



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

WEBSITE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

January 27, 2023

## Table of Contents

1. Summary	2
2. Proposal Guidelines and Requirements	2
3. Contract Terms	2
4. Purpose, Description and Objectives	3
5. Timeline	6
6. Vendor Requirements	7
7. Background of Organization	8
8. Audience	8
9. Scope & Guidelines	8
10. Available Technology Resources / Integration Issues	9
11. Evaluation Criteria	9
12. Format for Proposals	10

## 1. SUMMARY

Signal Centers is accepting proposals from interested vendors to design and develop its new web site. This will be a concept to completion project. The purpose of this request for proposals (RFP) is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates, and to provide the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.

The existing Signal Centers web site (see [www.signalcenters.org](http://www.signalcenters.org)) was designed and produced in 2018 based on navigation and design specifications at that time. Minor modifications are made by the Signal Centers Marketing Team members, but we rely on the hosting and maintenance provider for more detailed changes. Our goal is to be able to make most changes ourselves without having to have coding expertise.

Signal Centers, Inc. is a 501 c3 nonprofit organization and has been providing services to the Chattanooga Community for more than 60 years. Our mission is to strengthen children, adults and families through services focusing on disabilities, early childhood education, and self-sufficiency.

## 2. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

This is an open and competitive process. Proposals are due by **Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>**, by 5:00 pm EST.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of sub-contractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. In your proposal, please provide the name and address of the sub-contractor. Signal Centers will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of sub-contractors but does retain the right to refuse the sub-contractors you have selected.

Provisions of this RFP and the contents of the successful responses are considered available for inclusion in final contractual obligations.

## 3. CONTRACT TERMS

Signal Centers will negotiate contract terms upon selection, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget, and other necessary items.

## 4. PURPOSE, DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

### **Purpose**

Signal Centers and its programs need a website overhaul that implements design and accessibility best practices. As an organization that serves the disability population, we want to position ourselves as a leader in the digital accessibility space. Our new website will need to reflect that. Our biggest challenge we are trying to overcome is differentiating the programs enough to make the marketing of those services more streamlined and accessible, while not taking away from their central Signal Centers identity.

### **Description**

We would like the websites to center around a main hub ([www.signalcenters.org](http://www.signalcenters.org)). From this hub are three separate websites: Signal Centers local programming, the Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network, and Child Care WAGE\$® Tennessee. Our approach is to treat each program like an individual nonprofit to avoid overloading any single page with too much information. Each program will have different needs from an infrastructure and content standpoint.

### **Website Structure**

As mentioned above, in order to achieve our desired outcomes, we have divided the site into three major sections – each of which we have described below along with technical needs, audience and objectives.

#### **I. Child Care WAGE\$® Tennessee**

### **Technical needs**

We want to create a portal where applicants can apply for the program online, save and close their progress, store sensitive information and IRS tax forms, and have a backend component for the WAGE\$ team to access and download completed applications that have been submitted. We will also need a communication component to email or text a portion of the application to the applicant's administrator to complete and submit via the same portal.

We have a podcast hosted on a different website that we want to create a more elegant webpage for seated within the WAGE\$ website

We need a chat feature for real time customer service questions

### **Audience**

Our primary audience is early childhood educators in Tennessee that are eligible for our program. This workforce is 95% women, ages 18-65 following a bell curve distribution. They must have college education to be eligible for our program. The workforce has varying levels of technical literacy, so the website/application process will need to be as simple as possible to accommodate.

### **Objectives**

Our number one goal with the new website is to encourage more application submissions. A secondary goal is to close gaps in our analytic tracking so we can more specifically connect our marketing campaigns to applications submitted.

## II. Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network

### Technical needs

We need to better organize our homepage so that it feels welcoming and informative while including a digital bulletin board for announcements both in text and video format. We have workshopped organized homepage sections as followed:

- Programs
- Resources
- Training

We need to streamline our resource hub so that links provided are easily accessible (within 2 clicks) and searchable. Because of the breadth of our services, organization and simplicity should be prioritized to best serve our audience. We need to access the analytics of the most utilized services so these can be prioritized in our external messaging.

We would like to continue having a quick link to our regional pages that include training calendars, location/contact information, and regional staff divided by program. We also need to further develop our program pages so they are easily understood and contain the necessary information to contact program staff and get involved.

We would like to build an integrated and easily-updated staff portal that is not accessible to the public. This would likely need to be password protected.

Link to the WAGE\$ Podcast and our various TDHS partners

We need a chat feature for real time customer service questions

### AUDIENCE

Our primary audience is early childhood educators and directors in Tennessee. These educators must be employed by a DHS licensed childcare facility to create an account on our training portal. This workforce is 95% women, ages 18-65 following a bell curve distribution. Our secondary audience is any educator, family member, or caregiver who is need of resources and best practices for children birth to five. This website should also serve our internal workforce. We have over 150 staff who provide training and coaching across the state of Tennessee and we would like to develop a password protected staff portal that provides links to resources they can access and use with the various bases they serve.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Clear organization and utilization of resources to boost our role as a resource hub in Tennessee.
2. Continue serving educators who visit our website to access their training calendar.
3. Clear front-end messaging to better push messaging from TDHS.

### III. Signal Centers – Main Hub

#### TECHNICAL NEEDS

The Signal Centers website will serve first and foremost as the hub for ALL programs and will be the repository for administrative functions including:

- About Us
- Careers
- Donations
- In the News
- Contact
- Board and Volunteer Portal
- Employee Portal and Directory

It will serve as the launchpad for all major program websites including:

- Adult Day Services
- Assistive Technology Services
- Child Care Resources & Referral Network\*
- Child Care WAGE\$ Tennessee\*
- Children's Services
- Dolly Parton's Imagination Library
- Family Forward
- Hart Gallery
- Summer Camps
- TNAF Grant Training Program

Our site must be secure as we will host confidential information through payments, employee information, forms, etc. We would like our donations page to be very clear, informative, and welcoming.

We need to be able to utilize website traffic and performance metrics through backend analytics.

We need to be able to create and integrate forms.

We need an e-commerce capability for events, program registration and retail sales (Hart Gallery).

Our site must be able to accept payments and donations from multiple platforms card vendors and platforms such as Paypal, GiveButter, etc.

Dashboard and calendar with clear and concise data and events.

Integrated Employee portal that is linked to the Signal Centers RFP software for relevant staff updates and information.

*\*Also included on the hub site are Child Care Resources & Referral Network and Child Care WAGE\$ Tennessee, however the audience and objectives are listed in their own sections above.*

#### AUDIENCE

Our primary audience includes locals in the Chattanooga, Cleveland, and Northwest Georgia areas which are made up of clients of programs, donors, and staff. Our focuses are Early Education, the disability community, and social work.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Clear and concise language showcasing what Signal Center's is through branding and design.
2. We want our visitors to understand the services we provide, want to learn more from the Hub, and leave our site understanding the mission of Signal Centers.
3. We want to provide a user-friendly experience to everyone who visits our site.

## Vision

To meet our institutional goals, our new web site must:

- Serve as an ambassador for the Signal Centers brand
- Provide a modern, relevant design update
- Showcase the departments and programs at Signal Centers
- Improve customer service and engage site visitors
- Strengthen relationships with community partners
- Provide a scalable, maintainable solution
- Document Signal Center's rich history in education

## Strategies

- Utilize responsive design with the latest technologies to provide a consistent user interface across all devices
- Establish a clear path for visitors to access information relevant to them
- Present clear and concise information to end users
- Integrate with SC's social media platforms
- Provide an easy-to-use platform that interfaces with our CRM and financial software (if possible)
- Conduct thorough market research, competitive analysis and internal/external focus groups.
- Function as the "hub" for the overall agency leading clear pathways to microsites
- Maximize search engine optimization (SEO) through strategic mark-up language and content
- Provide an archival system for Signal Centers press releases, photos, videos and move historical data to a searchable database

## 5. TIMELINE

- Proposers may request more specific, detailed information by contacting Alex Farrell at [Alex\\_Farrell@signalcenters.org](mailto:Alex_Farrell@signalcenters.org)
- Proposals are due no later than end of business, **Monday, February 13, 2023**.
- Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. During this time, we may request interviews (either at our location or via videoconference) with our evaluation team.
- The name of the candidate firm who has been selected will be decided by **Feb 28, 2023**.
- All other candidates will be notified on or about **March 13, 2021**.
- The completion and delivery dates of the project and its phases will be mutually agreed upon prior to signing a contract.

## 6. VENDOR REQUIREMENTS

Please provide detailed information to accomplish the project scope outlined below. The budget and proposal must include all design, production, software acquisition, integration and necessary development and maintenance of the website.

### **ALL Proposals must address the following:**

#### **Executive Summary**

1. Describe your understanding of our current website challenges.
  2. Summarize your proposed solution, and how your solution will resolve our current website challenges.
  3. Provide a summary of pricing for the proposed services and products.
- **Company Overview** – Tell us about your company, your experience in web design and production for projects similar to ours, and your experience in working with clients in higher education. Provide links to your agency website, online portfolios, and social media.
  - **Team** – Identify the team who will work on this project. Include name, title/role, and brief background/experience of each. Include subcontractors if applicable.
  - **References** – Provide a list of three references (at least two in higher education) who can speak to services requested in this RFP. Please include contact information and a brief description of work done for those clients.
  - **Solutions Menu with Pricing** – Based on the elements included in the Project Scope/Objective section, tell us about your proposed solution in terms of creative design strategy, methodology, plan, and other important aspects of the redesign process. Include all project phases and tasks, along with a line-item breakdown of costs.
  - **Project Management Tools** – Your process for tracking and documenting project status.
  - **Deliverables** – Outline the products and/or services that will be delivered.
  - **Schedule** – Provide the suggested project schedule detailing the time required for each major step or phase of the project.
  - **User Training and Support** – Provide details on the user training and support included for our content editors along with the training support format (i.e., on- site/in-person, live web, chat, email, phone-based, hard copy, other documentation, etc.).
  - **Hardware** – List any hardware necessary to host and/or support the proposed solution. Also list any recommended configurations for a robust and reliable environment. Include hardware redundancy and/or disaster recovery recommendations.
  - **Payment** – Include any requirements or preferences regarding invoicing and payment.
  - **Include all terms and conditions.**



## 7. BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Signal Centers has been providing services to the Chattanooga Community for more than 60 years. Our mission is to strengthen children, adults and families through services focusing on disabilities, early childhood education and self-sufficiency.

## 8. AUDIENCE

The primary audience for the web site is clients of programs, donors, and staff. People with an interest in Early Education, the disability community, and social work.

## 9. SCOPE AND GUIDELINES

The scope of this project is to redesign the existing Signal Centers web site ([www.signalcenters.org](http://www.signalcenters.org)). Signal Centers' Marketing Department will provide the successful candidate firm with the photography and content necessary to populate the new site.

### **Discovery**

Confirm audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, site marketing, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, phasing, and budgetary constraints, resulting in a creative brief.

### **Site Specifications**

Signal Centers encourages creativity in the proposals submitted, but there are certain requirements for the web site project. Your proposal must account for all of these requirements.

- Site must be compatible with current and one (1) previous version of Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome and Safari browsers.
- Web site must not require plug-ins as a default.
- The site should be developed to meet all current federally-mandated ADA access requirements.
  - The site must be built in accordance with the latest Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and should also be easily accessible to the novice as well as the experienced Internet user.
  - The web site must be designed with a mix of text and graphics such that each page loads in a way that is acceptable to the typical user having an average home Internet connection speed.

### **Testing**

Testing of site on all applicable platforms to ensure that web site works as promised, including explanation of the testing plan.

### **Delivery**

Provisions for support must be made in order to assist SC staff when they are making the site live.

## 10. AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES/INTEGRATION ISSUES

We will revamp much of our existing web content. New content will be provided as it is identified during the course of the project.

- We currently use BrightBridge for childcare registration.
- We currently use embedded PDFs for web forms.
- The site will link to our existing social media accounts.
- We are in the process of purchasing a new CRM, which will need to integrate. Currently it's between RaisersEdge, Sage and DonorPerfect.
- We use MS Outlook for agency-wide email.
- We use Google products including Google Drive and DropBox for photography, video and other file storage.
- Integration between employee portal and RFP software.
- The site will link to HR department's Job Listings site: [sci.mycloudatwork.com](http://sci.mycloudatwork.com)

## 11. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will form the basis upon which Signal Centers will evaluate proposals. The mandatory criteria must be met and include:

All costs associated with the delivery of the project should be presented in a flat rate, fee for service format.

Proposals meeting mandatory requirements will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- The proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- Prior work that demonstrates artistic, innovative and user -friendly interfaces that engage viewers.
- Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake and be successful with this project.
- The price is appropriate for the value being offered by the proposer.
- The candidate firm has appropriate number of staff and necessary expertise to develop the site in a timely manner.
- The proposal is presented in a clear, logical manner, is well organized and has the appropriate information the RFP calls for

## 12. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Please use the following guidelines to format your proposal:

### **Length and Font Size**

Please use fonts no smaller than 10 point. Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications, and costs should not exceed 30 pages.

### **Title Page to Include**

Signal Centers, Web Site Design & Development, your company name, address, web site address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.

### **Cover Letter**

Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company.

### **Proposal**

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. Please include the length of time you feel it would take to deliver the completed project, from the day of signing the contract to completion.

### **Qualifications**

Provide the information requested in the "Scope & Guidelines" and "Qualifications" sections of the RFP.

### **Costs**

List costs as requested above. Identify staff who will be working on the project. Include standard hourly rates for