE (Section 6).

SECTION 4 – CONDITIONS OF AWARD

- A. The College will award this Contract for Website Design and Creation Services, if at all, to one Proposer that meets or exceeds the listed requirements.
- B. The College reserves the right to:
 - 1. reject any and all Proposals received in response to this RFP;
 - 2. waive or modify irregularities in Proposals received;
 - 3. use any, some, or all ideas submitted in the Proposals received;
 - 4. negotiate with Proposers in the best interest of the College;
 - 5. amend the RFP after Proposal Release Date; and/or
 - 6. alter any schedules or dates specified in this RFP in its best interest.
 - 7. interview prospective awardees
 - 8. award in the best interest of the College upon recommendations made by the designated selection committee.

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SECTION 5 – EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. A duly selected committee will use the following criteria to evaluate those Proposals which meet the requirements of these specifications:

1. Experience with comparable website design and management/References	10%
2. Technical Aspects and Scope of Proposal	30%
3. Cost	25%
4. Interview/Presentation	5%
5. Demonstrated ability to use design and text to enforce themes and underlying message	25%
6. Ability to complete project on a timely schedule	5%
GRAND TOTAL SCORE	100%

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SECTION 6 – COST ANALYSIS AND SIGNATURE PAGE

Total cost of creation and implementation of Website Design and Creation as described in the College's RFP document and delineated in the Proposal submitted by the Proposer:

TOTAL COST _____

(Attach a cost analysis itemizing cost factors used to determine the TOTAL COST amount submitted above. Factors such as content development, technical requirements, utilities, templates, and other factors should be separately listed.)

Name and address of Corporation or Partnership submitting proposal:

(Authorized Signature)

(Title)

(Date)

Sworn before me this _____ day of _____, _____

(Notary Public)

SEAL