U.S. HIGHBUSH BLUEBERRY COUNCIL

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Request for Proposal

Date: December 3, 2019

To: Website development firms and individuals
From: Kasey Cronquist, President, United States Highbush Blueberry Council
RE: Seeking proposals to develop USHBC's website platform in 2020

Background

The United States Highbush Blueberry Council (USHBC) seeks a qualified website development firm or individual to consolidate, update, monitor and maintain USHBC's websites. Currently, USHBC maintains multiple sites and domains through different agencies, vendors and hosting companies. This creates challenges with overall continuity and management of the USHBC identity, style and brand. USHBC seeks to make the user experience enjoyable, seamless and easy to navigate. By consolidating management and development, USHBC also expects to collect improved data, reports and analysis on the performance of current and future sites and landing pages.

The following is a partial list of USHBC's online resources to be consolidated, updated and maintained:

- ushbc.org (includes USHBC Export Database)
- blueberrytech.org (includes development of a new Supplier Database)
- blueberrycouncil.org

Scope

The selected individual will guide USHBC through the following phases:

Discovery Phase:
1. Conduct a website audit to identify and prioritize core content and eliminate duplicate or outdated content with a "less-is-more" approach to available content.

2. Identify and analyze USHBC's external online resources (such as those websites and databases developed and hosted by contracted vendors).
3. Review historical web analytic data to inform the optimal information architecture (IA) and improve user experience.
4. Conduct user research and usability testing throughout all project phases to achieve objectives.

Design Phase:
5. Develop the structural framework for the consolidated management of USHBC's web presence while modernizing the user experience and integrate all online resources into a cohesive platform based on the following principles:
   a. Prioritized content.
   b. Simplified discoverability.
   c. Optimal user experience for both industry and consumers.
6. Ensure the new IA and user experience aligns with the latest search engine optimization best practices.

Prototype Development and Launch Phase:
7. Design, create and deliver prototype layout and website pages for USHBC Project Team review.
8. Review and validation from USHBC Project Team.
9. Upon approval, ensure integrity of design through QA and testing.

Budget

Applicants are advised to submit a detailed sample budget. The budget must separate fees and expenses.

Timeline

December 2019: Solicit Proposals from qualified firms/individuals.
December/January 2019: Review proposals and conduct interviews.
January 2020: Select firm/individual and conduct initial planning and discovery session.
March 2020: Initial framework launched at USHBC board meeting.
May 2020: Project completion.

Requirements

Applicants must demonstrate the following:
   o Experience designing websites on various CMS platforms.
   o Experience developing websites that use current design best practices (including flexible designs for desktop, mobile, tablet).

o Experience developing websites that comply with Section 508 of the U.S. Rehabilitation Act to provide optimal accessibility to users.
o Ability to develop and execute an effective website platform development strategy.
o Familiarity and knowledge of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) requirements and regulations.
o Ability to provide sufficient staff and administrative resources.

Anti Discrimination Clause

USHBC does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, gender identity (including gender expression), disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, genetic information, income derived from a public assistance program, parental status, marital or family status, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all bases apply to all programs.) USHBC and any contractor must fully comply with any and all applicable federal, state, and local equal employment opportunity statues, ordinances and regulations, including, but not limited to, Executive Order 11246 (Equal Employment Opportunity); Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; and the Equal Pay Act of 1963.

Instructions

Proposals must include the following components:

1. Company background.
2. Relevant experience and qualifications (including key personnel and/or subcontractors).
3. Proposed approach and methodology to be followed in the development and successful implementation of an updated website platform.
4. Detailed budget.
5. Timeline.
6. Quantifiable performance measures.
7. References (at least three).

Questions and proposals must be submitted electronically to Alicia Adler at aadler@nabcblues.org by 5 p.m. (PST) on Friday, December 20, 2019.