

Request for Proposal

National Disability Institute Website Redesign

National Disability Institute (NDI) is a national nonprofit – the first of its kind – that is specifically dedicated to **creating a better *financial* future for people with disabilities and their families.**

Established in 2005, NDI encompasses a range of projects focused on financial empowerment (education), disability employment, organizational capacity building, research and public policy. Currently, NDI operates 35 different projects, all tied to NDI's mission.

In 2018, NDI underwent a full website redesign that updated our visual identity (logo & branding) and transitioned our website to WordPress.

Since that redesign, the NDI website has expanded greatly. The current website now has 160+ pages (including two standalone microsites), 500+ posts and 550+ documents and tools. The surplus of resources on NDI's site includes online classes, webinars, downloadable handouts, quick reference guides and groundbreaking research.

However, with its extensive growth over the last five years, finding information is not always intuitive and the overall design is dated. Additionally, the number and scope of NDI's managed projects is continually evolving.

We are seeking proposals for a 508-compliant, responsive website redesign that draws on the strengths of our existing site and corrects its limitations (see Page 2), while modernizing the overall look and layout of the website.

Scope of Work

We are looking to hire a full-service web design firm to assist us with:

- Visual Website Design (and Mobile Device Optimization)
- Information Design
- Testing & Quality Assurance (Accessibility Testing)

Additional Items (Pending Available Budget):

- Copywriting (for key pages, such as Home, About, Donate)
- Search Engine Optimization
- Video Production & Graphic Design

Building a better financial future for people with disabilities and their families.

Audience

NDI collaborates with hundreds of organizations throughout the country. Visitors to the website include people with disabilities, family members of people with disabilities, disability service providers, community organizations, financial institutions, municipalities, and government organizations. The NDI website currently attracts an average of over half a million page views a year, and over 50% of visitors are accessing the site through mobile devices.

Messaging

It is essential for visitors to the NDI website (particularly first-time visitors and potential funders) to understand what exactly NDI does, and what it doesn't do. Historically, users have had a difficult time understanding the structure and work of NDI as a nonprofit organization – ***chiefly, that although we provide services to help people with disabilities, we are not a direct disability service provider.***

Additionally, much of the messaging throughout our site tends to be informative and passive, instead of being conversion-oriented with strong calls-to-action. Most of the language is dense and at reading levels that are too high for ideal accessibility. During the redesign, we would like to streamline and rewrite content to improve plain language and make it more engaging, action-oriented and accessible to all audiences.

Microsites

At present, NDI maintains two microsites for its Financial Resilience Center – financialresiliencecenter.org – and American Dream Employment Network – americandreamen.org – that both operate as standalone websites, while still being housed within the NDI website. During the redesign, these microsites will require special attention to ensure their own unique design and layout.

Existing Site Limitations

Lack of Control with Current Page Builder

Full design control is limited with the combination of our existing theme and current page builder (WPBakery). We are seeking to switch to a new page builder (Elementor) that will give us greater creative control and customization capability.

Limited Systems Integration and Automation

Currently, many of our projects rely on a variety of external platforms and processes to host events, provide training and collect data. These tend to require manual input and oversight, or they break easily. We'd like to improve the automation within our site to keep people from leaving the website and hopping from external system to system. Looking ahead, we plan to leverage a CRM (Salesforce) and will need this to integrate with our website.

Cluttered, Confusing Navigation

Our current site navigation no longer showcases the full breadth of work that our teams are doing, in an understandable manner. We are looking to restructure the layout and workflows of our pages and implement a mega-menu structure to make it easier to navigate the site with less clicks.

Content Structure Influenced by Project Funders, Instead of Topics

NDI's website structure has been heavily influenced by our project funding streams, rather than by intuitive topic areas. This has led to content silos that make it hard for visitors to find information without knowing exactly what project it falls underneath. We need to adjust our website structure so that it allows for funded projects to evolve or end, without sacrificing the framework of the site.

Outdated Resources and Segmented Resource Pages

The amount of informational content and downloadable materials (PDFs, PowerPoints, etc.) generated by our projects has grown tremendously and needs to be better organized. We need to perform an audit to see what content is outdated and should be updated or removed. Then, we'd like to organize our resources into a searchable, public facing repository (using Ajax Search Pro or another plugin) so that users can access different types of resources (webinars, reports, handouts, blogs, guides, etc.) within a single area of the site, instead of having to navigate to specific pages.

Accessibility Compliance

As a disability nonprofit, we are dedicated to not just meeting, but exceeding, accessibility best practices. We are looking to run a full accessibility audit on the website and implement any widgets or plugins (ex. UserWay or GTranslate) that can improve the user experience. We also want to rewrite our content to improve plain language and make it more engaging, action-oriented and accessible to all audiences.

Site Responsiveness & Flow of Social Traffic

Because most users view the site on mobile devices, our site needs a better responsive design customized for small devices. We also want to improve the overall connection between our website and our social accounts, optimizing our pages for social sharing.

Functionality of Members-only Site Areas

Some of our projects have a need for members-only areas. We are currently using password-protected pages to meet these needs, but have encountered limitations with this option, including caching issues that fail to allow users to log in with the page password.

Donation Solicitations

We have a difficult time soliciting donations from individuals, so our online donations are minimal and infrequent. We need a better design for our donation page that explains the direct impact of our work, with a built-in donation form to improve the experience (currently, visitors are redirected to an external PayPal page).

Overview of Primary Goals

- Create a website design and navigation structure that accounts for the evolving nature and number of our projects
- Improve storytelling and examples of our organization's *measurable impact*
- Create strong calls-to-action that drive measurable conversions and support data capture with automated data flows
- Create learning pathways based on audience types to increase time that visitors spend on the website
- Improve site responsiveness across different devices and ensure accessibility
- Create a central, searchable, public-facing resource repository to provide access to NDI's many downloadable resources
- Create landing page templates for future digital strategy use
- Create members-only website areas to host exclusive materials

Reporting Needs

The NDI website currently uses Google Analytics for its reporting. In addition to collecting basic site metrics, we need to be able to continue tracking downloads of files and outgoing links to show our funders what resources are being accessed.

Important Site Specifications

Compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act is required for all external portions of this website (public areas, secure areas for users).

Budget

Our ideal budget for this project is between **\$30,000-40,000**.

Staff Resources

Primary Point of Contact:

Katie Auchenbach, Web Manager – kauchenbach@ndi-inc.org

Secondary Point of Contact:

Kathy Brannigan, Director of Communications – kbrannigan@ndi-inc.org

Timeline

- **May 31, 2024 – Proposals Due**
- *Internal Review of Bids*
- **June 14, 2024** – Proposal Award Date
- **June 2024** – Discovery Meetings
- **Late-December 2024** – Soft Site Launch
- **January 2025** – Official Site Launch

Terms and Conditions

1. NDI must own and have full access to customize the site code.
2. Proposals should be sent to kauchenbach@ndi-inc.org and kbrannigan@ndi-inc.org by **May 31, 2024**.

Format for Proposals

Entities are free to submit proposals in whatever format they see fit, but please limit proposals to 10 pages and include an itemized cost estimate and overall budget.

If you have questions or require additional information to format your proposal, please email Katie Auchenbach at kauchenbach@ndi-inc.org to set up a meeting.