

**Request for Proposals for Website Design, Development and Launch
Learning Collaborative for Health Equity and Social Justice
An e-learning website on behalf of the
National Association of County and City Health Officials**

Background

NACCHO is the national organization representing local health departments (LHDs). NACCHO supports efforts that protect and improve the health of all people and all communities by promoting national policy, developing resources and programs, seeking health equity, and supporting effective local public health practice and systems. NACCHO's Health Equity and Social Justice program explores the causes of disproportionate disease burden in some communities and advances the organizational and public health practice capacity of LHDs' tackling root causes of health inequities. NACCHO views this audience as important change agents who have the potential to connect with larger social movements through pre-existing relationships with partner organizations and their constituents.

NACCHO received a grant from the National Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities at the National Institutes of Health to design and implement a comprehensive, multi-media, Web-based educational resource that prepares public health practitioners to act on the root causes of inequity in the distribution disease and illness. This project, currently titled The Learning Collaborative for Health Equity and Social Justice, will function as a learning community for the current and future public health workforce. The program is based on the critical pedagogical strategy of Paulo Freire and will support the organizational and staff development of LHDs focusing on the root causes of health inequities.

Project Purpose

The proposed Learning Collaborative will offer opportunities for engagement, based on principles of social justice and relying on a popular education model developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. NACCHO and its consultants are developing a curriculum that invites participants to share knowledge and lived experience through a learning cycle of listening, dialogue, action, and reflection. After a series of prescribed introductory modules, participants will choose from up to a dozen modules that include several online activities intended to foster self-discovery. The learning cycle will likely require several sessions to complete. NACCHO considers this process of organizational and personal self-discovery essential for a paradigm shift in public health practice.



Audience Description and Demographics

The intended audience comprises local health department staff, ideally working in teams and sustaining dialogue beyond Internet participation. As employees of local government, some participants may have limited access to computing resources that support rapid page loading or technologies that require browser plug-ins.

Project Scope and Requirements

NACCHO is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide planning, analysis, and project management services supporting the design and implementation of a Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 (MOSS 2007) project. NACCHO intends to use SharePoint as an extranet platform for adult education, communication and collaboration. Users must first authenticate into the system. Once authenticated, we anticipate several collaboration areas are made available to users based on their assigned role. MOSS will use custom authentication provided by AVECtra's netFORUM to authenticate users and to provide roles. This site will be customized and configured using the MOSS platform to provide roles management, workflow, lists, and other components.

The website's development process will feature a strong emphasis on design as well as application architecture and development. The website should meet the following criteria:

- **Compatible with existing systems and products:** Is fully compatible with netFORUM's login system, and can be integrated with other NACCHO-related health equity sites.
- **Easily accessed and used:** Participants at local public health agencies that restrict Internet can easily access and navigate the site. Website retains functionality even if multimedia content is inaccessible.
- **Easily maintained:** Site maintenance is easily accessible for in-house staff, since the site will be maintained and supported by NACCHO.
- **Features engaging design.** The site should feature attractive and engaging design nurturing a strong brand identity. The site should reflect best practices and recent trends in graphic design (particularly in relation to popular social media sites).
- **Meets ADA Requirements:** The site should be developed to meet all Federally-mandated access requirements adopted by the Federal Access Board under section 508 subsection 1194.22 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- **Provides a customizable educational experience:** Participants can follow curriculum modules of their choosing (i.e., activities are asynchronous and learner-led). The site's design, applications, and use of Web parts must reflect and support the project's educational approach.
- **Supports an interactive learning community:** Ideally, participants use common social media and collaboration tools to interact after exposure to site material.

Preliminary Requirements for Design and Development (subject to change):

Prior to designing, implementing and launching the site, NACCHO will work with the hired contractor to clarify, define, and prioritize the project's vision and requirements. To create the learning community envisioned by the curriculum design consultants, the site should feature the following:

- **Attractiveness and strong branding.** Templates with a distinct and attractive design that deemphasizes or modifies SharePoint's out-of-the-box design template (i.e., new CSS, master pages, page layouts, and possibly navigation, pending additional review and recommendations).
- **Incentives.** Incentives must be built into the curriculum and site features, within a reasonable scope, where possible.
- **Multimedia.** A learning cycle supported by audio, video, and text-based content.
- **Navigation.** Site navigation must be easy, clear, and likely global; users should be able to choose how they delve into the material and organize their educational experience.
- **Collaboration and social features.** Heavy emphasis on social networking and collaboration Web parts, since the curriculum relies heavily on interaction and collaboration. Features of particular interest include activity tracking, blogs and comments, discussion boards, editable reference materials, event planning and organizing, document sharing and collaboration, and messaging.
- **Support role based security.** Site participants will include owners (assigned full control permissions as site administrators), members (assigned "contribute without delete" permissions as student-participants), and visitors (assigned read access to certain, top-level portions of the site collection). Additional roles may include "beta testers" and "power users" (subject to definition).

The selected contractor will provide the services below, though proposals should allow for a percentage of work to exceed this preliminary scope.

- **Compatibility assurance:** The proposed system recommendations must allow for all applications to be useable by multiple operating systems (e.g. Windows, Mac, etc) and browser types (e.g. Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc.).
- **Consulting services:** Work with educational curriculum designers to craft website architecture, a graphic look and feel, user navigation, as well as homepage and main navigation templates consistent with a critical pedagogy.
- **Integration:** Integrate MOSS with netFORUM's login system and other third-party applications and tools.
- **SharePoint-based site design and development:** Architect, design, develop, configure and deploy MOSS 2007 applications. Develop customized Web parts, site definitions, site templates with a heavy emphasis on social networking and collaboration.

Deliverables

Phase I: Discovery, Requirements Planning, Site Definition & Design

During Phase I, the curriculum development team and contractor will confirm website audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, and navigation. Since NACCHO's technological resources compel this project's use of Microsoft SharePoint Products and Technologies, we will also confirm the associated design and functional possibilities/limitations of this platform with our hired contractor.

- Project management plan development and curriculum finalization: The curriculum team seeks guidance on the assumptions, functional requirements and possibilities, and potential budgetary concerns in creating the website. NACCHO will finalize the curriculum structure after a contractor review that merges the project's learning objectives and proposed curriculum design with the website's development plan. The physical deliverable will be a project management plan that factors-in appropriate technical review cycles for quality assurance, testing, and production launch.
- Use case analyses: NACCHO anticipates the contractor will perform use case analyses and create use case models after discussions with LHD staff. The physical deliverable will be a report including the contractor's findings.
- Information architecture: Additionally, NACCHO has in-house technical resources and hopes to form a design and development partnership with the chosen contractor. NACCHO's curriculum development team expects to provide the website's content, but the selected contractor will be expected to lead decision-making on website design and navigation. Physical deliverables during and at the end of the project will include all workflow and expectations-setting documents, wireframes, etc.
- Site design and layout: NACCHO requests at least three concept designs with two iterations of changes. Physical deliverables during and at the end of the project will include all design files as well as a comprehensive global site style sheet to ensure site uniformity.

Phase II: Site Development, Testing, and Launch

During Phase II, the curriculum development team will finalize content and work with NACCHO and website development staff to gather assets. Website development staff will focus on site navigation development, page construction, and the creation of customized programming to adapt Windows SharePoint Services 3.0 and the MOSS platform for this project's specific needs. This phase includes a testing phase, followed by launch and deployment and handling of post-launch issues.

- Development services: NACCHO expects the contractor to develop the site in its entirety, based on content provided by the curriculum development group. We expect to define the parameters of website development as part of Phase I (during which we will confirm the site's functional requirements).
- Testing: NACCHO will consider the project complete when the site is live. Before going live, the site will require extensive testing and proofreading using many versions of several commonly used browsers.

Status Meetings/Reports

The selected contractor and the NACCHO Program Associate in Health Equity, Senior Web Specialist, and additional appropriate staff will schedule regular meetings between themselves and their respective staffs as deemed appropriate by contractor and NACCHO. These meetings will be held on a no less than bi-weekly basis and will include at least two in-person meetings at NACCHO's offices in Washington, DC. The Program Associate will act as liaison between the selected web design and development contractor and curriculum design consultants, as necessary. The contractor will formalize what was discussed during the meetings via a periodic written report to be scheduled in the project management plan.

NACCHO Responsibilities

NACCHO is responsible for providing all curriculum content, a test server, and access to the organization's SharePoint platform.

Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made regarding the software requirements for the health equity curriculum website:

1. NACCHO will provide the selected vendor with the required information such as licensing keys and access to software when required to access, install, and configure said software.
2. The entire project must be completed by September, 2011. The website will be live by November, 2010. Work on Phase I begins shortly following award.
3. Completion is defined as a new, tested, live site.
4. NACCHO will appoint one person to serve as an internal project coordinator/manager. NACCHO will provide appropriate support documentation for the successful completion of the project.
5. The selected vendor will have the required level of access to all data (databases, web services, and external websites) that is scheduled to be needed in a timely manner.
6. The sites will be hosted by NACCHO's MOSS.
7. netFORUM and eWeb will be available and stable at the time specified in the project schedule.

Work Setting and Staffing

The selected contractor shall conduct activities related to this project at their facilities. Any substitution of staff from the proposal must be approved in advance by NACCHO. The selected contractor will designate a lead staff person on this project.

Period of Performance

The website must be live by November 2010 and all work on the project must be completed and accepted as final on or before September, 2011. Interim activities and deliverables can be negotiated on a case-by-case basis with the selected vendor. The selected contractor will provide a 90-day warranty on all programming.

Proposal Format

In order to be considered for this project proposals must include the following:

1. The name and bio of the project lead staff member and other significant contributors to this effort, including qualifications, certifications, and role.
2. A comprehensive explanation of your firm's expertise in e-learning technologies and design, graphic design, MS SharePoint Products and Technologies and netFORUM.
3. An explanation and example of your firm's approach to discovery, information architecture. Please include work examples that demonstrate how the partnership worked to create the concept and navigation of that site.
4. Three references including contact name, phone number, and project description and value.
5. An explanation of how your firm will complete each deliverable, intermediate milestones, and the expected timeline.
6. A detailed budget and cost proposal. When costing, you may indicate estimates per deliverable, you may choose to quote each phase.

Proposals should be in PDF format and **not exceed 17 pages** (excluding supporting documents). All proposals must be submitted via e-mail to mrichards@naccho.org. All proposals must be received by close of business on, February 9, 2010.

Selection Process and Criteria

Each proposal will be reviewed and rated. Proposals will be rated on the following:

- **Appropriate project objectives.** Project objectives are realistic, measurable, achievable, and should reflect an understanding of this project's efforts to diverge from a didactic approach to education.
- **Appropriate project timeline.** The application includes a comprehensive timeline for the project period.

- **Budget.** When costing, please indicate estimates per deliverable, or quote each phase. Please include justification.
- **Demonstrated experience of vendor and proposed staff.** Please describe your strengths in the areas listed below, including examples where appropriate.
 - Experience in using a standard software development lifecycle process to design, build and implement high quality solutions based on Microsoft SharePoint Products and Technologies.
 - Solid technical skills and experience in developing, configuring and deploying MOSS 2007 applications. Familiarity with SharePoint features and be proficient in developing Web parts, site definitions, site templates and custom fields.
 - Ability to make informed recommendations pertaining to MS SharePoint information and site architecture, infrastructure, software implementation and Web parts design, testing and deployment. Ability to recommend best practices for software configuration, site permission policy, and site template management.
 - Ability to leverage both internal resources (already developed services, Web parts, methodologies, etc.) and external resources (open source networks, user groups, freeware, etc.).
 - Experience in managing a diverse client constituency in a non-profit setting.
- **In-person presentation.** Companies that meet NACCHO's basic requirements will be invited to present their proposal in person.
- **Robust project management plan.** Application demonstrates that the project has adequate, qualified human resources to assure successful implementation.
- **Understanding of project purpose.** Applicant has a clear understanding of the project goals.

Administration

All questions should be submitted in writing to Mikhaila Richards, Program Associate in Health Equity and Social Justice at mrichards@naccho.org.

Schedule

NACCHO aims to hire and onboard the selected vendor by March 1.

RFP Released	January 19, 2010
Final Questions Due	January 26, 2010 at 5pm to mrichards@naccho.org
Proposals Due	February 9, 2010 at 5pm to mrichards@naccho.org
Selection and Notifications	February 16, 2010