



Request for Proposal (RFP)
Redesign and Development of the Bronx River Alliance's Website
www.bronxriver.org

Issued by the Bronx River Alliance
May 29, 2020

Project Overview:

The Bronx River Alliance is seeking a website design firm to complete the redesign of its main website, bronxriver.org. Our primary goal is to produce a website that serves as an adequate landing site for a diverse set of organizational stakeholders, including donors, partners, and volunteers. Additionally, we want to generate a highly visible webpage that is effective at both generating new donors, volunteers, and educational contacts. Ease-of-use, for both Bronx River Alliance staff as well as site visitors, is of importance. The website should also serve as a source of basic information (FAQs, directions to the river/greenway) to potential visitors. Finally, it is essential that the Alliance's new website integrates closely with Salesforce (and other common online applications) as the Alliance uses a Salesforce customization (Watergrass) as its database.

RFP Sent: June 1, 2020

Responses Due: July 1, 2020

Maximum Budget for new website: \$50,000.00

Projected Website Launch Date: October 1, 2020*

For questions about the RFP, or to submit your proposal, please contact Thomas Capozzi, Development and Communications Associate, at Thomas.capozzi@bronxriver.org. **Please submit proposal as a single PDF file.**

*Website launch date is subject to change depending on conversations with potential developers.

Company Overview:

The mission of the Bronx River Alliance is to serve as a coordinated voice for the river and work in harmonious partnership to protect, improve and restore the Bronx River corridor and greenway so that they can be healthy ecological, recreational, educational and economic resources for the communities through which the river flows. The Alliance works towards this goal through four main programs, the Ecology Program, the Education Program, the Outreach Program, Education Program, and Recreation Program each of which rely on the website to generate new leads and communicate with existing constituents.

Website Audience:

The audience for the Alliance's website consists of a diverse group of potential clients, users and/or partners. Being a non-profit, the Alliance engages a variety of different consumers in a similarly wide variety of functions:

Grantmakers

Grantmakers consist of private and public foundations, as well as city, state, and federal governmental organizations and corporations. Grantmakers might visit our site when reaching out to our organization for funding opportunities, or while evaluating submitted grant proposals.

Our top priority for our grantmaking audience is establishing organizational credibility. Grantmakers visit our website as an essential part of the application review process, and it is essential that we demonstrate professionalism and capability in our online presence. Additionally, it is important that grantmakers are able to navigate easily through the website in order to locate the section pertinent to the programs they are interested in funding.

Donors and Potential Donors

Donors consist of individuals and corporations that make monetary contributions to our organization. They might visit our site to stay up-to-date on our programs, to view our progress towards institutional goals, or to support us with a monetary contribution.

Our top priority for our donor audience is communicating impact effectively in order to build confidence that contributions are being leveraged effectively towards the programs they are passionate about. We need the website to be a cache of information about the progress of our programs that can be easily navigated by our donors, and which includes a visible donation tab.

Volunteers

Volunteers are members of our community who contribute to our organization by offering pro-bono services to our programs. Volunteers are integral to the operation of our organization and assist in some capacity with all of our major program areas, fundraising, and back office functions.

Our top priority for our volunteers is to generate a website that actively converts community members into volunteers by offering up-to-date information on our volunteering efforts and providing a seamless sign-up portal integrated directly into the website. The site also needs to be serviceable for our existing volunteers, providing them with up-to-date information on our upcoming volunteering opportunities and communicating the impact of their contributions.

Event Participants

Event Participants are members of the community that regularly attend Bronx River Alliance events. We are looking to generate a website that provides accessible up-to-date information on upcoming events and integrates with our database for event registration for free and paid events in order to encourage regular attendance and convert event participants into volunteers or donors. Critical for this task is the establishment of an embedded calendar of events that is easily searchable and can be filtered by category.

Community

Members of the community audience are inhabitants of the communities directly adjacent to the Bronx River.

Our top priority with community members is to generate a website that serves as a resource for information about the river and activities. The goal of the website is to generate traffic from community members, and then to convert those community members into event participants, volunteers, or donors.

Objectives:

Our main objectives are to build a website that:

- Increases organic traffic from constituents in the greater NYC area
- Inspires donor confidence from grantmaking organizations as well as individual donors
- Inspires site visitors and motivates them to attend events, volunteer, and/or donate
- Provides answers to FAQs
- Provides information about how to get to the river as well as about what is open/closed within the Alliance's parks
- Is able to host photos and videos
- Is well organized and easily navigable by site visitors
- Has a modern look more in tune with our branding guidelines
- Is easy to update, manage, and maintain by staff. Must be simple enough for use by employees from a non-coding background, and must allow editing access to multiple users at once
- Integrates with Alliance's database and other third-party softwares
- Is mobile-device friendly
- Is consistent with modern standards for website security

Current Website:

The Alliance's current website fails to meet our organizational requirements for a multitude of reasons, elaborated below:

Platform/CMS: The Alliance's current website is hosted on Puma, a largely defunct software that falls short of our requirements for a multitude of reasons:

- Puma is cumbersome to navigate, slow to load, and only allows access to a single user at a time, which causes problems when we have multiple staff members editing the website at once.
- Puma's technology is obsolete, causing difficulties in viewing images, videos, and graphics on the site.
- Puma's design is largely outdated, resulting in a website that is limited to antiquated design elements.

Layout: The Alliance's current website is poorly organized, making it difficult for visitors to locate pertinent information and limiting website traffic to desired pages.

- The Alliance's current website does not include a conventional drop-down navigation menu that would help organize the home page and direct website traffic to its intended destination.
- The Alliance's current website hosts a huge variety of content stemming from different program areas. As a result, some of this content is buried several clicks into the website, and is therefore difficult to locate.

Design: The Alliance's current website possesses an antiquated design that does not adequately communicate the mission and impact of the organization

- The current site consists of outdated graphics which are not consistent with the Alliance's current branding guidelines.
- The current site does not feature a modern aesthetic, such as those featured on websites for similar organizations. Examples of such websites includes: riverkeeper.org, <https://www.transalt.org/>, <http://designtrust.org/>, <https://www.hrwc.org/>
- The current site does not heavily feature the extensive cache of photography owned by the Alliance.
- The current site is cluttered and disorganized.
- The current site does not feature a prominent and obvious donate button, nor an easily accessible button for volunteer sign-ups.
- The current site is not mobile-friendly.

Security: The Alliance's current website is not secure.

- The current site does not have an SSL certification.
- The current site has been the target of several hacking attempts throughout its history.
- The current website and host are secured by a third-party vendor.

Functionality and Design:

In order to address the current website's shortcomings, listed above, the Alliance is seeking the following essential functionalities and design elements for its redesigned site:

Google Analytics Tracking/SEO Optimization: The Alliance would like its new website to be set up in order to be effectively tracked using google analytics. This would include the insertion of Google Tag Manager codes into each page of the website as well as into form submission and download buttons, so that website traffic can be tracked and analyzed. This would allow Alliance staff to use Google Analytics to analyze site traffic and implement SEO optimization practices in order to organically drive traffic to the website.

Platform Ease of Use: The Alliance's new website must be easy to update and manage by staff members with little to no background in website design or coding. Multiple users must be able to edit content at one time and without a significant amount of prior training.

Integration of Ancillary Domains: The Alliance currently relies on a number of ancillary domains in order to provide information to its constituency. They are as follows:

www.bronxriverwater.org

www.bronxriverdata.org

paddle.bronxriver.org

The Alliance's new website would need to integrate these websites under the bronxriver.org domain in order to make the content which is hosted on these sites easily accessible from the main website.

Security: The Alliance's new website will need to meet industry standards in terms of security practices. The Alliance's new website must include an SSL certification.

Modern Aesthetic: The Alliance's new website needs to adhere to a modern look that more closely satisfies its branding guidelines.

Drop-Down Navigation Menu: The Alliance's new website will need to include a drop-down navigation menu on the home page that allows site visitors to more easily navigate the website and locate intended content. Due to the diverse and varied content hosted on the Alliance's website, this sort of menu will be essential for retaining this amount of content while simultaneously making it more accessible. The website should conform to web accessibility guidelines, to the greatest extent possible.

Mobile Usability: The Alliance's new website must be mobile-friendly, allowing site visitors to seamlessly navigate the website while on their smartphones.

Social Media Integration: The Alliance's new website must seamlessly integrate with the Alliance's social media outlets.

Donate and Get Involved Buttons: The Alliance's new website would need to prominently display both a donate button and a get involved button. The Donate button would link to a payment form, and the Get Involved button would link to an integrated volunteer interests form, allowing potential volunteers to select their volunteering interests, and have their information directly uploaded to our database.

Integrated Calendar: The Alliance's new website needs to include an integrated calendar that can easily be navigated and filtered by website visitors. The calendar would feature all of the Alliance's major events, and should include the following features:

- Capability to set up calendar events as single or recurring events, with options for daily, weekly, monthly, or annual recurrences.
- Calendar events should include space for full event descriptions, including space for images and video.
- Calendar must be filterable by category, start and end dates, and keyword search.
- Site visitors must be capable of subscribing to calendar updates via e-mail, text, or google calendar integration.

Educator Portal: The Education Program works closely with educators, who navigate to the website in order to download lesson plans and learning modules to use with their class. The Alliance's new website would need to include a portal for these educators, forcing them to enter certain information before proceeding to the download page for the modules/plans.

Image Management: The Alliance's new website would need to include image management and storage tools, allowing the Alliance to post, edit, and organize photos within the website.

Image management tools would need to include:

- The ability to edit images by changing opacity, resizing, cropping, flipping and rotating.
- Ability to preview images prior to association with on-site content
- Organized, customizable, easily searchable cache of all images uploaded to the website.

Language Translation: The Alliance would like to enable language translation on its new site in order to ensure accessibility for the entirety of its audience. This would include the embedding of the Google Translate widget, allowing site visitors to translate pages as necessary into their desired languages. This would also require the simplification of site content to allow translatability and ensure that content can be digested effectively.

Blog: The Alliance's new website would need to include a robust blog. Ideally, the blog would be set up in a way so that each blog post/article would have a dedicated individual page and would also be organized under a specific category relating to certain programs. The blog should be filterable by keyword.

Wish List:

Interactive Map: The Alliance would be interested in including an interactive map of the Bronx River. This map would be easily navigable by website users and would display various areas of interest along the river. When hovered over, users would be presented with information and upcoming events related to that section of the river. This map would need to be easily updated by staff members with little to no background in coding.

Developer Requirements:

The Bronx River Alliance is seeking proposals from highly qualified, experienced website development companies to design, develop and launch its new website. The selected developer must be a firm that has extensive experience in managing non-profit website designs, and expertise with best practices relating to:

- Successful website redesign
- Website development for non-profit organizations
- User experience and usability testing
- Website development and deployment
- Content strategy
- Search engine optimization

- Responsive design

Budget:

The Alliance's maximum budget for this project is \$50,000. A criterion used in evaluating proposals will be cost effectiveness.

Proposal Requirements:

Please respond to this RFP with a proposal containing the following elements:

- Overview of your company, as well as the specific staff and their qualifications to be assigned to this project.
- Overview of how you will meet our objectives.
- Explanation of your proposed platform/CMS.
- Outline of your website design and development strategy.
- Demonstration of how you will complete the website development according to the timeline proposed in the RFP, or an alternative proposed timeline for the project.
- Recent design and development examples.
- Recent design and development examples of websites built for non-profit organizations.
- Examples of existing websites you might try to emulate for this project.
- References.
- A line-itemed budget displaying how you will meet the budget requirements of the project.
- Terms and conditions.

RFP Deadline and Project Timeline:

RFP Sent: June 1, 2020

Responses Due: July 1, 2020

Finalists Selected and Contacted: July 6, 2020

Winner Selected and Contacted: July 13, 2020

New Website Launch Target Date: October 1, 2020

Submission Guidelines:

Please submit all proposals as a single PDF file via email to Thomas Capozzi, Development and Communications Associate, at thomas.capozzi@bronxriver.org. Proposals should be received by the Bronx River Alliance by June 1, 2020.

RFP Evaluation Criteria:

Submitted proposals will be submitted according to the following criteria:

- Demonstrated experience in designing/overhauling compelling websites for nonprofits with similar objectives stated in this RFP + seniority and experience of staff assigned to this project - 30%

- Ability to meet timeline - 25%
- Cost effectiveness - 20%
- Strength of references - 15%
- Clarity of proposal - 10%

Thank you for your interest in this project. We look forward to reviewing your proposal. If you have any questions, please contact Thomas Capozzi at Thomas.Capozzi@bronxriver.org, or at 718-430-4602.