

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) ADDENDUM

RFI Number: RFI03032026VLG

Addendum Number: 03

Addendum Date: March 20, 2026

Original RFI DUE Date / Time: March 17, 2026 at 5:00 PM Eastern Time (ET)

Revised RFI DUE Date / Time: March 31.,2026 at 5:00 PM Eastern Time (ET)

Purpose of Addendum

This Addendum is issued to provide responses to questions received by the deadline (March 10,2026). This document contains the full and complete list of questions submitted and the University's official responses.

Who are the primary stakeholders and decision-makers for this project?	The University Communications and Marketing team and the ITS Digital Services team.
Is there an expected timeline from RFI to RFP issuance?	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.
Is there a target launch date tied to the academic calendar or fiscal year?	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.
What's driving the redesign now? Enrollment pressure, accreditation, accessibility compliance, technical debt, leadership change?	The current website, which launched in 2018, is out of date and has design and functional limitations. The primary goal of the redesign is to transform the website into modern, easy-to-navigate site that is a central source for key university information, news and stories. We would also like to build in audience personalization.
Is a current vendor or agency incumbent on this work?	We do not have a pre-selected vendor for this work.
Is a copy of the University's standard contract or MSA available for review?	No, not at this point. The University has standard terms and conditions for any contract that would apply closer to a contract being awarded.
What are the University's standard payment terms for engagements of this type?	Mutually agreed upon completion of each phase of the project can be invoiced and paid net 30.
Can the University share an anticipated budget range for this engagement?	The University is looking for the best product available at a fair and reasonable price. Once we know the estimated cost, we can request the necessary funding.
Are there existing content creation tools or workflows that must be preserved?	No.
Which newsletter platform is currently in use, or is selection part of scope?	The University uses Salesforce Marketing Cloud to send The Well and intends to continue using it with the new design.
Is there existing documentation on editorial ownership models across units?	There is not, but we will work with selected vendor to compile this.
Are there specific KPIs being targeted for the overall effort? (engagements, reduction in support issues, applications) If so, can the University share them in the RFP?	We don't have any specific KPIs.
Is a brand style guide or design system currently available?	Yes, please see https://identity.unc.edu/ .

Will the University provide photography and video, or is asset creation in scope?	You can access the University's multimedia library at https://mediagraph.io/unc .
Are analytics or user research findings on current site pain points available as part of the RFP?	We have gathered some audience information, user data and web traffic information as part of other projects and will share what we have with the selected firm. We can also provide pain points.
Is the approved base theme and component library documented for the current WordPress architecture and shareable?	We ask vendors to deliver an approved parent/base theme and component library as part of the project scope. Following our review and approval, ITS Digital Services would assume ongoing maintenance, provided the codebase and integrations meet the team's supportability standards.
Are there existing plugins, integrations, or custom code that must be retained? If so, is this documented for the current WordPress architecture and shareable?	We have a plug-in with the Alert Carolina emergency notification system that displays a banner at the top of the site when necessary. This must be retained. SSO is also required.
Does the University have standardized WordPress security requirements documented, and will they be part of the RFP process?	All vendor-developed code will require ITS security review prior to deployment. Any third-part integrations or services that collect, store or process user data may need a data governance review and risk assessment based on the data classification tier involved. Our Digital Accessibility Office will also need to review.
Does the University have documented workflows for content editorial ownership models within the current WordPress ecosystem, and will they be made available in the RFP?	We do not.
Does the University currently have a policy on artificial intelligence governance and tooling, and will it be shared in the RFP process?	AI guidelines can be found here: https://ai.unc.edu/staff-generative-ai-usage-guidance/
Does the University currently have a policy around audience segmentation and site personalization, and will it be made available in the RFP process?	Information about data use and access is available on the Data Governance website . Other applicable policies will be made available.
Should vendors plan for a discovery phase, or has discovery been completed internally? If completed internally, will it be shared in the RFP process?	We have gathered some audience information, user data and web traffic information as part of other projects and will share what we have with the selected firm.
Will the existing full site architecture documentation be available during a future RFP process?	We can provide pertinent information to the selected firm.
Are there state or University-specific procurement regulations vendors should note?	The University operates under applicable North Carolina state laws and University procurement policies. While this Request for Information (RFI) is for market research purposes only and will not result in a contract award, vendors should be generally aware that any future solicitation will include those requirements.
Do you have a timeline on when the site should go live?	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.
Will you require content migration services?	We would be interested in learning more about these services.
Will the entire .edu domain need to be migrated?	No.
Are there additional domains that need to be migrated?	No.
In regards to migration, how many different page layouts do you have	We currently have 20 templates, 53 content modules (parts) and seven blocks (also parts). It uses twig/timber as a templating engine,

on your current site?	but an approach more inline with native WordPress would be preferred.
Are you looking to change the pantheon hosting arrangement? Or do you want to stay hosting with Pantheon?	We do not plan to change the pantheon hosting arrangement. The solution should be platform agnostic.
How many developers do you have to work on templates, and other CMS-related development??	2-3
How many developers do you have to work on templates, and other CMS-related development??	2-3
How many individuals at your institution will need to use the CMS?	Currently, a team of four manages the site on a daily basis. There are also 2-3 ITS managers who regularly assist with technical changes. We have a handful of other folks who occasionally update certain features. This number is expected to grow as the University reorganizes its communications teams.
You mention WordPress as the CMS, can we recommend other CMS's? Or will you only accept bids with WordPress?	We plan to move forward only with WordPress bids.
Can you share an established budget for this project?	The University is looking for the best product available at a fair and reasonable price. Once we know the estimated cost, we can request the necessary funding.
What systems do you have that you would like integration with? Is there a priority of system integrations? What specifically would you like to integrate within these systems.	We have a plug-in with the Alert Carolina emergency notification system that displays a banner at the top of the site when necessary. This must be retained. SSO is also required. Additionally, we use Localist for our Events Calendar and would like integration to share those events on this site. Lastly, we're curious about integrations with Salesforce Marketing Cloud, our ESP.
How important is a support plan/option for you with the CMS?	In an ideal scenario, the site would be built to be flexible and future proof, minimizing the need for ongoing external support. We will have University support post-launch.
Project scope clarification: The RFI references a redesign and development of both UNC.edu and The Well, but the detailed requirements focus primarily on the newsroom functionality described for The Well. Could you clarify the intended scope of the project, specifically the extent to which the broader UNC.edu site is included beyond shared global elements such as navigation, header, footer, and related top-level pages?	The entire UNC.edu site is included in this. Newsroom functionality is a priority for us, but the University also shares key information on this site for consumers of varying interests: prospective students, faculty and staff, alumni, community members and more. We need to be able to effectively do all that.
UNC.edu content scope: To help inform cost and timeline estimates, could you provide an approximate page count or content scope for the portion of UNC.edu included in this initiative, excluding The Well?	We have not yet conducted the content audit necessary to answer this.
Architecture constraints: Page 8 references fitting within the University's current WordPress architecture and hosting constraints. If a new implementation is anticipated, should vendors still assume those existing architectural constraints apply, or is there flexibility to establish a revised implementation within the broader	Yes. If solutions demand otherwise, we'll review at that point.

ecosystem?	
Base theme clarification: The RFI notes that solutions must adhere to an approved base theme and component library. Should vendors assume that an existing base theme must be used, or is the expectation that the selected partner will establish a new base theme and component framework for approval as part of the project?	The selected partner will establish a new base theme and component framework.
Hardware and software cost expectations: The RFI requests estimated costs for hardware and software as part of the solution. Since WordPress is open source and the site is hosted on Pantheon, could you clarify what categories of hardware or software costs the Department anticipates vendors including in these estimates (for example commercial plugins, SaaS tools, search platforms, or personalization tools)?	Those examples are all apt. Any integrations that require an ongoing fee should be included and well-defined.
Brand and creative direction: The RFI emphasizes brand consistency and visual storytelling. Should vendors assume the University's existing brand standards and marketing materials will serve as the primary inputs for the design process, or is the Department open to broader creative exploration and concept development as part of the redesign?	We are refreshing the current brand guide, which will be in place for the redesign.
Stakeholder engagement model: Does the Department anticipate gathering input from a broad group of campus stakeholders as part of this initiative, or will discovery and feedback primarily involve the teams responsible for UNC.edu and The Well?	We have gathered some audience information, user data and web traffic information as part of other projects and will share what we have with the selected firm. Teams representing UNC.edu and The Well will also be highly involved in the process.
Newsletter platform: The RFI references deeper integration with newsletter distribution. Could you share what technology currently powers the University's newsletter platform(s)?	Salesforce Marketing Cloud.
Email system of record: What system serves as the source of truth for the University's centralized email lists, and how are those lists currently integrated with editorial or newsletter publishing workflows?	The University uses Salesforce Marketing Cloud. We publish a thrice-weekly newsletter through it, but it's separate from our core editorial workflow.
Current workflow integration: Is there currently any integration between The Well's publishing workflows and the University's newsletter creation or distribution tools?	There is not. We manually build the newsletter through templates in Salesforce, separate of our website publishing and distribution workflow.
Additional system integrations: Beyond Single Sign-On, are there other university systems that should be considered essential integrations for UNC.edu or The Well (for example CRM platforms, event systems, media libraries, analytics platforms, or other campus services)?	Essential integrations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert Carolina emergency banner, which receives 1.2 feed messages • Localist feeds (calendar.unc.edu) • Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager

What is the total volume of content (pages, posts, and media files) currently on www.unc.edu and The Well that is slated for migration?	We have not decided.
How many "major schools and selected units" will require their own managed sub-sites or unique landing pages under this initial contract?	Roughly 15-20.
What is the specific newsletter platform currently in use by the Department of Communications and Marketing, and what specific SSO/directory protocols are required for the email list integration?	The University uses Salesforce Marketing Cloud.
Does the University have an established WordPress component library or base theme that must be used, or is the vendor expected to develop these from scratch as part of the redesign?	We want a new theme as part of this project.
For the "Automated Content Versioning" and "Assisted Editing," does the University have a preferred AI provider (e.g., OpenAI, Azure AI) already approved for security and data privacy?	The University doesn't have a preferred AI provider for this project. Any functionality should be written to be provider-agnostic so as not to create vendor lock-in.
Which other third party tools or CRMs need to be integrated?	Essential integrations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert Carolina emergency banner, which receives 1.2 feed messages • Localist feeds (calendar.unc.edu) • Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager
Beyond the Nike Newsroom, are there specific higher education or news industry websites the University considers "best-in-class" for navigation and "low cognitive load"?	We've also looked at Texas A&M (tamu.edu and stories.tamu.edu) for inspiration.
Will the University perform its own WCAG 2.2 AA compliance testing, or must the vendor provide a third-party audit as part of the final delivery?	The University's Digital Accessibility Office will perform this review.
What is the size and technical proficiency of the internal team that will be responsible for the "distributed site ownership model"?	Our digital planning and production team is currently four people, but we expect that to grow in the coming months and possibly include others from schools/units across the university. Technical proficiency varies.
Should the TCO estimate include ongoing Pantheon hosting fees, or should it focus strictly on vendor-provided maintenance, security updates, and plugin licensing?	The estimate does not need to include ongoing Pantheon hosting fees.
While the RFI asks for "timeline estimates," does the University have a specific "go-live" target, such as the start of an academic year or a major University anniversary?	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.
The RFI focuses primarily on content workflow and operational improvements. To help vendors propose solutions that are calibrated to the right outcomes, could UNC describe how the new site should feel and perform differently from the	The key focus here is navigation. Currently, it's clunky and hard to find some of our most valuable information, as well as our stories. We want to simplify this and make for as clean a user experience as possible.

<p>current one, particularly from the perspective of its key audiences? What is working well today that should be preserved, and where is the current experience falling short? Are there specific audience behaviors or moments of friction that this project is directly intended to address?</p>	
<p>Project scope clarification: The RFI references a redesign and development of both UNC.edu and The Well, but the detailed requirements focus primarily on the newsroom functionality described for The Well. Could you clarify the intended scope of the project, specifically the extent to which the broader UNC.edu site is included beyond shared global elements such as navigation, header, footer, and related top-level pages?</p>	<p>The entire UNC.edu site is included in this. Newsroom functionality is a priority for us, but the University also shares key information on this site for consumers of varying interests: prospective students, faculty and staff, alumni, community members and more. We need to be able to effectively do all that.</p>
<p>UNC.edu content scope: To help inform cost and timeline estimates, could you provide an approximate page count or content scope for the portion of UNC.edu included in this initiative, excluding The Well?</p>	<p>We have not yet conducted the content audit necessary to answer this.</p>
<p>Implementation approach: Is the expectation that this initiative would involve a new WordPress implementation with associated content migration, or should vendors assume the project will extend and evolve the existing WordPress architecture currently supporting UNC.edu and The Well?</p>	<p>This would be a new implementation with associated content migration.</p>
<p>Architecture constraints: Page 8 references fitting within the University's current WordPress architecture and hosting constraints. If a new implementation is anticipated, should vendors still assume those existing architectural constraints apply, or is there flexibility to establish a revised implementation within the broader ecosystem?</p>	<p>Yes. If solutions demand otherwise, we'll review at that point.</p>
<p>Base theme clarification: The RFI notes that solutions must adhere to an approved base theme and component library. Should vendors assume that an existing base theme must be used, or is the expectation that the selected partner will establish a new base theme and component framework for approval as part of the project?</p>	<p>The selected partner will establish a new base theme and component framework.</p>
<p>Hardware and software cost expectations: The RFI requests estimated costs for hardware and software as part of the solution. Since WordPress is open source and the site is hosted on Pantheon, could you clarify what categories of hardware or software costs the Department anticipates vendors including in these estimates (for example commercial plugins, SaaS tools, search platforms, or personalization tools)?</p>	<p>Those examples are all apt. Any integrations that require an ongoing fee should be included and well-defined.</p>

<p>Brand and creative direction: The RFI emphasizes brand consistency and visual storytelling. Should vendors assume the University's existing brand standards and marketing materials will serve as the primary inputs for the design process, or is the Department open to broader creative exploration and concept development as part of the redesign?</p>	<p>We are refreshing the current brand guide, which will be in place for the redesign.</p>
<p>Stakeholder engagement model: Does the Department anticipate gathering input from a broad group of campus stakeholders as part of this initiative, or will discovery and feedback primarily involve the teams responsible for UNC.edu and The Well?</p>	<p>We have gathered some audience information, user data and web traffic information as part of other projects and will share what we have with the selected firm. Teams representing UNC.edu and The Well will also be highly involved in the process.</p>
<p>Newsletter platform: The RFI references deeper integration with newsletter distribution. Could you share what technology currently powers the University's newsletter platform(s)?</p>	<p>Salesforce Marketing Cloud.</p>
<p>Email system of record: What system serves as the source of truth for the University's centralized email lists, and how are those lists currently integrated with editorial or newsletter publishing workflows?</p>	<p>The University uses Salesforce Marketing Cloud. We publish a thrice-weekly newsletter through it, but it's separate from our core editorial workflow.</p>
<p>Current workflow integration: Is there currently any integration between The Well's publishing workflows and the University's newsletter creation or distribution tools?</p>	<p>There is not. We manually build the newsletter through templates in SalesForce, separate of our website publishing and distribution workflow.</p>
<p>Additional system integrations: Beyond Single Sign-On, are there other university systems that should be considered essential integrations for UNC.edu or The Well (for example CRM platforms, event systems, media libraries, analytics platforms, or other campus services)?</p>	<p>Essential integrations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alert Carolina emergency banner, which receives 1.2 feed messages • Localist feeds (calendar.unc.edu) • Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager
<p>Which newsletter platform is UNC currently using or considering? Is this an open evaluation or an integration with an existing platform?</p>	<p>The University uses Salesforce Marketing Cloud to send The Well and intends to continue using it with the new design.</p>
<p>What CRM system will be used to collect converted users?</p>	<p>This is not determined.</p>
<p>What external system integrations will be required? (profile databases, calendar systems, etc.)</p>	<p>We have a plug-in with the Alert Carolina emergency notification system that displays a banner at the top of the site when necessary. This must be retained. SSO is also required. Additionally, we use Localist for our Events Calendar and would like integration to share those events on this site. Lastly, we're curious about integrations with Salesforce Marketing Cloud, our ESP.</p>
<p>For SSO-connected email list distribution: which directory/identity system is in use (e.g., Shibboleth, Microsoft Entra)?</p>	<p>Shibboleth.</p>
<p>Who will own governance of the component library and approved templates after launch -- a central web team, Communications and Marketing, or IT?</p>	<p>The web planning and production team at University Communications and Marketing and the ITS Digital Services team will have ownership.</p>

What is the anticipated size and technical capability of the internal team that will manage the platform post-launch?	There are currently four members of the web planning and production team at University Communications and Marketing, but we expect that to grow in the coming months. Several partners across campus will also assist. Technical capability for them varies. There will also be 2-3 developers from ITS Digital Services who will assist.
Is the news story content you hope to easily integrate, personalize and reformat going to be only entered in the new CMS? (or will stories come from other sites as well?)	Yes, it should only be entered in the new site.
Can you expand on the content syndication model you envision? Will it be confined to the new gateway and The Well site, or connect to other sites?	It will be confined within this single UNC.edu site. The Well will be a page within that site. Our goal is to have all news stories/content centrally located in this one place.
Does The Well have its own editorial team and content workflow, or does it share staff and process with the main unc.edu communications team	Staff from the marketing and communications team work across channels to share stories. There is a editorial team responsible for creating content on unc.edu and The Well.
Approximately how many pages, templates, and content types exist on the current www.unc.edu ? Is a content audit planned, or is that expected from the vendor?	We will conduct a content audit to determine our migration plan.
Is migration of existing content in scope, or does UNC plan to start fresh with new content on the new platform?	We will migrate some existing content.
Who is responsible for content migration if it is in scope -- UNC staff, the vendor, or a combination?	We have not decided.
Is there an anticipated budget range vendors should use when preparing cost and timeline estimates?	The University is looking for the best product available at a fair and reasonable price. Once we know the estimated cost, we can request the necessary funding.
Is there a target launch date or fiscal year constraint driving the project timeline?	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.
What criteria will determine whether this RFI leads to a formal solicitation, and is there an anticipated timeline for that process?	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.
Will all RFI respondents be considered for a follow-on RFP, or will UNC shortlist respondents prior to issuing a formal solicitation?	All RFI respondents will be considered for a follow-on RFP.
For the Response (7.0) section on page 3, the RFI notes the first requirement as "1. Executed RFI". Is the vendor required to complete the Execution form at the bottom of page 1 for this requirement?	Yes
Is the vendor required to include a completed eVP Number Form with our RFI response?	Yes
Would UNC share the estimated period of performance for the scope of work (SOW) noted in the RFI?	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.
Is on-going maintenance support a part of the SOW that should be included in the cost estimate? If so, for how many years?	In an ideal scenario, the site would be built to be flexible and future proof, minimizing the need for ongoing external support. We'd like to have functionality that subscribes to WordPress coding standards so

	there is always a shared language among developers. There may be value in a short period of post-launch support, but not long term.
Does the SOW include periodic admin training?	We'd be interested in options for training pre-launch, but not after.
Are there any details on specific user roles and permissions with regard to the SOW that can be shared?	Those will be shared with the selected partner.
Does the SOW include migrating any content or data from the existing sites hosted on Pantheon?	Yes.
How many sites/subdomains and pages are included in this SOW? For instance, does the SOW include sites like https://gradschool.unc.edu/admissions/ , https://global.unc.edu/ , or https://studentaid.unc.edu/ ?	The SOW includes the unc.edu domain, not subdomains.
Is this a single site or a multisite currently? Is there a preference on this in the future?	This is currently one site, a single install of WordPress. We prefer to keep this moving forward.
Will each department manage its own pages, or will this be managed by a webmaster?	Some departments will manage their own pages. Other pages are maintained by the central team.
Is there a CRM tool, or other centralized 3rd party tools outside of the newsletter platform mentioned in the SOW, which need to be integrated with calendar events, form submissions, etc.?	We use a Localist-powered events calendar that we'd like to have some integration with.
Would UNC share which system it uses for its centralized email lists?	Email lists are in Salesforce.
Would you provide the current website wireframe to better understand the website's structure, layout, and content placement?	This will be shared with the selected partner.
Will the content (e.g. videos, images, text, etc.) be created by the vendor or will UNC provide the content?	UNC will provide the content.
Is UNC planning to use the current brand guide for the websites or will a new brand guide be created prior to the redesign of the websites?	UNC will provide the content.
Will the vendor have the opportunity to introduce new ideas for branding?	We need to follow the brand identity guidelines on identity.unc.edu , but are open to interpretations of that.
Does the SOW include hosting all of the websites and should the vendor include this in the cost estimate? If so, will this be on WordPress?	No, the site is hosted on campus.
What is the vision for integrating sites like The Well into unc.edu? Should it remain a distinct experience within unc.edu? Should it retain its current URL?	The Well is a page/section on UNC.edu -- it should be entirely integrated and follow the same brand standards. We would like to retain the current URL.
Approximately how many sites, including sub-sites, should vendors assume are in-scope for this initiative at launch and post-launch?	Just one.
Do any of the units/schools currently follow the desired managed sub-site structure? (e.g. https://civiclifef.unc.edu/) If so, what is currently lacking from this experience that the University would like to address?	Sub-sites like https://civiclifef.unc.edu are not in scope for this project.

Does the University have a target timeline or institutional milestone driving this initiative?	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.
What level of content strategy support is expected? Should vendors assume full information architecture redesign for unc.edu and The Well landing page, or primarily a redesign of templates, navigation, and UX within the existing structure?	We are curious about recommendations for information architecture.
Is the University satisfied with the current article taxonomy? Will the desired "interest topics" be net new or leverage existing categorization?	We are curious about recommendations for information architecture. We will define "interest topics."
Approximately how many schools or units are expected to have sub-sites within the platform upon launch? To what extent are school/unit representatives expected to be consulted during the creation of the pre-approved, branded templates?	Sub-sites are not in scope for this project.
Please provide examples of the desired design customizations on school/unit sub-sites. (For example, would school/unit sites have the same colors/theme? Are you expecting multiple themes/templates for schools/units to choose from? Or would customizations be limited to block arrangement within a single theme?)	The school/unit sites should have the same colors/themes, but multiple templates and modules to choose from. Limiting to block arrangement within a single theme is correct.
Please provide examples of the desired integration between site content and newsletter platform. What is the team currently missing?	We're curious about options for a more streamlined newsletter production process. Are there ways to send content directly to SalesForces to populate in a pre-built template?
Could you confirm that our understanding is accurate? Currently unc.edu and The Well is its own WordPress installation and the goal is to integrate unc.edu and The Well into the existing campus-wide WordPress architecture that currently supports 5,000 sites.	We plan to keep UNC.edu and The Well as a single site separate from other large networks on campus.
Are there existing integrations already in place for SSO, directory services, or newsletter platforms that vendors should assume will remain? Please list current integrations and indicate if they are expected to remain.	SSO is currently integrated and should remain.
Is the University open to AI-enabled editorial tooling integrated directly within WordPress, or would AI-assisted workflows need to operate through external services or APIs?	Any functionality created in WordPress around AI assistance should use the Abilities API. When using this API to interface with AI models, the code should be agnostic.
Are there institutional guidelines or policies governing the use of AI in content production or editorial workflows?	AI guidelines can be found here: https://ai.unc.edu/staff-generative-ai-usage-guidance/
What tool currently powers site search?	Site Kit by Google. Creating a smoother navigation process may also help offset issues with our search tool.
Please provide a list of all URLs that are included in the scope.	Unc.edu
What roles on the core web team might be involved in managing this project?	This project involves both the ITS Digital Services team and University Communications and Marketing editorial and web team,

	with support from the Digital Accessibility Office.
Can you elaborate on the desired level of autonomy the core team might have on the project? Specifically, the ability to make project decisions/approvals and if multiple levels stakeholder involvement should be considered within the timeline?	Expect the leadership of the communications and marketing team to be very involved in the beginning to set the vision and then check in at major decision points. The core team can manage day-to-day decisions.
What are your hopes and expectations for a vendor lead discovery phase and development of a website strategy?	We have gathered some audience information, user data and web traffic information as part of other projects and will share what we have with the selected firm. We would like to expedite the discovery phase process.
Is UNC Chapel Hill interested in staying with WordPress as the CMS?	Yes, the University will continue to use WordPress.
Please share information about the theme UNC Chapel Hill utilizes.	We currently have a custom theme built when the current site launched in 2018.
Is UNC Chapel Hill interested in a different OpenSource or a proprietary CMS? If so, do technology preferences exist?	No, we plan to stay with WordPress.
What specific qualities are you looking for in an agency partner?	Communication, collaboration and authority. We hope our partner is easy to be in touch with, and who also can speak to people who work on a variety of teams and roles – editorial, web production, IT, visuals, leadership, etc. We hope they see this as a true collaboration and partnership, where we can reach the desired outcome together. Lastly, we don't know what we don't know. We're hoping to lean on the partner's expertise and advice for much of this process.
Will web guidelines for the brand be provided to the winning bidder?	Current web guidelines are available, but we will create new ones based on the redesign. https://identity.unc.edu/content/websites/
Will copywriting be needed by the selected agency partner?	No.
Do you need help with content strategy and governance?	No.
Could ranges be provided for various phases of the project?	The University is looking for the best product available at a fair and reasonable price. Once we know the estimated cost, we can request the necessary funding.
Which department(s) are primarily responsible for the website?	The website is managed by the University Communications and Marketing web and editorial team, with technical support from the ITS Digital Services team.
Can you provide examples of higher education websites or even those outside of higher ed that you aspire to / favor and why?	The design and user experience should mirror the principles of a premium digital newsroom, specifically using the Nike Newsroom as a guide. Written stories will be accompanied by dynamic photo galleries and occasionally video. These stories should be easy for users to find and for editors to distribute across channels.
Do you have a separate intranet and/or portal for current students? Is that outside the scope of this redesign?	This is not in scope for this project.
What is the University's target launch date or desired timeline for the redesigned unc.edu and The Well? Is there a phased rollout expectation (e.g., discovery/design phase,	There's no hard timeline or milestone driving this project. We would like to aim to have a new site launch within 12 months after the contract is awarded, but it will depend on the scope of the final project.

<p>development, content migration, QA/launch), and if so, are there any hard deadlines tied to university events or academic calendar milestones?</p>	
<p>Can the Department provide an estimated budget range or ceiling for this project, including both initial implementation and ongoing annual maintenance? Understanding even a broad range would help vendors propose solutions that are appropriately scoped</p>	<p>The University is looking for the best product available at a fair and reasonable price. Once we know the estimated cost, we can request the necessary funding.</p>
<p>Beyond the initial redesign and build, what is the University's expectation for ongoing support? Specifically, is there a separate budget or contract anticipated for post-launch maintenance, hosting optimization on Pantheon, AI/SaaS tooling subscriptions, and iterative feature development?</p>	<p>This is dependent on the solution. We're curious about what maintenance options look like.</p>
<p>Is the Department open to a vendor that specializes purely in the foundational discovery, UX research, and strategic prototyping phases, or does the University strictly require a single vendor to handle both the strategy and the technical WordPress development/system architecture?</p>	<p>We would prefer a single vendor but open to options.</p>
<p>Beyond "modernization," what is the single most important behavior you want a visitor to take on the new unc.edu? E.g., Is it an increase in high-quality undergraduate applications, donor engagement, public perception of state-wide impact?</p>	<p>The single most important thing is a visitor being able to find the information about Carolina they need and leave the site knowing both what Carolina stands for and its value across the state and beyond.</p>
<p>With the "First. And For All." campaign, how much "creative friction" is the University willing to tolerate? Are you looking for a safe evolution of the current brand, or a disruptive digital identity that sets a new standard for higher education?</p>	<p>We are open to all ideas. The University is working toward a stronger, more aligned brand identity across all units, and this site would be the standard for that. First. And For All. Is a multi-year campaign we'd like to build on, but we're curious about our options.</p>
<p>How do you define the distinct "user state of mind" for someone visiting unc.edu (functional/navigational) versus The Well (narrative/emotional)? Are you open to these being two distinct UX architectures, or must they share a unified framework?</p>	<p>We are open to options here to best accomplish all site goals.</p>
<p>The RFI mentions needing to reach a diverse set of consumers, including prospective students, researchers, faculty, and alumni. Has the University already conducted foundational user research on these specific groups, or should vendors include comprehensive discovery methods—such as in-depth interviews, ethnography, and participatory design—in their proposed scope to inform the new intuitive navigation Will the University facilitate access to key user groups for ethnographic</p>	<p>We have gathered some audience information, user data and web traffic information as part of other projects and will share what we have with the selected firm.</p>

shadowing (specifically prospective first-generation students, rural NC residents, and global research partners)?	
While WCAG 2.1 AA is the standard, is the University aiming for "Beyond Compliance" (e.g., neurodiversity-friendly design, low-bandwidth optimization for rural areas)?	We are aiming for WCAG 2.2 AA.
To achieve the "distributed site ownership model", what is the current internal governance structure, and how siloed are the unit-level managers currently? Will the vendor be expected to lead stakeholder engagement and change management to ensure adoption of this collaborative creative process?	The unit-level managers are siloed and manage their own sites right now, independent of the central team. That is changing across the next several months. We hope to integrate that process and content strategy more. We don't expect the vendor to lead stakeholder engagement and change management for that part of the process.
Who are the primary "internal users" (content creators) for The Well? We need to understand the current bottlenecks in their workflow to ensure the new CMS doesn't just look better, but actually empowers faster storytelling.	We have a small web planning and production team that builds most of the content on UNC.edu and The Well. We expect to grow this team across the next year.
The University desires a premium digital newsroom experience that expands beyond traditional news to foster an "emotional connection" with the audience. How is the Department currently measuring empathy and emotional engagement, and what qualitative metrics or human-centric evidence will define a successful user experience for this redesign?	We're hoping to improve this. We recently conducted a brand awareness survey that measured much of this, but are discussing how to keep doing that moving forward.
Regarding the goal of utilizing AI to enhance content creation and personalize user feeds, does the University expect the vendor to prototype and test these new workflows directly with your internal editorial and digital production teams?	Any functionality created in WordPress around AI assistance should be created using the Abilities API, with agnostic code. The vendor should work directly with the project team and UNC data governance teams on this aspect.
Are there specific "immovable objects" (e.g., ConnectCarolina, legacy directory systems, or specific database back-ends) that the new front-end must integrate with seamlessly?	There should be design and integration for our Alert Carolina banner. We'd also like to ensure some level of functionality with our Localist-powered university events calendar.
Does the University have an internal team prepared to maintain the design system post-launch, or are you looking for a long-term strategic partnership for iterative optimization?	In an ideal scenario, the site would be built to be flexible and future proof, minimizing the need for ongoing external support. We will be working with our Digital Services team on support afterward. We'd like to have functionality that subscribes to WordPress coding standards so there is always a shared language among developers. There may be value in a short period of post-launch support. We are curious for those options.