

	Question	Response
1	<p>Budget - In order to better evaluate scope requirements, please provide approved budget or budget range for this project (new CMS, Hosting, Web Redesign, Content Migration, etc.). This will give us a better idea of what we can do to meet your needs, and help us determine the timeline we can complete it in.</p>	<p>This project is for the creation of a new website for College of The Albemarle (COA), which includes comprehensive website development. The scope encompasses all aspects of building a new site, such as design, development, implementation of a new content management system (CMS), secure hosting, content migration, integration with third-party systems, accessibility compliance, and training for COA staff. As outlined in the RFP, we are seeking a modern, fully responsive, ADA-compliant website built on an intuitive CMS, with robust security and integration features.</p> <p>At this time, COA has not established or published a specific budget range for this new website project. Instead, we are relying on competitive proposals from qualified vendors to help us determine the most fiscally responsible approach. We request that vendors provide their most competitive pricing based on the requirements and specifications detailed in the RFP, including itemized costs for all relevant components (development, CMS, hosting, content migration, training, support, etc.).</p> <p>Cost is an important factor in our evaluation, but will be considered alongside technical merit, security and compliance, vendor experience, and other criteria as described in the RFP. We encourage vendors to be transparent in their pricing and to propose solutions that deliver the best value to COA.</p> <p>Please provide a detailed and itemized quote for the full scope of new website development as specified in the RFP. We reserve the right to negotiate and select the proposal that best meets COA's needs and budgetary constraints.</p>

2	<p>Timeline – What is your anticipated timeline for the project? Do you have a hard deadline for launching the new site? CMS – Your current cms is Drupal 7. Are you considering moving to a new one and why?</p>	<p><u>Timeline:</u></p> <p>College of The Albemarle (COA) does not have a hard deadline for launching the new website. However, our goal is to have the new site fully developed, tested, and launched within one year of contract award. We expect vendors to propose a realistic project plan with clear milestones and deliverables, and to identify any factors that could impact the schedule. Proposals should include a detailed timeline for each phase of the project, including planning, design, development, content migration, testing, training, and launch, as outlined in the RFP.</p> <p><u>Current CMS (Drupal 7) and Future Direction:</u></p> <p>Our current website is built on Drupal 7, an open-source content management system that has served us for many years. However, Drupal 7 will reach its official end of life on January 5, 2025, meaning it will no longer receive security updates or official support from the Drupal community. Continuing to use Drupal 7 after this date poses significant security and maintenance risks, as vulnerabilities will not be patched and technical support will become increasingly difficult to obtain.</p> <p>Given these factors, COA is open to proposals that include either migration to a newer version of Drupal (such as Drupal 11) or to a different CMS platform that better meets our needs for usability, accessibility, security, and long-term sustainability. We encourage vendors to recommend the CMS platform they believe will provide the best value and functionality for COA, and to clearly articulate the benefits and trade-offs of their proposed solution.</p>
3	<p>CMS - Have you demoed any CMS solutions over the last 12 months? If so, which ones.</p>	<p>College of The Albemarle (COA) has not conducted any formal demonstrations of CMS solutions over the last 12 months. However, we have reviewed and explored the websites of other institutions to assess</p>

		design approaches, features, and user experience, but we have not participated in any live or vendor-led CMS demos during this period.
4	CMS - Do you have a preference for open source or proprietary CMS solutions?	<p>College of The Albemarle (COA) is leaning toward an open source content management system (CMS) for this project. Our preference is based on several key factors that align with our institutional needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cost-effectiveness: Open source CMS platforms, such as WordPress and Drupal, typically have no licensing fees and offer a more affordable solution, which is especially important for institutions with limited budgets. ● Flexibility and Customization: Open source CMSs allow for extensive customization and integration with other systems, enabling us to tailor the website to our specific requirements and workflows. ● Community Support and Regular Updates: Open source platforms benefit from active developer communities that provide ongoing updates, security patches, and a wealth of shared resources and best practices. ● Ease of Use: Many open source CMS options are designed to be user-friendly, making it easier for non-technical staff to manage and update content, which is critical for our decentralized content management needs. ● Scalability and Integration: Open source solutions are scalable and can support multiple subdomains, microsites, and integrations with third-party systems common in higher education environments. ● Transparency and Digital Sovereignty: Open source software provides greater control over our data and system architecture, reducing risks of vendor lock-in and ensuring long-term sustainability.

		<p>While we are open to reviewing all proposals, we encourage vendors to focus on open source CMS options that meet the technical, security, accessibility, and usability requirements outlined in our RFP. We also welcome recommendations on which open source platform would best serve COA's current and future needs.</p>
5	<p>Has any research/discovery been completed on the website in the last 24 months?</p>	<p>In the past 24 months, College of The Albemarle (COA) has not conducted a formal or comprehensive research or discovery phase for the website project. However, we did undertake a limited internal effort: a small group of stakeholders completed surveys focused on select web pages to gather feedback on user-friendliness and potential improvements. This activity was narrow in scope, targeted only specific pages, and did not include broader usability studies, stakeholder interviews, analytics reviews, or a structured assessment of the website as a whole.</p> <p>As outlined in the RFP, COA is seeking a vendor-led discovery process as part of the website redesign and redevelopment project. We expect the selected vendor to conduct a thorough and inclusive discovery phase, which may include stakeholder engagement, user needs assessment, content and usability audits, and technical analysis. This will help ensure the new website meets the needs of all our audiences and aligns with best practices in higher education web design.</p> <p>Additionally, vendors have flexibility in their proposals, as described in the RFP. You may propose different implementation models (e.g., turnkey or COA-assisted), and your discovery approach can be tailored accordingly. Please outline in your proposal how you would approach discovery, including any recommended activities or deliverables, so that we can evaluate the best fit for COA's needs and project goals.</p>

6	<p>Are you interested in completing qualitative or quantitative analysis to inform the designs and user experience as a part of the Website Redesign Project? Analysis items may include user focus groups, surveys, heatmaps, engagement review of the current site, audience-based navigation, and content review, and/or online user experience recordings.</p>	<p>COA is open to both qualitative and quantitative analysis as part of the Website Redesign Project, including methods such as user focus groups, surveys, heatmaps, engagement reviews, audience-based navigation studies, content reviews, and online user experience recordings. We recognize the value of these approaches in informing design and user experience decisions.</p> <p>However, we believe that one of the key purposes of this RFP process is to leverage the expertise of vendors and give them the opportunity to recommend the research and analysis strategies they feel will best address our goals and challenges. Rather than prescribing specific methods, we encourage vendors to propose a discovery and research approach-qualitative, quantitative, or a combination-that they believe will most effectively inform the project and deliver value to COA, based on their experience and understanding of our needs as outlined in the RFP.</p> <p>Please include in your proposal your recommended approach to research and discovery, the rationale behind your methods, and how your analysis will support the design and user experience objectives for the new website. We look forward to reviewing your suggestions and selecting a partner whose methodology and vision align with our institutional goals.</p>
7	<p>Content Strategy - Are you interested in having the chosen vendor provide a Content Strategy that would include a content audit of your high-level pages to help determine what pages to move to the new website, what content is missing, organization of content, what content needs to be edited, etc?</p>	<p>COA recognizes that a well-defined content strategy-including a content audit of high-level pages, content mapping, gap analysis, and recommendations for editing, organizing, or migrating content-is critical to the success of any website redesign. However, rather than prescribing a specific approach, we are seeking a vendor partner who can guide us on the best practices and methodologies for content strategy based on their expertise and our project goals.</p> <p>We are open to the vendor providing a comprehensive content strategy as part of the project, which may include a content audit, assessment of what</p>

		<p>content should be migrated, identification of content gaps, recommendations for new content, and guidance on organization and editing. We encourage vendors to propose the approach and level of content strategy support they believe will deliver the best results for COA, as well as to outline how they would collaborate with our team during this process.</p> <p>Please include in your proposal your recommended approach to content strategy and audit, the rationale for your methods, and how this work will inform the design and user experience of the new website. We look forward to your expert recommendations and a collaborative process that ensures our new website is streamlined, user-focused, and aligned with COA's mission.</p>
8	<p>Content Development - Will the chosen vendor be responsible for writing new content or copyediting existing website content? If so, in order to provide an accurate quote, how many pages of content should the chosen vendor plan to:</p> <p>i. Copywrite (provide new content)</p> <p>ii. Copy edit existing content</p>	<p>COA anticipates that the chosen vendor will assist with content migration as appropriate for the new website, ensuring that existing content is effectively transferred and organized within the new site structure. Our internal team plans to take the lead on developing any new content (copywriting), but we may require the vendor's assistance with copyediting existing content and providing guidance on best practices for web content and page organization.</p> <p>We encourage vendors to outline in their proposals how they would support content migration, copyediting, and any additional content strategy services, and to include itemized pricing for these services as part of their cost proposal.</p> <p>Ultimately, we are seeking a partner who can recommend the best approach for content development and migration based on their expertise and our project goals, as outlined in the RFP. If additional copywriting</p>

		<p>support becomes necessary, we will work with the selected vendor to define the scope and adjust the project plan and pricing accordingly.</p> <p>ii. Copy edit existing content</p> <p>383 General Pages, 298 News Pages, 51 Program Pages, 23 Noncredit Pages (755 Total)</p>
9	<p>Do you have a set of User/Audience Personas defined? Or would you like to include Audience Persona Strategy/Creation as part of the redesign discovery process?</p>	<p>COA does not currently have a formal set of user or audience personas defined for our website. We recognize that understanding and addressing the needs of our diverse audiences is critical to a successful redesign. As such, we are open to including audience persona strategy and creation as part of the discovery process if the selected vendor recommends it.</p> <p>Consistent with the purpose of this RFP, we are seeking a vendor who can guide us on best practices for discovery, research, and content strategy- including whether to develop user/audience personas, and if so, how best to approach this work. We encourage vendors to propose a discovery methodology that may include qualitative and quantitative research methods (such as user focus groups, surveys, analytics review, and content analysis) to inform persona development and ensure the new website meets the needs of all key user groups.</p> <p>Additionally, as described in the RFP, vendors have flexibility in how they respond and may submit proposals for:</p> <p>Consulting and Design (vendor provides consulting services and executes the redesign)</p> <p>Design Only (COA provides consultation and project management, vendor executes the design)</p>

		<p>Turnkey Solution (vendor handles full design, implementation, and content transfer)</p> <p>COA-Assisted Implementation (COA staff participate in content transfer and data migration)</p> <p>We welcome your recommendations on the most effective strategies for audience research and persona development, and ask that you outline in your proposal how you would approach understanding and defining our audiences as part of your proposed discovery process. Please also indicate which implementation model(s) your proposal addresses, as COA will consider all compliant submissions in accordance with the options outlined in the RFP.</p>
10	<p>Content migration – Will the vendor be responsible for migrating content from the existing website or will you be handling that migration?</p> <p>a. Please provide estimated number of pages to be migrated</p>	<p>Content migration is an expected component of this website redesign project, as outlined in the RFP. We anticipate that the selected vendor will play a significant role in supporting content migration from our existing website to the new platform. The level of vendor involvement may vary depending on the implementation model proposed. As described in the RFP, vendors have the option to propose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Turnkey Solution, where the vendor handles the full design, implementation, and content transfer/migration. • A COA-Assisted Implementation, where COA staff participate in content transfer and data migration, with the vendor providing guidance, tools, and support. <p>We are seeking vendors' recommendations on the most effective and efficient approach to content migration, including strategies for inventorying, auditing, and prioritizing content, as well as ensuring quality and accuracy throughout the process. We expect the vendor to provide a clear migration plan as part of their proposal.</p>

		<p>We encourage vendors to outline in their proposals how they would approach content migration, including any tools or processes they recommend, and to include itemized pricing for migration services based on the different implementation models.</p> <p>Please refer to the RFP for additional details and options for your proposal. COA will consider all compliant submissions and select the approach that best fits our needs and resources.</p> <p>Estimated # of pages to be migrated:</p> <p>383 General Pages, 298 News Pages, 51 Program Pages, 23 Noncredit Pages (755 Total)</p>
11	Will College of the Albemarle provide the new information architecture for the website or will the vendor?	<p>COA does not have a finalized information architecture for the new website. As outlined in our RFP, we are seeking a vendor who can guide us on best practices and, if selected, lead the development of the new information architecture as part of the redesign process. We anticipate this will include discovery activities, stakeholder engagement, and user research to ensure the site structure best meets the needs of our audiences. COA will provide input and any existing documentation to support this process, but we expect the vendor to recommend and deliver the new information architecture as part of their overall solution.</p>
12	Design - Which websites (both inside and outside of higher education) do you look to for inspiration?	<p>COA has intentionally chosen not to provide a list of specific websites for design inspiration as part of this RFP. We believe the purpose of this process is to leverage the creativity, expertise, and industry knowledge of prospective vendors. We encourage you to recommend design directions, features, and user experience strategies that you believe will best serve our audiences and support our institutional mission, based on your</p>

		<p>understanding of our requirements and your experience with similar projects.</p> <p>As outlined in the RFP, vendors have flexibility in how they approach the project and may propose different models or solutions. We look forward to seeing a range of innovative ideas and approaches as part of your proposal.</p>
13	<p>What types of templates do you anticipate requiring for the redesign? Our standard offering generally consists of templates for homepage, landing page, standard/interior page, and degree/program listing & detail page.</p>	<p>We anticipate needing templates for the following page types as part of the redesign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homepage • Landing pages (for major departments or initiatives) • Standard/interior content pages • Degree/program listing and detail pages • Student service areas (such as admissions, financial aid, and advising) • News listing and news detail pages • Faculty/Staff Directory • Calendar • Contact forms • FAQ pages <p>These templates are essential for delivering a consistent, user-friendly, and accessible experience across our site. We are also open to your recommendations for any additional templates or content types that would further enhance usability, engagement, or operational efficiency based on your experience with similar projects and best practices in higher education web design</p>
14	<p>Do you need to have any of the following templates as part of your main scope of work:</p>	<p>Yes, as part of the main scope of work, we require templates for the following:</p>

	<p>a. News listing page and news detail page?</p> <p>b. Faculty/Staff Directory?</p> <p>c. Calendar?</p> <p>d. Other Templates?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News listing page and news detail page • Faculty/Staff Directory • Calendar • Contact forms • FAQ pages <p>These templates are essential to ensure a consistent, user-friendly, and accessible experience for our key content areas. We expect the vendor to design and implement these templates within the new CMS, following best practices for higher education websites, including mobile responsiveness, accessibility (WCAG 2.1 AA), and intuitive navigation.</p> <p>We also welcome recommendations for any additional templates or content types that would enhance usability, engagement, or operational efficiency based on your experience with similar projects.</p> <p>Please include in your proposal how you will approach the design and development of these templates, as well as any suggestions for further template needs that align with COA's goals and user groups.</p>
15	<p>How are you managing your current faculty/staff directory? With the redesign, will the directory stay as-is? Or, will it be managed within the CMS?</p>	<p>Currently, our faculty/staff directory is managed outside of the CMS and does not provide the level of usability or functionality we desire. With the website redesign, we plan to overhaul the directory and manage it directly within the new CMS. Our goal is to create a modern, user-friendly directory that enables intuitive search and filtering, consistent design, and easy maintenance.</p> <p>Specifically, we are aiming to replicate the design and functionality of Wake Tech's faculty/staff directory, which we view as a strong example of an effective and accessible directory for higher education. We are interested in features such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search and filter options by name, department, or campus

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual profile pages for faculty and staff with contact information, photos, and biographical details • A consistent, mobile-friendly layout • The ability for designated staff to update their own profiles (as appropriate) • Integration with external data sources if needed for automation or data consistency <p>We expect the selected vendor to recommend and implement a directory solution within the new CMS that meets these goals and aligns with best practices for usability, accessibility, and maintainability. Please include in your proposal your recommended approach, relevant experience, and any additional features you suggest for maximizing the value and user experience of the COA faculty/staff directory.</p>
16	How are you managing the calendar on your current website? With the redesign, will the calendar stay as-is? Or, will it be managed within the CMS?	<p>Our current website calendar meets our basic needs, and we are not opposed to continuing its use if it remains the best fit. However, as part of this redesign, we are open to exploring more robust or integrated calendar solutions that may offer greater functionality, improved user experience, and easier content management. We recognize that higher education institutions benefit from centralized, easily managed, and mobile-friendly calendar tools that support event categorization, filtering, and integration with other campus systems.</p> <p>We encourage vendors to recommend a calendar solution-whether that means enhancing our current setup, integrating a third-party tool, or leveraging CMS-native calendar features-that best aligns with COA's needs and the technical requirements outlined in the RFP. Key factors we are interested in include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of use and management for staff across departments • Integration with the CMS and other platforms as needed

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User-friendly event submission, approval workflows, and categorization • Mobile responsiveness and accessibility • Customization to match COA's branding and organizational structure • Features such as event filtering, search, and personalized content for different audiences <p>Please outline in your proposal your recommended approach for calendar management, including any third-party solutions you suggest, integration strategies, and how your proposed solution will enhance both the administrative process and the end-user experience.</p>
17	<p>Would you please elaborate on the legacy databases being used and any 3rd party services that will need to be integrated into the site?</p> <p>Please note if these are external links to 3rd party sites or if they will need to be integrated into the new website.</p>	<p>Possible integrations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regroup • Element 451 • Facebook • Twitter • Instagram • LinkedIn • CareerCoach
18	<p>What are your expectations for Google Analytics in terms of consulting and migration to the new site?</p> <p>a. Have you implemented GA4?</p> <p>b. Do you need vendor to setup GA or will vendor be using existing setup?</p>	<p>COA has not yet implemented Google Analytics 4 (GA4) on our website. As part of this redesign project, we expect the selected vendor to provide consulting and support for properly setting up GA4 from the ground up. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and implementing a full GA4 migration, not simply relying on Google's automated or default setup, to ensure all tracking and reporting aligns with COA's goals and requirements. • Defining and configuring key metrics, events, and conversions that are relevant to our audiences and institutional objectives.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting up event tracking, custom reports, and dashboards tailored to our needs and ensuring data accuracy throughout the process. • Consulting on best practices for analytics in higher education, including strategies for measuring engagement, supporting content strategy, and informing ongoing site improvements. • Ensuring the new GA4 implementation is fully integrated with the redesigned website and any relevant third-party platforms or tools. <p>We will rely on the vendor's expertise to recommend a measurement plan, configure GA4, and train our team on using the new analytics environment. Please include in your proposal your approach to GA4 migration, your process for defining and configuring analytics, and any ongoing support you provide for analytics optimization and reporting.</p>
19	<p>Can you describe the SEO efforts taken on your site so far?</p> <p>What is your current SEO strategy?</p>	<p>Our current SEO efforts have been limited and largely informal. We have not implemented a comprehensive or institution-wide SEO strategy. Most optimization to date has been handled on an as-needed basis, such as entering basic metadata, adjusting keyword placement, and using the Yoast SEO plugin for select pages. There has not been a coordinated approach to technical SEO, content strategy, site structure, or analytics-driven optimization.</p> <p>We recognize that effective SEO for higher education websites involves a holistic and ongoing strategy-including technical SEO, on-page optimization, content development, local SEO, mobile responsiveness, and regular performance monitoring. As part of this website redesign project, we are seeking vendor expertise and recommendations on best practices and current trends in higher education SEO, such as optimizing for mobile, leveraging AI tools, improving site speed, developing keyword-rich and locally relevant content, and integrating analytics for continuous improvement.</p>

		We look forward to your proposed SEO strategy and recommendations tailored to the needs and goals of COA as part of your response to this RFP.
20	SSO Integration – Is the SSO integration related to the CMS only or are there specific parts of the site which require SSO?	<p>At this time, COA does not have specific public-facing pages identified that require SSO protection. However, we would like the CMS administrative interface to support SSO integration, ideally allowing our staff to use their existing Active Directory (AD) accounts to access the CMS admin pages. This will streamline authentication for site administrators and enhance security by leveraging our institutional identity provider.</p> <p>We are open to vendor recommendations regarding SSO for other areas of the site if you identify additional use cases or best practices during discovery. Please outline in your proposal your approach to integrating SSO with the CMS admin area, including supported protocols (such as SAML, OAuth, or OpenID Connect).</p>
21	Hosting – Who is your current hosting provider, or do you maintain it on-premises?	WP Engine is currently hosting our web server
22	Hosting - Is hosting of the production web server part of this project scope	<p>Yes, hosting of the production web server is part of the project scope. The selected vendor will be fully responsible for providing secure, reliable, and scalable hosting for the new COA website. This includes all necessary server resources, operating system updates, security patches, and the implementation and maintenance of appropriate cybersecurity software and protocols. COA will not host the website or any related infrastructure on premise.</p> <p>As outlined in the RFP, vendors should propose a cloud-based hosting solution that meets the requirements for performance, uptime, security, compliance, and disaster recovery. The hosting environment must be U.S.-based and comply with all relevant North Carolina and State IT security</p>

		<p>standards, including SOC 2 or ISO 27001 certification, daily backups, and robust incident response capabilities.</p> <p>Please include in your proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended hosting architecture and specifications (CPUs, RAM, storage, bandwidth, etc.) based on your solution. • Details on operating system (Linux or Windows), security measures, and update/maintenance processes. • Information about cybersecurity tools and practices included in your hosting environment. • Any relevant certifications or third-party assessment reports (e.g., SOC 2, ISO 27001, FedRAMP). • Service level agreements (SLAs) for uptime, support, and incident response. <p>COA will rely on the vendor's expertise to recommend and deliver the most effective hosting solution for a modern, accessible, and highly secure college website. No on-premise hosting will be provided or supported by COA.</p>
23	<p>Hosting – If hosting is part of the scope for this response, please provide the following for the web server:</p> <p>a. Current CPUs</p> <p>b. RAM GB</p> <p>c. Disk GB</p> <p>d. Data Transfer / Bandwidth GB</p> <p>e. Operating System – Windows or Linux</p>	<p>The College of The Albemarle will not be utilizing any on-premise servers for this project. As outlined in the RFP, we are seeking a secure, cloud-based hosting solution as part of the website redesign. We expect vendors to recommend and provide the most appropriate hosting environment-including server specifications, architecture, and operating system-based on their proposed solution, best practices for higher education, and the needs described in the RFP.</p> <p>We do not have predetermined requirements for CPUs, RAM, disk space, bandwidth, or operating system. Instead, we ask vendors to specify the recommended hosting configuration (including CPUs, RAM, disk storage,</p>

		<p>bandwidth, and whether the environment is Linux or Windows-based) that will ensure optimal performance, security, scalability, and compliance for a modern, accessible, and highly available college website.</p> <p>Please include in your proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended server specifications (CPUs, RAM, disk, bandwidth, etc.) for your solution • Rationale for your hosting architecture and technology choices • Details on security certifications (e.g., SOC 2, ISO 27001, FedRAMP) and data residency (U.S.-based) • How your hosting solution will support expected traffic, uptime, disaster recovery, and scalability <p>We look forward to your expert recommendations on the most effective and cost-efficient hosting solution for COA's new website.</p>
24	<p>It appears the college is on WordPress. Please confirm.</p> <p>Section 2.3, page 4</p>	<p>Please see the response to Question 21. Yes, the College is currently using Wordpress.</p>
25	<p>Where is the site currently hosted?</p> <p>Section 2.3, page 4</p>	<p>WP Engine</p>
26	<p>How many pages do you currently have?</p> <p>Section 2.3, page 4</p>	<p>383 General Pages, 298 News Pages, 51 Program Pages, 23 Noncredit Pages (755 Total)</p>
27	<p>Can you provide more detail about the Design Only option and describe what role COA will play and what role the vendor will play?</p>	<p>In the Design Only model, COA leads consultation and project management, while the vendor is responsible for delivering all required design assets and front-end code.</p>

	Section 2.0, page 3	
28	<p>What is your estimated comprehensive budget for this work? Alternatively, what is the anticipated not-to-exceed amount and/or budget range? If you are moving to a new CMS: Please separate expected budget allocation by redesign efforts vs. CMS initial procurement and ongoing costs.</p> <p>Section 2.3, page 4</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 1. COA has not established or published a specific budget range for this project. We request vendors provide their most competitive, itemized pricing based on the requirements outlined in the RFP. Cost will be considered alongside technical merit and other criteria.</p>
29	<p>What is your anticipated/desired launch date?</p> <p>Section 2.3, page 4</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 2. COA does not have a hard deadline, but our goal is to launch within one year of contract award. We expect vendors to propose a realistic project plan with clear milestones.</p>
30	<p>Internal Content Management</p> <p>What is the current internal process for content management?</p> <p>How many internal users will require training on the new CMS?</p> <p>What are their existing technical skill levels? We understand current governance is minimal, but are there any documented workflows?</p> <p>Section 1. AGENCY BACKGROUND, Page 2</p>	<p>Currently, the content management process is centralized, with the webmaster primarily responsible for maintaining and updating the website. There is minimal formal governance in place, and workflows are not currently documented.</p> <p>For the redesigned site, we anticipate that multiple members of the Marketing Department and possibly members from our IT Department will require CMS access and training to support decentralized content updates. While some users may have limited technical experience, the webmaster has over five years of experience working with WordPress and various programming languages. Training should be tailored to accommodate both technical and non-technical users to ensure consistency, accuracy, and ease of use across the team.</p>

		We are also open to developing more formal content governance and workflow documentation as part of the implementation process.
31	<p>How will COA measure the success of the website redesign?</p> <p>What key performance indicators (KPIs) will be used to evaluate the project's impact?</p> <p>Section 1. AGENCY BACKGROUND, Page 2</p>	<p>COA will measure the success of the website redesign by tracking several key performance indicators (KPIs), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website Traffic: Increases in the number of visitors and page views. • User Engagement: Improvements in how long visitors stay on the site and how many pages they view. • Conversions: More people completing important actions, such as submitting forms or requesting information. • User Experience: Positive feedback from users and better accessibility for all audiences. • Technical Performance: Faster load times, fewer errors, and strong security.
32	<p>The RFP mentions integration with key third-party systems. Can you please list all the systems and APIs requiring integration?</p> <p>Section 1. AGENCY BACKGROUND, Page 2</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 17. The new website must integrate with key third-party systems, including student information and enrollment systems, HR portals, CRM platforms, and emergency notification systems. Details will be finalized during discovery.</p>
33	<p>Turnkey vs. COA-assisted Implementation</p> <p>What level of COA involvement is anticipated in each implementation model? What resources and staff will COA dedicate to each? What are the specific responsibilities expected of the vendor and COA under each scenario?</p> <p>Section 2. PURPOSE OF THIS RFP, Page 3</p>	<p>In the Turnkey model, the vendor is responsible for the full project lifecycle, with COA mainly providing direction and approvals.</p> <p>In the COA-assisted model, COA dedicates additional staff (such as content editors and IT personnel) to work with the vendor, sharing implementation responsibilities.</p>

34	<p>Has a budget been allocated for this project? If so, can you provide us with any budget guidance?</p> <p>Would it be acceptable if our cost proposal has a range in cost at this stage of the process?</p> <p>Section 4. COST OF VENDOR'S OFFER and Attachment D: Cost Form, Page 13</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 1. COA has not established or published a specific budget range for this project. We request vendors provide their most competitive, itemized pricing based on the requirements outlined in the RFP. Cost will be considered alongside technical merit and other criteria.</p>
35	<p>Do you have a target launch date for the new site in mind?</p> <p>Do you have any additional deadlines?</p> <p>Section 5. Implementation Timeline and Project Management, Page 15</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 2. COA does not have a hard deadline, but our goal is to launch within one year of contract award. We expect vendors to propose a realistic project plan with clear milestones.</p>
36	<p>Do you have a preferred CMS platform?</p> <p>2.3, pg 4</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 4. COA prefers an open-source CMS, such as WordPress or Drupal, due to flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and community support. However, we are open to vendor recommendations based on our requirements.</p>
37	<p>Can you provide the points or weight distribution for each evaluation criterion?</p> <p>5.2, pg 13-16</p>	<p>Evaluations will be done using the best value method and COA will evaluate each vendor and do a narrative showcasing each proposal strengths and weaknesses.</p>
38	<p>Is there any formal scoring or preference given to NC-based vendors or those with prior engagements with NC public institutions or community colleges?</p>	<p>No</p>
39	<p>Is there an ideal go-live date for the redesigned website?</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 2. COA does not have a hard deadline, but our goal is to launch within one year of contract award. We expect vendors to propose a realistic project plan with clear milestones.</p>

40	What is the estimated volume of pages or files to be migrated from the current website? 3.3.6	Please see our response to Question 10. Content migration is expected as part of the project. The estimated number of pages to be migrated is 755 (383 General, 298 News, 51 Program, 23 Noncredit).
41	Can you provide a target budget range for the project?	Please see our response to Question 1. COA has not established or published a specific budget range for this project. We request vendors provide their most competitive, itemized pricing based on the requirements outlined in the RFP. Cost will be considered alongside technical merit and other criteria.
42	Do you require the web development agency itself to hold certifications such as SOC2/Type2, ISO27001/1, or can this be held by the partnered hosting provider? 3.6.1.(3)	Can be held by the partnered hosting provider or have at least the SOC 2 /HECVAT report.
43	What are the pain points in your existing CMS?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited flexibility in design and layout customization, which makes it difficult to maintain a modern, engaging user experience. • Outdated theme and design structure, which no longer reflect current web standards or branding goals. • Poor SEO performance, with limited support for metadata, structured content, and optimization tools. • Slow page load times, particularly on content-heavy pages or mobile devices. • Excessive use of images and PDFs, often used in place of web-native content, which negatively affects accessibility, SEO, and content maintainability.
44	Who are your target audience?	Our target audience is broad, reflecting the diverse community we serve. Primary audiences include: prospective students, current students, adult

		learners, local employers, community partners, alumni, faculty/staff, and community members.
45	If submitting a proposal for “Consulting and Design” type of proposal, how is this best highlighted in our response to ensure it is clear? 2,.1	Just designate this in your proposal.
46	Based on the type on data that will be used on the website, what sub-sections of “3.22 SOLUTIONS NOT HOSTED ON STATE INFRASTRUCTURE” are applicable to the company building the website? Would 3.22 be applicable to the hosting provider only?	All sub-sections should be followed for both the company building the website as well as the hosting provider.
47	Are the Visio documents discussed on 3.3.1 “Architecture Diagrams” required at the proposal phase?	Yes
48	What type of information would be helpful for 3.3.2 “Solution Roadmap”? Is there a current vision for website evolution over the coming years?	COA does not have a detailed multi-year vision for the website’s evolution at this time. The RFP expects vendors to propose a solution roadmap that demonstrates ongoing support, scalability, and the ability to adapt to changing needs and technologies
49	Is the HECVAT or HECVAT Lite to be completed after the proposal phase? How will ITS determine if the vendor should complete the HECVAT or HECVAT lite?	See section 3.4

50	Can you provide more information regarding the third-party integrations? Can you provide names of tools and the type of integrations (link, iframe, API, etc.)?	Please see our response to Question 17. The new website must integrate with key third-party systems, including student information and enrollment systems, HR portals, CRM platforms, and emergency notification systems. Details will be finalized during discovery.
51	For completion of the VRAR, if a cloud-hosting provider has not been chosen at this time, should we answer the questions assuming that our recommendation will be used?	While we want recommendations as part of this process, we may or may not select the proposed provider.
52	<p>Please define consulting as it is used in the introduction. What does consulting mean in this context? Is it one or more of the following: User Research, User Experience, Data/Structural Design, Visual Design?</p> <p>Section 2.1 Page 3</p>	<p>Consulting in the context of Section 2.1 (Introduction) of the RFP refers to professional services provided by the vendor to guide, inform, and support the website redesign process. Specifically, consulting as used here includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User Research: Activities such as stakeholder interviews, surveys, focus groups, and analytics review to understand the needs, behaviors, and preferences of key audiences (prospective students, current students, faculty, staff, community members). • User Experience (UX): Developing strategies and recommendations to ensure the new website is intuitive, accessible, and user-centered, including information architecture, navigation, and usability best practices. • Data/Structural Design: Advising on and helping develop the underlying structure of the website, including content organization, taxonomy, and integration with third-party systems. • Visual Design: Providing creative direction, branding alignment, and visual design concepts to ensure the website is modern, engaging, and consistent with COA's identity. <p>The RFP invites vendors to propose a comprehensive consulting approach that may encompass all these areas as part of a "Consulting and Design"</p>

		<p>proposal, with the expectation that the vendor will lead discovery, strategy, and planning in partnership with COA.</p> <p>In summary, consulting in this RFP context means providing expert guidance and strategic services across user research, user experience, data/structural design, and visual design to ensure the success of the website redesign</p>
53	<p>Also in the introduction, do offerers need to provide pricing for one or both of the Turnkey and/or COA-assisted implementation options?</p> <p>Section 2.1 Page 3</p>	<p>Yes, offerers must provide pricing for both the Turnkey and COA-assisted implementation options. As stated in Section 2.1 (Introduction) of the RFP:</p> <p>“Additionally, vendors must provide pricing for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turnkey solution – Vendor handles the full design, implementation, and content transfer. • COA-assisted implementation – COA staff participates in content transfer and data migration.” <p>Both pricing models are required so the College of The Albemarle can evaluate and compare proposals for the two implementation approaches.</p>
54	<p>Can the College provide estimated current website traffic data (e.g., unique visitors, page views, bounce rate, traffic sources)?</p> <p>Section 2.3 Page 4</p>	<p>In the past 30 days, we have had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72,071 browsing sessions • 189,615 pageviews • Average session duration: 23 seconds • 60.8% bounce rate
55	<p>Would the College like for user roles be created, updated, and/or otherwise managed by an external identity provider?</p> <p>Section 3.3.3 Page 7</p>	<p>At this time, we do not require integration with an external identity provider for managing user access. We prefer that user roles and permissions be managed directly within the CMS, with the webmaster</p>

		serving as the primary administrator responsible for creating and/or updating them.
56	<p>Would the College like to have users' access revoked via an external identity provider?</p> <p>Section 3.3.3 Page 7</p>	Please see our response for Question 55. The webmaster will serve as the primary administrator responsible for granting and revoking access.
57	<p>Are there specific needs for IAM application integrations?</p> <p>Section 3.3.3 Page 7</p>	The College does not have specific requirements for IAM application integrations. User access and roles are currently managed manually within the CMS, and we do not anticipate the need for integration with external IAM systems as part of the redesign.
58	<p>Are there specific third-party systems or platforms (e.g., student information system, learning management system, event calendars, payment gateways) that the new website must integrate with? If so, please list them and describe the nature of the required integration.</p> <p>Section 3.3.4 Page 7</p>	Please see our response to Question 17. The new website must integrate with key third-party systems, including student information and enrollment systems, HR portals, CRM platforms, and emergency notification systems. Details will be finalized during discovery.
59	<p>Does the scope include the migration of all existing website content, or will the College be responsible for the content population? If migration is included, what is the estimated volume of content (pages, documents, images), and different types of content (e.g. pages, blog posts, events, etc.)?</p> <p>Section 3.3.6 Page 7</p>	Please see our response to Question 10. Content migration is expected as part of the project. The estimated number of pages to be migrated is 755 (383 General, 298 News, 51 Program, 23 Noncredit).
60	Does the College have a preferred Content Management System (CMS), or are vendors free to propose the CMS they	Please see our response to Question 4. COA prefers an open-source CMS, such as WordPress or Drupal, due to flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and

	<p>deem most suitable? If there's a preference, why was that CMS chosen?</p> <p>Section 3.6.1 Page 11</p>	<p>community support. However, we are open to vendor recommendations based on our requirements.</p>
61	<p>Are there specific security standards or protocols that the new website application must comply with beyond standard best practices?</p> <p>Section 3.6.1.4 Page 11</p>	<p>We will follow the state's standard practices for security for the website.</p>
62	<p>Could the College specify the number of staff members requiring training and their general technical proficiency levels?</p> <p>Section 3.6.1.8 Page 12</p>	<p>Please see our response for Question 30. At least three members from our Marketing team (possibly more for IT) will need training on the new CMS. Technology proficiency levels range from moderate to advanced.</p>
63	<p>Does the College have existing branding guidelines, style guides, or digital asset libraries that must be adhered to, and if so, will these be provided to the selected vendor?</p> <p>Section 5.2.1 Page 14</p>	<p>Yes, the College has established branding guidelines that must be followed throughout the website redesign. These include specifications for logo usage, color palettes, typography, and general visual identity standards. We will gladly provide these materials to the selected vendor to ensure design consistency with our institutional brand.</p>
64	<p>Regarding the financial stability requirements, are there specific thresholds or ratios the College is looking for, or is this primarily for due diligence?</p> <p>Section 7.2 Page 22</p>	<p>Due diligence</p>
65	<p>Are you open to moving from WordPress to Drupal, another open-source CMS?</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 4. COA prefers an open-source CMS, such as WordPress or Drupal, due to flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and</p>

		community support. However, we are open to vendor recommendations based on our requirements.
66	Is there a budget range that you'd like to stay within?	Please see our response to Question 1. COA has not established or published a specific budget range for this project. We request vendors provide their most competitive, itemized pricing based on the requirements outlined in the RFP. Cost will be considered alongside technical merit and other criteria.
67	What technology are you using for your student information system and HR employment portal? Section 3.5.6, page 10	Please see our response to Question 17. The new website must integrate with key third-party systems, including student information and enrollment systems, HR portals, CRM platforms, and emergency notification systems. Details will be finalized during discovery.
68	What technology are you using for your student enrollment portal and LMS? Section 3.6.7, page 12	Please see our response to Question 17. The new website must integrate with key third-party systems, including student information and enrollment systems, HR portals, CRM platforms, and emergency notification systems. Details will be finalized during discovery.
69	Can you confirm that the CRMs listed as examples, that is Salesforce, TargetX, and Slate, are the CRMs you currently in use? Section 3.6.7, page 12	Please see our response to Question 17. The new website must integrate with key third-party systems, including student information and enrollment systems, HR portals, CRM platforms, and emergency notification systems. Details will be finalized during discovery.

70	<p>Where this RFP states "Consulting and Design – Vendor provides consulting services and executes the website redesign." - does "executes the website redesign" include website development?</p> <p>Similar question for this statement: "Design Only – COA provides consultation and project management, while the vendor executes the design." While it says "Design Only", it also says "executes the design", does this "Design Only" engagement actually mean Design the website and Develop/Build the website? Or does it literally mean the agency hands over the design files and that COA staff will do the development?</p> <p>RFP Section: 2.1 INTRODUCTION Page Number: 3</p>	<p>COA will accept “Design Only” proposals that include design and layout services, ADA/WCAG-compliant and responsive template coding. The RFP was intentionally structured to invite a range of solutions-including “Design Only”-to give vendors flexibility to propose the approach that best fits their expertise and COA’s needs.</p> <p>Section 2.1 of the RFP specifically states:</p> <p>“Vendors are invited to submit two types of proposals:</p> <p>Consulting and Design – Vendor provides consulting services and executes the website redesign.</p> <p>Design Only – COA provides consultation and project management, while the vendor executes the design.”</p>
71	<p>Is WordPress an acceptable CMS solution to propose?</p> <p>RFP Section: 3.4 HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY VENDOR ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT Page Number: 9</p>	<p>COA is open to proposals that include either migration to a newer version of Drupal or to a different CMS platform that better meets our needs for usability, accessibility, security, and long-term sustainability. We encourage vendors to recommend the CMS platform they believe will provide the best value and functionality for COA, and to clearly articulate the benefits and trade-offs of their proposed solution. WordPress is specifically mentioned as an example of an acceptable open-source CMS</p>
72	<p>Is there a budget range? For this project? Would a budget of \$100k+ be considered?</p> <p>RFP Section: 2.1 INTRODUCTION Page Number: 3</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 1. COA has not established or published a specific budget range for this project. We request vendors provide their most competitive, itemized pricing based on the requirements outlined in the RFP. Cost will be considered alongside technical merit and other criteria.</p>

73	<p>With regard to a “Design Only” proposal please describe the Agency responsibilities covered by “COA provides consultation and project management”</p> <p>2.1</p>	<p>Execute all design deliverables as specified in the RFP, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovery and consultation with COA. • Creation of design concepts, layouts, and templates. • ADA/WCAG-compliant and responsive front-end coding. • Documentation and packaging of all design assets. <p>Provide consultation and recommendations based on best practices, but defer to COA for final decisions.</p> <p>Collaborate with COA’s project manager and stakeholders throughout the design process.</p>
74	<p>With regard to a “Design Only” proposal would COA accept proposals that includes design and layouts services, ADA/WCAG compliant and responsive template coding, with handoff to third party for implementation and migration?</p> <p>2.1</p>	<p>Yes, COA will accept “Design Only” proposals that include design and layout services, ADA/WCAG-compliant and responsive template coding. The RFP was intentionally structured to invite a range of solutions-including “Design Only”-to give vendors flexibility to propose the approach that best fits their expertise and COA’s needs.</p> <p>Section 2.1 of the RFP specifically states:</p> <p>“Vendors are invited to submit two types of proposals:</p> <p>Consulting and Design – Vendor provides consulting services and executes the website redesign.</p> <p>Design Only – COA provides consultation and project management, while the vendor executes the design.”</p>
75	<p>The current site appears to be responsive. Can COA clarify what is meant in section 2.3 where it states that “<i>The current site lacks...mobile responsiveness.</i>” Are there certain</p>	<p>While the current site is generally mobile-responsive, there are specific elements that do not perform well on mobile devices. Notably, the homepage navigation menu does not function reliably across all screen</p>

	<p>pages or sections that are not responsive? Or is the entire site falling short in some way? If so, how?</p> <p>2.3</p>	<p>sizes, and the social media feed does not display consistently or in a mobile-optimized format.</p>
76	<p>Does COA require real-time analytics, metrics, system performance data, engagement reporting, site traffic and user behavior data above and beyond what is available through Google Analytics, Tag Manager and Page Speed? If so, please specify what is required.</p> <p>2.3 3.5.1 Items 5, 6</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 18. The vendor will be responsible for implementing GA4 from the ground up and providing analytics consulting. For SEO, see our response to Question 19; we seek vendor expertise for a comprehensive SEO strategy.</p>
77	<p>The state mandated readiness requirements (Section 3.1 of the VRAR document) will prevent this vendor from bidding on the full project. Please confirm that these requirements are mandatory.</p> <p>3.2.2</p>	<p>Yes, these state-mandated readiness requirements are required.</p>
78	<p>Can COA provide an estimate of the number of discreet pages that will be included in content transfer? Please do not include file assets (images, pdf, etc.) in that estimate</p> <p>3.3.6</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 10. Content migration is expected as part of the project. The estimated number of pages to be migrated is 755 (383 General, 298 News, 51 Program, 23 Noncredit).</p>
79	<p>What stack is the current site using? This is important to understanding what migration options are available.</p>	<p>We are currently using a variety of programming languages (PHP, JavaScript, HTML/CSS) though our theme file editor.</p>

	3.3.6	
80	<p>What is the difference between item e) “Detailed Project Timeline” and item k) “Implementation Timeline”</p> <p>6.3.2</p>	<p>The difference between item e) “Detailed Project Timeline” and item k) “Implementation Timeline” in Section 6.3.2 is as follows:</p> <p>Detailed Project Timeline (Item e)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: This is a comprehensive, phase-by-phase schedule that outlines all major activities, tasks, and milestones for the entire project-from project kickoff through post-launch support. • Content: It should include key phases such as discovery, design, development, content migration, testing, training, launch, and post-launch activities. Each phase should show start and end dates, dependencies, responsible parties, and major deliverables. • Format: Typically presented as a chart or table, it provides a visual overview of the project’s progression and critical path, helping both COA and the vendor track progress and manage risks. <p>In summary: The detailed project timeline is a master schedule showing the full scope and sequence of the project.</p> <p>Implementation Timeline (Item k)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: This is a focused, high-level schedule specifically for the implementation phase-that is, the period when the website is actually being built, configured, and launched. • Content: It should break down the estimated duration for each major step of implementation, such as development, integration, data migration, user acceptance testing, training, and go-live. It may also include post-launch stabilization. • Format: Usually a summary table or list showing estimated durations (e.g., “Development: 8 weeks; Data Migration: 3 weeks; Testing: 2 weeks; Training: 1 week; Go-live: 1 week”).

		<p>In summary: The implementation timeline zooms in on the execution/build portion of the project, providing a clear estimate of how long each implementation step will take.</p>
81	<p>What does item b) "<i>Vendor Response to Specifications and Requirements</i>" refer to? Section 3.5? Section 3.6? Both? Is there a preferred format for responses?</p> <p>6.3.2</p>	<p>Item b) "Vendor Response to Specifications and Requirements" in Section 6.3.2 refers to the vendor's comprehensive, point-by-point response to the requirements and specifications outlined in the RFP. This includes both Section 3.5 (Business and Technical Requirements) and Section 3.6 (Business and Technical Specifications), as well as any other requirements or specifications described throughout Section 3.0 of the RFP.</p> <p>What to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 3.5 outlines the higher-level business and technical requirements (e.g., user experience, accessibility, content management, security, integrations, support). • Section 3.6 provides more detailed and measurable technical specifications (e.g., CMS platform features, accessibility testing, hosting, security certifications, analytics, integration capabilities, training, and documentation). <p>Preferred format for responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize your response in the exact order in which the specifications and requirements appear in the RFP (see Section 6.3.1a). • Use clear headings or numbering that matches the RFP sections and subsections (e.g., 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.6.1, etc.). • For each requirement or specification, provide a concise but complete explanation of how your solution meets or exceeds the requirement. If a requirement is not applicable, state "Not Applicable."

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-reference your responses to the specific RFP section and page number for clarity.
82	<p>Has COA established a budget, budget range or cost-not-to-exceed amount? If so, can that information be shared?</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 1. COA has not established or published a specific budget range for this project. We request vendors provide their most competitive, itemized pricing based on the requirements outlined in the RFP. Cost will be considered alongside technical merit and other criteria.</p>
83	<p>What is the realistic start date for the project?</p> <p>RFP Section 1, page number 3</p>	<p>Please see our response to Question 2. COA does not have a hard deadline, but our goal is to launch within one year of contract award. We expect vendors to propose a realistic project plan with clear milestones.</p>
84	<p>Can you tell us more about the request for turnkey options? In our experience, a turnkey solution doesn't work well as a re-architecture requires re-thinking content, which does require input from your teams.</p> <p>RFP Section 2.1, page number 3</p>	<p>A turnkey website solution, as requested in RFP Section 2.1, means the vendor is responsible for delivering a fully functional, modern, and accessible website-handling all aspects of the project from discovery through launch. However, COA's definition of "turnkey" is not a one-size-fits-all or "minimal input" approach. Instead, it is expected that the vendor will do the heavy lifting for all technical, design, development, migration, and implementation work, while actively consulting with COA and incorporating our input on all key decisions, especially those related to design, content, and user experience.</p> <p>COA recognizes that a successful website re-architecture requires rethinking content, navigation, and user needs. Therefore, even under the turnkey model, the vendor should:</p> <p>Lead the discovery and strategy process, gathering input from COA stakeholders and key user groups.</p>

		<p>Provide recommendations and best practices for information architecture, content strategy, and design.</p> <p>Collaborate closely with COA to ensure that all decisions about site structure, content organization, and visual design are made with our input and approval.</p> <p>Manage content migration and technical implementation, but with COA's guidance on content priorities, edits, and messaging.</p> <p>In summary, COA's turnkey request means the vendor manages and executes the project end-to-end, but with ongoing consultation and decision-making in partnership with COA-not in isolation. The vendor should propose a process that ensures COA's goals, audiences, and content needs are addressed through collaborative planning, regular check-ins, and iterative feedback, resulting in a site that is both technically sound and institutionally authentic</p>
85	<p>Does COA have input from users that will be provided or will the web partner need to gather information from the key user groups (prospective students, current students, faculty, staff, community) and develop a website strategy?</p> <p>RFP Section 2.3, page number 4</p>	<p>COA has conducted limited internal user research, including stakeholder surveys focused on select web pages. However, we have not completed a comprehensive discovery process or developed formal user/audience personas for the website. As outlined in the RFP, we expect the selected web partner to lead a thorough discovery phase, which should include gathering input from key user groups-such as prospective students, current students, faculty, staff, and community members-and using that information to inform the website strategy, information architecture, and design. We encourage vendors to propose a discovery methodology that may include both qualitative and quantitative research (e.g., focus groups, surveys, analytics review, content analysis) to ensure the new site meets the needs of all audiences.</p>

		Vendors should outline in their proposals how they will approach user research and engagement as part of the discovery process, and how those findings will guide the website's strategy and structure.
86	<p>Will content writing and governance be needed from the web partner?</p> <p>RFP Section 2.3, page number 4</p>	The College of The Albemarle (COA) anticipates that the selected vendor will assist with content migration and may be asked to provide copyediting of existing content and guidance on web content best practices. However, COA's internal team plans to take the lead on developing any new content (copywriting). If additional copywriting support becomes necessary, COA will work with the vendor to define the scope and adjust the project plan and pricing accordingly. Vendors are encouraged to outline in their proposals how they would support content migration, copyediting, and any additional content strategy services, and to include itemized pricing for these services.
87	<p>Please confirm the current site is in WordPress and what version and Theme the site is built in.</p> <p>RFP Section 2.3, page number 4</p>	Yes, our current site is in WordPress. It is version 6.8 and our theme is coamain (Version: 1.0.0)
88	<p>Are you seeking an alternate CMS platform? If so, what problems have been experienced with WordPress, and do technology preferences exist?</p> <p>RFP Section 2.3, page number 4</p>	Please see our response to Question 4. COA prefers an open-source CMS, such as WordPress or Drupal, due to flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and community support. However, we are open to vendor recommendations based on our requirements.
89	<p>Please identify sections of the site that are excluded from the scope of the redesign (such as bookstore, intranet/student portal, library, etc.)</p> <p>RFP Section 3.1, page number 5</p>	Sections that do not need to be redesigned include the bookstore, library services, OneLogin, MyService, Career Coach, Element451.

90	WCAG 2.1 AA is mentioned throughout the RFP. Is it safe to assume WCAG 2.2 AA is acceptable. RFP Section 3.3.8, page number 8	Yes, WCAG 2.2 Level AA compliance is acceptable and welcomed.
91	Where is the current site hosted? Are you seeking to make a change from the current hosting provider and are you seeking estimates for hosting? RFP Section 3.5.3, page number 9	Please see our response to Question 21. WP Engine currently hosts our website. Hosting for the new site is part of the project scope, and we require a secure, cloud-based, U.S.-based hosting solution that meets all specified security and compliance standards.
92	Please list all 3rd party integrations that must be supported in the new website. RFP Section 3.5.6, page number 10	Please see our response to Question 17. The new website must integrate with key third-party systems, including student information and enrollment systems, HR portals, CRM platforms, and emergency notification systems. Details will be finalized during discovery.
93	Are content migration estimates needed at this time? If so, please provide a detailed breakdown of the number and types of content that will require migration to the new site. RFP Section 3.5.7, page number 10	Please see our response to Question 10. Content migration is expected as part of the project. The estimated number of pages to be migrated is 755 (383 General, 298 News, 51 Program, 23 Noncredit).
94	What is the desired launch date for the website? RFP Section 3.5.7, page number 10	Please see our response to Question 2. COA does not have a hard deadline, but our goal is to launch within one year of contract award. We expect vendors to propose a realistic project plan with clear milestones.
95	Should a payment schedule be included in the proposal? RFP Section 4.2, page number 13	Yes, per section 4.2
96	Is the project funded? If so, are you able to share a budget target or range? RFP Section 4.2, page number 13	Please see our response to Question 1. COA has not established or published a specific budget range for this project. We request vendors provide their most competitive, itemized pricing based on the

		requirements outlined in the RFP. Cost will be considered alongside technical merit and other criteria.
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