



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RfP) FOR WEB MAINTENANCE AND HOSTING SERVER TRANSITION SERVICES**

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**CLOSING DATE AND TIME: NOVEMBER 4 AT NOON (12:00 PM EST)**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

ParlAmericas is a non-profit organization headquartered in Ottawa, Canada that promotes parliamentary diplomacy in the inter-American system. ParlAmericas facilitates the exchange of parliamentary best practices and promotes cooperative political dialogue through workshops and regional conferences, the production of tailored knowledge resources and online learning spaces.

In 2017, ParlAmericas launched two portals (ParlTools.org and ParlGenderTools.org) with toolkits designed to support parliamentarians and their staff on topics related to Open Parliament and Gender Equality.

### **B. PURPOSE OF RFP**

ParlAmericas is soliciting proposals from qualified service providers to support the migration of ParlTools.org and ParlGenderTools.org to a new hosting server, update web framework versions and configurations of these portals, perform quality assurance verifications to ensure the functionality of their features, and provide maintenance and security update services. As a non profit with limited resources, for sustainability purposes, the service agreement being solicited through this RFP will be for a 1-year duration and also include a knowledge transfer component so that ParlAmericas can assume full and independent control over the portals' maintenance after the service agreement.

### **C. CURRENT SITUATION**

- The portals share the same structure and web framework and are currently hosted through a cloud-based provider, with the following specs: Debian GNU/Linux (Linux 4.18.0-1-amd64). Web content is dynamic and connected with a PostgreSQL 9.4.15 database. These were setup by a third-party service provider.
- The CMS and plugins were developed on a free and open source platform (Django-CMS, Python 2.7.13). These require several months of version updates.
- The portals are multilingual (English, French, Spanish and Portuguese) but use an English CMS.
- ParlAmericas staff committed to oversight of the portals include a Program Manager and an IT Officer with experience in front and back end web development whose capacities will be strengthened through self-guided learning and targeted support provided under the agreement's knowledge transfer component over its 1-year duration. Routine updates, maintenance and troubleshooting of unexpected errors on the portals will be transitioned to the ParlAmericas IT Officer person at the end of the service agreement.



## D. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

### Phase 1:

- The service provider will analyze the code structure and plugins to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the portals
- Based on this analysis, the service provider will migrate the portals to a new server provider (Platform as a service). This includes the exporting, cleaning and migrating of all data to the new server, ensuring that content is carried over, and the setup of all connections to the new server, including replacements of plugins, extensions and themes if needed
- The service provider will ensure that upon migration to the new server, the multilingual portals will be set to the latest stable version of the Django-CMS
- The service provider will implement security and maintenance updates as needed (including to modules and core updates)
- The service provider will fix any functionality errors that arise in updating of the CMS and plugins, extensions and themes
- The service provider will ensure an optimized browsing experience and compatibility with modern browsers and common devices with no loss of functions or features
- The service provider will ensure that editable menus are accessible site-wide and editable through the CMS interface
- The service provider will maintain style sheets and theme structures to optimize the overall integrity and cleanliness of the code upon updates
- The service provider will maintain the portals' adaptability (according to devices' screen size)

### Phase 2:

- The service provider will be responsible for ongoing maintenance (inclusive of version updates, security updates, fixes to bugs, and daily backups) of the portals, ensuring that they continue to run smoothly and are protected from security threats

### Applicable to Both Phases:

- Access needs, roles, and publishing workflows will be determined with ParlAmericas
- The service provider will setup staging environments that are accessible to ParlAmericas, and ensure that all changes or updates to the portals are approved in staging prior to deployment
- The service provider will be responsible for documenting new integrations, plugins, extensions and/or customizations undertaken during the migration of the portals, updating/replacement of plugins, extensions and themes and their maintenance
- The service provider will maintain site-wide standard security features (including for forms and logins)
- The service provider will provide 24/7 support for emergencies (regular support is only expected during regular working hours)
- The service provider will perform bug fixes in a quick and reliable manner
- The service provider will ensure that a quality assurance process was applied prior to requesting validation of new deployments from ParlAmericas
- The service provider will use tracking systems that are accessible to ParlAmericas that logs work time, changes to code, and the identification and resolution of bugs and other issues
- The service provider will endeavour to transfer knowledge in responding to questions from the



ParlAmericas IT Officer and provide targeted coaching sessions (either remotely or in-person) as required to effectively transition the portals' maintenance to that staff person after the 1-year duration of the service agreement.

## **E. TIMELINE AND CHECKPOINTS**

The following timeline outlines desired completion deadlines and validation checkpoints for different aspects of the RfP process and the execution of the service agreement. They are provided for planning purposes to assist prospective service providers with their proposal. These may be modified at the discretion of ParlAmericas prior to the commencement of the service agreement.

### Request for Proposals Timeline:

RFP Issued:	October 02, 2019
Questions from Bidders Due:	October 16, 2019
Responses Provided by:	October 23, 2019
Proposals due by:	November 4, 2019

All questions in relation to this RfP must be submitted by October 16, 2019 and should be directed by email to: Christian Navarro, ParlAmericas Web and Design Officer at [christian.navarro@parlamericas.org](mailto:christian.navarro@parlamericas.org)

Written proposals will be reviewed by a selection team at ParlAmericas who may seek clarification from bidders regarding any information contained in their proposal. The top finalists *may* be asked to provide oral presentations to the selection team.

### Deliverable Milestones and Work Flows:

- Work is expected to begin with a kick-off meeting in November 2019, at which time the successful applicant will be provided access to the CMS, server, database and all the information regarding the portals.
- ParlAmericas would seek to complete Phase 1 of the service agreement by December 15, 2019, if allowed for by workloads among the service provider's assigned team members (as described in the proposal).
- The performance of work under this service agreement will be broken down into 1-month sprints. ParlAmericas will participate in planning meetings to determine the priorities of each sprint, and be integrated to scrum meetings, as required, in addition to project management and issue tracking tools used to monitor and validate work performed.
- The service provider will perform work by agreed upon deadlines as per task authorizations determined in sprint planning meetings. On acceptance of each task authorization, the service provider will issue a tracking ticket and log work performed using an online project management system that is proposed by the service provider. ParlAmericas will review and reserves the right to require corrections before validating the closure of each ticket.
- Knowledge transfers and the development of supporting materials will occur in tandem to these deliverables and form part of priorities determined in each sprint.



## **F. REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS**

Work undertaken by the service provider to achieve deliverables outlined in this RFP will be supervised at ParlAmericas by the Deputy Director, Operations and Planning, and be supported by a dedicated Web and Design Officer.

## **G. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

ParlAmericas seeks to work with a web development team with demonstrated experience, longevity of operations, and technical competencies to provide services solicited in this RFP over a 12-month period.

English oral and written fluency are essential. This will be the working language used in the delivery, preparation of documentation and communications related to the service agreement.

There is no restriction on the geographic location from which proposals can be submitted. Relative proximity to Ottawa-Hull (national capital region) in Canada would be an asset to allow for in-person meetings, as required.

## **H. CONTENT OF PROPOSALS**

Responses to this RFP should contain the following sections and information:

### Qualifications

- a) Business profile: Brief overview of projects and services that your team currently delivers;
- b) Team Organization/Expertise: Details of team members that will be assigned to the project, their proposed responsibilities, a brief description of their professional qualifications (including with programming language, and shortlisted servers) and experience related to different aspects of the RFP, and their position within the organization's broader structure.
- c) Relevant Experience: Listing of 3 recent similar projects that the firm was engaged in for other entities, description of the scope of work performed, and the names, titles and phone numbers of at least two (2) client references. Examples of projects with non-profit organizations and on multilingual portals are encouraged.

### Technical Proposal

- a) Approach: Proposed strategy and options to address the full list of requirements outlined in Section D of this RFP. For Phase 1 of the service agreement, this should include descriptions of processes that will be used (during Phase 1 of the service agreement to) migrate the portals to a new server, and update their CMS, plugins, and security, and fix functionality errors related to these updates. For Phase 2 of the service agreement, this should include a list of services to be included as part the portals' maintenance and in support knowledge transfers (including through documentation) to enable ownership of their maintenance by ParlAmericas by the end of the service agreement. Any additional recommendations that could result in efficiencies or cost savings for ParlAmericas in the portals' maintenance/transitioning to a new server are also encouraged and welcomed;



- b) Responsibilities and Work Processes: This section should outline expected divisions of roles and responsibilities, as well as workflows between the service provider and ParlAmericas. If feasible, ParlAmericas would propose to integrate its IT Officer in sprint planning and review meetings to enable gradual integration to work being performed under the service agreement.
- c) Project Management and Tracking: Description of processes to be applied in the management and tracking of authorized work under this service agreement (inclusive of logs to track work time, changes to code, and the identification and resolution of bugs and other system issues;
- d) Schedule: Outline of projected completion dates and milestones for different aspects of the RFP;

#### Financial Proposal

ParlAmericas proposes to divide the service agreement into two phases that notably involve: Phase 1) a migration of the portals to the new server, updating of CMSs, plugins, extensions and themes as well as of security components, and fixing of any functionality errors (including replacements of plugins and extensions if needed) that may arise through the updates; Phase 2) ongoing maintenance and security updates to ensure ongoing and full functionality of the websites and their protection from security threats through the remainder of the service agreement's duration.

- a) For Phase 1: ParlAmericas proposes a deliverable-based fee structure based on a table with an itemized breakdown of projected hours per grouping of requirements (exclusive of applicable taxes);
- b) For Phase 2: ParlAmericas proposes a monthly bank of hours that can be divided between maintenance and security update requirements, troubleshooting, knowledge transfers, and new development requests (if needed) that will be determined through monthly planning meetings.

#### **I. OTHER PROVISIONS**

- Service providers are required to provide professional, objective, and impartial services and to prioritize the sustainability of the portals, including through knowledge transfers and other services to support their progressive transition to maintenance by ParlAmericas after the duration of the one-year service period.
- Service providers are required disclose any situation of actual or potential conflict that could impact their capacities to serve the interests of ParlAmericas, or that can be reasonably perceived as having this effect. Failure to disclose such situations may lead to disqualification or termination of the service agreement.