

STATEMENT OF WORK
FOR
COMPREHENSIVE WEB DEVELOPMENT

#MKTG-22-132

RELLIS ACADEMIC ALLIANCE WEBSITE
The Texas A&M University System

Per the Department of Information Resources Cooperative Contracts
for Technology Services.

February 2, 2022

RELLIS Academic Alliance Website Engagement

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to define the requested services and deliverables the Texas A&M University System (A&M System) is seeking in the engagement, give the reader insight into the RELLIS Academic Alliance, and request proposals.

2. Background

Established in 2016, the RELLIS Academic Alliance (RAA) is a University System Center, bringing together 11 regional university partners and several community college networks to one location. Together, they offer courses to complete associate degrees, as well as over 25 bachelor's degrees in a variety of fields. While enrolled students belong to the institution they are taking classes with, the RELLIS Academic Alliance represents the students enrolled in courses who are taking classes on-site at the RELLIS Campus in Bryan, Texas.

The current Academic Alliance website was completed prior to enrolling students in the fall of 2018 but was built largely as a recruitment site to attract potential students. Going into the third academic cycle, the Academic Alliance is now equipped with a better understanding of their student body and how best to communicate to keep them engaged. The Academic Alliance has continued to grow in both the number of current students, but also in the degrees offered and resources available to those students. This exponential growth has increased the need of a website built to both attract students to the campus and to engage with them during their time enrolled.

The Academic Alliance has experienced brand confusion in the past with the Texas A&M University campus, due largely to proximity, logo use and brand color schemes.

The Academic Alliance is currently going through a brand evolution and plans to utilize these guidelines for the new website development and design. Changes will reflect a youthful population located on an innovative campus, who is engaged and looking toward the future.

3. Audiences

While the RELLIS Academic Alliance is a unique higher education model, the website target audiences do mirror many traditional institutions.

A. Student Prospects

- First Time In College (FTIC) students: Fall 2021 is the first semester to have enrolled freshman through a dual-enrollment agreement between university partners. Lower level courses will be completed through Blinn College District or other community college partners.
- Transfer Students: The RELLIS Academic Alliance opened its doors to 100 transfer students in fall 2018. The majority of transfer students completed coursework or graduated from Blinn College District prior to enrolling with a university with the RELLIS Academic Alliance.

B. Guardians / Influencers: Showing legitimacy and credibility are important for the young brand. Many parents, relatives and school counselors will inquire before encouraging others to seek more information and apply.

C. Current Students: The original website was not built with the current student in mind. Since then, the team has maximized its resources and capabilities to create space for students to find information about student organizations, resources and other information related to their quality of education.

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4. Website Goals

Website goals reflect the goals of the organization. The chosen vendor will assist in solidifying the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) listed.

A. Improve brand awareness and process clarity

- a. As stated earlier, the RELLIS Academic Alliance deals with brand confusion with Texas A&M University. The RELLIS Academic Alliance has unique academic processes that require prospects and decision makers to pay close attention.
 - i. Present content to frequently asked questions where needed to improve quality of appointments with recruiters
 - ii. Clarity on Dual Admissions Program and its benefits for FTIC students
 - iii. Clearly promote the perks of a seamless transfer experience for students
 - iv. Clarity on application process for FTIC and Transfer students
 - v. RAA uses PlatformQ to offer evergreen video content about the Academic Alliance and its offerings

B. Increase appointments and visits

- a. Appointments: RELLIS Academic Alliance recruiters field many questions throughout the year. It would be beneficial to increase the number of quality appointments where the prospect is highly interested.
- b. Visits: The RAA is building their video and photography inventory that highlights the unique qualities of RELLIS. They offer in-person and virtual tours, as well as a new interactive map hosted by Concept3D

C. Increase student engagement and completion

- a. There are many resources available to improve experiences for our students while at RELLIS. RAA uses their website and a video streaming platform called PlatformQ for their live and pre-recorded content.

D. Provide an interface that is accessible and engaging.

- a. RAA quickly outgrew the current website that was built in 2018. The new website structure must guide target users with ease to the information they need.
- b. Expand the current brand style guide to include website style and design.

E. Provide site admins an-easy-to-use ecosystem to maintain and build webpages

- a. There were many aspects of the current website that were hardcoded, which made it difficult for admin users to modify and flex templates.

5. Expectations and Services

A. Discovery and Site Planning

This is a time to educate the vendor about the RELLIS Academic Alliance and dig deeper about the organization's goals and how we can meet those goals with a new website. RAA has an updated site map, and the organization looks forward to finalizing the site map with the vendor in this stage.

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In addition to confirming goals, the website requirements and technology plan will be established in this phase.

B. Design and Layout

Phase includes reviewing and confirming the expanded website style guide, concepts for homepage and interior pages.

To include design solutions for nine areas with a total of 12 templates to be applied to 50-60 webpages. The RAA website is larger than 60 pages, but internal support will duplicate the work to complete the remaining pages on the website.

Solution	Templates	Pages	Comments
Homepage	1	1	Standard solution for homepage that can help guide intended users to the content they need.
Parents Pages	2	5-6	Request two templates for editors to choose for the main navigation parent pages from the homepage.
Child Pages	2	7-8	Request two templates for editors to choose for the main child pages.
Degree / program pages	1	10	A modern and visually appealing design is required to communicate the degree information, benefits and requirements.
Low-Content, Link-heavy info page	1	4	Since RAA is a conduit to content on partner institution's websites, there are several instances where a page of content is link-heavy. An aesthetically pleasing design solution is needed for these instances.
Recruitment/ Admissions	1	12-14 (unknown)	The RAA model is unique. The admissions and recruitment webpage structure needs to help with shepherding prospects and influencers to the right information.
Media Hubspot	1	1	A media-rich page where news, student profiles, and an events calendar can exist. This is mainly for current students, but it can be a recruitment tool.
Campaign landing pages	2	2	Mobile-first landing pages are needed to point traffic for campaigns and promotions. If possible, these pages are intended to be setup for remarketing purposes if they abandon the sign up.

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Course Catalog	1	Unknown-based on solution	This section houses the schedule of courses each semester. Needs to be accessible, visually appealing and manageable to edit. There is a possible API data solution to explore.
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The Design and Layout phase will also explore the best practices and solutions for the following:

- Homepage navigation: ie. mega-menu VS dropdown VS no menu
- Ability to create and update Emergency Messages
- Quick Links section to add to any interior page
- Site search solution
- Staff and Faculty directory is searchable
- Ability to integrate video on pages
- Request For Information (RFI) forms strategically placed and styled to match website style

C. Content

With the support from The Texas A&M University System Marketing and Communications Office, the RELLIS Academic Alliance will have the majority of its content built with the target audiences in mind. RAA is open to additional content support services such as converting content for the web where needed and copywriting opportunities like headlines, call-outs and titles.

D. Research

RELLIS Academic Alliance will consider new solutions for its current applications that are linked or used alongside the current website. Below is a list with notes of which ones are requested to integrate and which ones are open for recommendations.

Application	Status	Elaborate
Calendar	Open to recommendations	Currently using a Wordpress plug-in. Need a better solution with more capabilities, has a better search or category option and is styled to web
Chat	PlatformQ - Required	Embedded code. This is a feature of a larger service with PlatformQ. Contract ends April 2023.
Scheduling	Setmore - Open to recommendations	This application is linked from the website to another site for interested people to schedule appointments with the recruiters. Limited reporting is available.
Site search	Open to recommendations	RAA wants to explore a cleaner and robust way

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		to perform a site search
RFI form	Pardot - Open to recommendations	Need help with a few different Pardot form templates, and maybe a clean way to display multiple forms from Pardot on website pages.
Interactive Map	Concept3D - Required	This tool has many ways to maximize its presence on a website.

E. Development & Integration

RAA will rely on the vendor to guide the project and include the important team members along the way.

Development includes installation of the most current WordPress platform and the plugins and modules needed to satisfy the approved technical plan determined during planning.

Front-end development includes creating templates per the approved scope and designs and setting the styles within the CMS to match.

F. Accessibility

Testing for accessibility to the WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance using Siteimprove.

G. Database

Salesforce is RAA's database solution and works in conjunction with Pardot to send out emails.

H. Analytics

Request to setup Google Analytics legacy and Google Analytics 4 (GA4) for the new website. Also, help retain data from the current website.

Additionally, request to setup conversion tracking in GA4 to mirror website goals.

I. SEO

Ability to customize meta information, including image for social and search.

J. Testing and Quality Assurance

Vendor will test functions and accessibility throughout development. This stage will include final testing for browser and accessibility compliance. Expectations include pushing the new site live, a round of testing on the live site to identify and fix issues, and 30-days of support from the live date to address bugs in the site.

K. Provide written content creator "User Guide" with simple instructions on adding content to the RAA site.

6. Technical Requirements

Internal support is available to maintain the final website for RELLIS Academic Alliance. To maintain the new upcoming website, the following parameters are required.

- Elementor Builder will be used and we have premium licenses for:

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- Elementor Pro
- Crocoblock
- Premium Add-Ons
- Wordpress builder friendly themes are necessary and we have premium licenses for:
 - Astra Pro
 - Generate Press (GP Premium)
 - Kadence Pro
 - Page Builder Framework (Page Builder Framework Premium Addon)

Alternatively, we will accept using the Hello Elementor theme (free) with custom Elementor Pro Theme Builder built headers and footers.

7. Deliverables

Expected deliverables shall include at a minimum:

- Monthly status reports that summarize project oversight and risk monitoring activities and results to include identified risks and suggested mitigations.
- Additional communications and/or reports as appropriate, especially if an urgent issue is identified.

8. Reports and Meetings

- The Vendor is required to provide the A&M System project manager with monthly written progress reports of this project as specified in the deliverables.
- The monthly report shall cover all work performed and completed during the month for which the progress report is provided and shall present the work to be performed during the subsequent month.
- The Vendor will be responsible for participating in monthly status meetings with the A&M System project manager and/or the project leadership team. The meetings will be held at a time and place designated by the A&M System project manager. The meetings can be in person or over the phone as agreed by Vendor and the A&M System project manager. Additional meetings may be requested by either party as needed.

9. Period of Performance

Performance under an agreement pursuant to this Statement of Work shall commence upon execution of an agreement through completion of the project, which is needed by the end of August 2022.

10. Invoices

Vendor may submit an invoice as proposed and agreed upon by A&M System.

It is the policy of A&M System and the state of Texas to make payment on a properly prepared and submitted invoice within thirty (30) days of the latter of any final acceptance of performance or the receipt of a properly submitted invoice, in conformance with the Texas Prompt Payment law. Generally, payment will be made on the 30th day unless a discount or other terms have been arranged within the agreement.

11. Additional Customer Terms and Conditions

Refer to the terms and conditions in Exhibit A.

12. Proposal Response

The Respondents must demonstrate knowledge and expertise for the work to be performed through prior similar experience, staff credentials, or other means. This shall be evident through the information and documentation provided for each of the items listed below or through interviews held with selected finalists.

- A. **Company Profile.** Respondent shall provide at a minimum the following information; years in business, general description of the services offered by your company, total number of employees.
- B. **Sample of Work.** Respondent shall provide at a minimum the following information and documentation:
 - a. Sample of work to demonstrate ability to perform the required services, specifically any work that was done within the higher education industry.
 - b. Any other documentation that supports their ability to meet the requirements to the A&M System.
- C. **Technology.** Respondent shall provide a list of themes/WordPress page builders they typically use.
- D. **Accessibility.** Respondent shall provide documentation that required accessibility standards can be met.
- E. **References.** Respondents shall provide at least three (3) references, preferably one from an institution of higher education with a similar project scope. Each reference shall include at least the following:
 - Company name
 - Contact person name and title
 - Contact phone number and email address
 - General description of the completed scope and services provided

13. Pricing

Respondents shall provide a fee and payment schedule based on all applicable DIR rates and estimated hours. The schedule shall be structured according to the items below or a similar proposed structure.

- I. Discovery and Planning
- II. Design and Layout
- III. Development
- IV. Implementation
- V. Final Integration
- VI. Testing and Quality Assurance. This shall include 30 days of support post implementation.

The A&M System estimates that the total not-to-exceed cost for this project scope will be in the range of \$150,000 – \$200,000.

14. HUB Subcontracting Plan

It is the policy of the state of Texas and the A&M System to encourage the use of Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) in our prime contracts, subcontractors, and purchasing transactions. The goal of the HUB program is to promote equal access and equal opportunity in A&M System contracting and purchasing.

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Based on the scope of this SOW, Respondents must determine if they can perform the entire scope with their own resources or if it will be necessary to subcontract any portion of the scope. Subcontracting opportunities are defined as those opportunities contracted with a vendor to provide services, supply commodities, or contribute toward completing work for a governmental entity.

Subcontracting opportunities are possible for this SOW and therefore a HUB Subcontracting Plan (HSP) is **required**. Failure to submit a comprehensive, acceptable HSP will be considered a material failure to comply with the requirements of the SOW and will result in rejection of the submittal. The HUB Subcontracting Plan shall be submitted **with** the SOW response by the date and time specified. The applicable **HUB goal** to utilize for this RFP is **11%** for “all other services”.

Respondents shall complete the [HSP form](#) attached or as found on the following site; https://assets.system.tamus.edu/files/budgets-acct/pdf/hub_reports/HSP_FY22.pdf and submit it with the RFP response. Do not forget to include any backup documentation and sign the HSP form.

If the Respondent is completing as self-performing, a statement which attests that the respondent shall perform the subcontracting opportunities identified by the agency, with its own employees and resources is required. The sections in the HSP form to be completed for self-performing are Section 1, 2a (check “No”), 3 with your statement included in the open text field, and 4.

For information regarding the HUB Subcontracting Plan requirements, please contact Jeff Zimmermann from the A&M System’s HUB Program at (979) 458-6410 or soprocurement@tamus.edu for assistance in proper completion of the HSP. **Respondents have the opportunity to submit a draft of the HSP prior to submittal of their response to the SOW for review by Mr. Zimmermann.**

15. Response Submission Requirements

- Submittal Instructions

All proposals must be received by the A&M System, no later than **2:00 p.m. CST, February 16, 2022** electronically via email to soprocurement@tamus.edu with the subject line of “**RELLIS Academic Alliance Website Proposal**”. The sent time indicated within the A&M System email server shall be used for the receipt and acceptance of the response. Late proposals will not be considered under any circumstances.

Submittal File Format: Submission shall be saved as three (3) separate files according to the items listed below and named as such; **I) “company name – Proposal”, II) “company name – Pricing” and III) “company name – HSP”.**

- Proposal Components

The following documents and all requirements from noted sections are to be submittal as part of your proposal response. Failure to include these documents may be basis for response disqualification.

- I. Proposal (Section 12)
- II. Pricing (Section 13)
- III. HUB Subcontracting Plan (Section 14)

- Questions

For questions regarding this request for proposals, please submit them in writing to soprocurement@tamus.edu with the subject line of “RELLIS Academic Alliance Website”. Answers to all questions submitted will be shared with all potential respondents.

16. Selection Process

A&M System will base its choice on demonstrated competence, qualifications, ability to meet the stated specifications and requirements, any other factors as deemed relevant by the A&M System, and on the reasonableness of the proposed price for the purchase; and if other considerations are equal, give preference to a RESPONDENT whose principal place of business is in the state or who will manage the agreement wholly from an office in the state. The A&M System at its sole discretion, may conduct interviews of selected Respondents as part of the evaluation process.

A&M System may perform reference checks and seek further information, as needed from all RESPONDENTS whose proposals A&M System, at its discretion, considers viable, based on the initial evaluation and scoring. The RESPONDENT's response to this proposal request officially authorizes A&M System to contact these organizations to discuss the services and other considerations which the RESPONDENT has provided to such organizations and authorizes the organizations to provide such information to A&M System and RESPONDENT shall and hereby does release and hold harmless A&M System, the state of Texas, and the organization of any and all liability whatsoever, in connection with providing and receiving all such information. Any negative responses received from reference checks may be grounds for disqualification of the proposal.

Submission of proposals indicates RESPONDENT's acceptance of the evaluation techniques and the recognition that subjective judgments must be made by A&M System during the evaluation process.