Website Redesign and Development
Request for Proposal

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I. Submission Timeline and Format

Tuesday, June 3, 2014:	RFP sent
Monday, June 16, 2014:	Proposal Submission Deadline
Tuesday, June 17:	Proposal Reviews
June 17 – 20:	Interview Candidates
June 23:	Board Meeting Presentation of 2 finalists; Award contract
Summer	Marketing Committee works with design firm on website refinements
August 25:	Board Meeting: Board approves final website design
September 1:	Website goes live

Submissions must be in the PDF format and may be delivered via e-mail to the RFP coordinator. All questions should be directed to the RFP coordinator. All submissions received after the due date will not be considered. Camden Conference may request an interview with vendors with the highest rating.

For ease of reference, each firm receiving this RFP is referred to as a "firm" and the firm selected to provide services for Camden Conference is referred to as the "selected firm." This RFP states the instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure and criteria by which a firm may be selected.

II. Organization Overview

The Camden Conference was founded in 1987 as a nonprofit, non-partisan educational organization which mission is to foster informed discourse on world issues. The primary activity of the organization is a three-day Conference on the third weekend in February at the Camden Opera House, which is also live-streamed to the Strand Theatre in Rockland, and to the Hutchinson Center in Belfast. The Conference gathers some the best minds on foreign policy including academics, journalists, and government and non-governmental actors, to share their insights and expertise on a range of global issues. The focus of the Camden Conference changes each year, addressing topical issues of global import. Recent Conferences have taken on the difficulties in the Middle East, and the food and water resource challenges facing the global community. The focus of the 2015 Camden Conference is Russia.

The Camden Conference is a volunteer-driven organization with one full-time staff member and one part-time staff member. The Program, Community Events, Finance, Development, Education, Hospitality, Marketing, and Technology Committees are comprised of volunteers who collectively produce the Conference and all of its year-round events. Committed to keeping registration fees low and accessibility high, funding comes from individual gifts and memberships, local business sponsorships, and grants from institutions, foundations and corporations.

Essentially a citizens' foreign policy conference, the Camden Conference is unique among conferences on international affairs. Ordinary people gain exposure and access to high level diplomats, academics, and international experts, and are able to engage with them on the issues on an unprecedented level. Attendees come from both the local area and outside of Maine. Audience members at the three venues are invited to participate in a moderated post-presentation discussion with the speakers. Twenty percent of seating is designated for scholarships for students from Maine high schools, colleges and universities, though more students are welcome at full price.

Essential to its mission, the Conference also offers 50-70 free Community Events throughout the year. These events include lectures, discussion groups, film series and other educational and cultural events related to the Conference theme. Most are offered free of charge or for a minimal entrance fee to encourage attendance by a diverse audience.

III. Project Overview

Camden Conference seeks an experienced firm to redesign www.camdenconference.org and implement technologies to meet the objectives outlined in this document. This will be a concept to completion production, from scoping to information architecture, design, development, and content migration, and should include an option for firm staff to update and enhance the website on a limited and an ongoing basis, for both technical maintenance and content updates.

The audience of Camden Conference's website includes these categories: (1) Camden Conference speakers and potential speakers; (2) Camden Conference ticket buyers,; 3) the general public in mid-coast and Southern Maine interested in community events information; 4) the Camden Conference Community, which consists of members, board members, advisory board members , and volunteers; (5) students and teachers; (6) the general public outside the immediate area; (7) foundations, potential sponsors and donors are also a special audience for the website.

The content for Camden Conference's website may include an "About Us" page with contact info, staff, Board of Directors, Advisory Board, Partners and Sponsors; program and project overviews; a calendar of events; organization news, special and current events; an archive that will be the repository of the past conference agendas, speakers & bios, photos and Conference videos; Conference summaries ("Highlights") and annual report publications; interactive maps; resource lists (films, books, etc.); online surveys and other actions; an education page with sections for programs (both for university students and senior college), resources, and teaching aids; a fundraising page, including membership, sponsorship and foundation information.

A detailed outline of possible tabs, vertical content, and navigation is attached.

The redeveloped website should be easy to use and intuitive, organized around the February Camden Conference as a main event with photos and graphics, and easy access to Program, Community Events, Education, and Videos as sub-brands with graphic elements, and with a Calendar as a featured function.

We envision a home page with a description of the organization mission and history; and with a prominent function for ticket purchasing. We envision a moving gallery of photos, where the current Conference topic in terms of place, culture, and topic, plus photos of past speakers, upcoming community events, and student involvement are prominently featured.

In addition, Camden Conference is interested in creating a website experience with updated postings such as related local issues, world issues, book and policy reviews, video features and photos with links to Facebook for Community Events summaries, reviews, photos, and dialogue; a link for a live Twitter feed, and a link to Linked in.

Goals of New Website

The primary goals of the new website include:

- Internet presence that professionally represents the organization, clearly communicating who we are, what we do, and why someone should come;
- The site should communicate a strong sense of legitimacy to potential speakers, and give confidence that we are vibrant, current and important;
- Provide users with up-to-date information about Camden Conference, the organization's events, projects and programs;
- Design and functionality that provides tools to encourage users to interact through easy access to archival research, social media, publications, and other recommended resources such as books, articles, and films;
- A site that is easily managed and maintained by non-programmers through a web-based interface;
- Conversion of visitors to the website into contributing users (as a possible scale-up feature);
- Encourage membership, foundation support, and corporate sponsorship;
- Encourage ticket purchasing, donations and memberships, and make doing so easy;
- Administrative capability for website and managed data; Retain information and information relationships from current website systems;
- Design and content aimed at engaging our target audiences: (1) Camden Conference speakers and potential speakers, (2) Camden Conference Ticket Buyers, (3) general public in the mid-coast Maine interested in community

events information, (4) Camden Conference Community members, (5) students and teachers, (6) general public outside the immediate area, and (7) foundations, potential sponsors and donors are also a special audience for the website.

Budget

Camden Conference is a small non-profit organization, but we have committed resources for the re-design of the website. We honor our financial supporters and fiscal goals by carefully spending the funds we have been entrusted with. As such, we will be carefully vetting responses based on their reasonable pricing and high quality, amongst other features. Additionally, as a small non-profit, our staff time is already focused on current projects. In light of this, responses should not presume to use Camden Conference staff time as an inexpensive way to implement features, transition data, etc. We would like to see a proposal that may include a phased development of some of the features have been proposed.

IV. Current Situation

The current www.camdenconference.org web site is hosted in a local facility, running on WordPress 3.3.2, with 18 accessory plug-ins (perhaps some are no longer used; full version details are given in a separate file). The site was designed in 2007 or 2008, with page layout optimized for 4:3 screen sizes at a fixed width of 980 pixels, and without any special behaviors for tablets or smart phones.

The total number of pages on the site is now just under 200, although some of these are "container" pages that delineate sections (and are not generally viewed) and other pages are no longer in use or are duplicates or drafts. There are also around 80 posts, which are variously tagged (mostly community events announcements and conference news) and which appear in a limited collection in panels on the main home page, in a full listing on their dedicated section pages, and as full articles on a single pages.

The original web site designer abruptly closed his business in early 2012, so that maintenance of the site by others has resulted in a few ad-hoc treatments that deviate from the original structure. It is hoped that the redesign can address these few anomalies and restore a fully coherent organizational scheme to site's back end and URL scheme.

Every page has a header area with the Conference logo, a horizontal menu, the most recent highlights video, and Facebook, Twitter and e-Newsletter sign-up links. There is also a common footer, with conference sponsor logos, and copyright, privacy and policy links, and the conference phone number.

The Home Page has additional header elements: our mission text, the next conference's title and date, and a rotating photos panel.
The content area includes panels for a featured video, a featured speaker, forthcoming community events, and recent conference news. The sidebar has a panel with information on membership and educational activities, and a links panel. Occasionally there are ad hoc panels there too.

In addition to the home page, the major content collections on the web site include the following:

The Conference pages:

Forthcoming conference: Program, Articles, Booklist, Links, Press (external press coverage), Speakers (bios, etc)
Added to this section after the conference: CamCasts (videos of the talks, usually 10), Highlights (a collection of reviews of the presentations, both as separate articles and as a PDF booklet download), and Photo Gallery
The Conference pages are placed as a collection into an archive area each year, and a new set of Conference pages is created for the next event. The "Camcasts" or videos of the talks are stored locally on the web server for the years 2006-11; they display in a pop-forward FLV player panel. From 2012 onwards, the videos have been placed on Vimeo.com, and play in an embedded window or full-screen mode. The most recent year or 2 are HD (16:9).

Archives:

Archived Conference pages (noted above), email newsletters, and special conference-specific educational material (see education section below).

Timely information pages:
Conference News articles, Community Events listings, registration details

General information pages:
Membership, scholarships, the Conference itself (organization, volunteers, history, etc), Camden

Educational activities pages:
These contain a mix of timely and general information about the Conference's engagement with schools and students, including a special section on the Curriculum Enrichment Program (CEP). Up to now, the CEP section has displayed articles and short video clips from the 2010-2014 conferences, suitable for use in a classroom. We will keep these archives, but the design of the CEP will be changing from 2015 onwards, and will most likely not include the video clips.

Shopping cart:
Uses HTTPS and special plug-ins; visitor can purchase memberships, donate to scholarships, purchase tickets to the various venues, etc.

V. Functional Requirements
Calendar
The calendar needs to display upcoming community events, special events, workshops, events, etc. It should have a function to open up the event for venue address and time, and special events should have a link to buy tickets. This area must be easily updatable by staff and designated users, and should be searchable by geographic location or venue. We would like the ability to pull in next X-number of events onto a panel on the home page.

CMS
The website should have a simple inclusive content management system allowing non-developer staff members the ability to create, edit and remove web site pages. The CMS should allow for the upload and use of different media in a page. Pages should allow for structural intra-relating and relationships with other managed content. Camden Conference must be able to maintain full editorial control of content without dependence on outside contractors.
If feasible, we welcome the ability to change the color scheme of structural elements, and to have an option for assorted treatments of images: flush left, right, center, with some options on borders and margins.

E-Newsletter
Camden Conference currently publishes an e-newsletter, and we may be interested in shifting the content toward an e-magazine format that can be easily read online. The website must integrate the content of the e-newsletter into the website and maintain an archive of past articles. The content should be easily searchable by subject and date of past editions.

Media
The website should allow embedding from YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, Twitter, and Google Plus, 16:9 aspect ratio, and preferably, we would offer embedded video on the website and would not require the segue to another site such as Vimeo.

API
Users should be able to use social media to interact with our website. Camden Conference hopes users can use their Facebook profile or Google Plus account to comment on blog posts.

Financial Integration
We need the ability to register and pay for Camden Conference tickets and special event tickets through Authorize.net. We would like to add PayPal, and the decision to offer this will be based on the price of adding this feature. We also need to have a function that allows people to become members and corporations to become sponsors at various levels of support.

News/Articles/Blog
The website should have an optional blog plug-in that aligns with the branding of the webpage and could be featured on the homepage. The blog might be updated weekly with articles, news clippings, videos, and other content. These content

elements are proposed to drive audience to the website on a more regular basis. Camden Conference is interested in using the website as a platform for people to fully engage whereby users create their own content. Camden Conference is open to ideas for enabling user-generated content that is useful to the broad spectrum of our target audiences. We don't feel that we have the staff at this time to implement this feature, but may in the future.

Search
Website should have a simple and standardized search with a text-box able to search site-wide, such as a Google custom search. Search should capture items like past conference archives, past speakers, current and past articles, photos, videos, newsletter contents, and education information and materials.

Usage Tracking
The website should use Google Analytics for usage tracking**.** We would also prefer to recode video links so that clicks to start videos are registered with GA as well as with Vimeo, YouTube, etc., including any locally archived items that use the FLV player. Currently clicks to start Vimeo-hosted videos are registered only with Vimeo, and clicks to start locally hosted FLVs are not registered at all.

Additionally, clicks on any off-site links should be similarly registered with GA.

SEO
The website should use best practices for search engine optimization.

Site Maintenance
We would like to negotiate an on-going relationship with the developer such that we pay a fixed monthly support fee based on an assumed number of hours at an agreed upon hourly rate. This monthly fee will be reviewed and adjusted semi-annually based on the prior six month experience.

We would also like to be able to register individuals to post content without any authority to change the site structure. For example, a Community Events person could log onto the site and post notices for Community Events or summaries of recent community events. A program committee member could log onto the site and post new speaker bios, additions to the program schedule and links to articles published by a speaker.

VI. Design Requirements
The following are overall requirements for this project:

Above all, intuitive and easy to navigate website, good search function. The website should reflect the best of who we are and what we do.

The website should undergo significant redesign and reorganization with a highly dynamic visual style. The design should incorporate the Camden Conference logo into the center of a fresh and inventive new design context evoking the Camden Conference brand. Some words which describe the Camden Conference experience: engaging, stimulating, international, accessible, connected, educational, thought-provoking, fun, dynamic, intellectually rigorous, civilized in discourse, serious.

Design should be upbeat, visually appealing, have a unified look and feel, and provide easy navigation throughout. It should also evoke a sense of place, i.e., perhaps Midcoast Maine in Mid-February, and the subject of the current annual conference.

We would like to see as much information "above the fold" on the home page (or any page, for that matter), without the display getting too cramped. Avoid the requirement to scroll to find the most important information (a weakness on our current site). As an example, www.nytimes.com has a menu bar which remains static at the top of the page no matter how far down you scroll including an upper left corner "Sections" drop-down column on each web page, which we find highly desirable for easy navigation. This static menu bar allows you to always return to the home page, to reach any section or to search the entire site without scrolling to the top of the page.

We are striving for balance of text and visuals that will be fresh, interesting, and functional for mobile devices. Camden Conference is still very much about words. *"Fostering informed discourse".* Our event consists of speakers who mostly speak without slides, or without too many of them. Therefore, a judicious approach in the transition to the more modern, image-based designs of today is appropriate.

One site we like, www.musicatmelo.org, has a beautiful slide show that is economic in its use of images and the timing of their movement. This site uses strong, compelling visuals featuring active and accomplished people, iconic elements, and abundant white space to suggest a vibrant, active, energetic organization in a very attractive setting. Like classical music, a conference on world affairs is intellectual, stimulating and engaging. We like the site for the prominence of Ticketing and Support. Additionally, the setting for Music at Menlo is beautiful, as is the setting for the Camden Conference (though it is mid-winter).

As a well designed and highly functional calendar is important to us, we feel that a graphic calendar is appropriate, but also like the description and clarity of the calendar on the www.baychamberconcerts.org site.

We like the one-stop Conference page and its clear navigation tabs on https://poptech.org.

For another sense of who we are as an organization, but with a strong bent toward the serious, is the site www.wacphila.org. This organization does many of the same things that we do, the speakers may be similar, but its audience is somewhat different and less diverse.

We like www.cmcanow.org for its visual clarity, its general organization and its use of sub-brands on the homepage. We can envision prominent sub-brands such as 2015 (or current conference) Program, Community Events, Education, and perhaps a Video or "Watch and Listen" section on our homepage.

We envision using the posters of past conferences as a way to organize the archive, and hope that a designer will be able to relate the legacy poster designs into the new design context. Graphics will be provided.

VII. Technical Specifications

Website should be developed utilizing modern web design and standards, compatible with modern browsers and screen dimensions, whether on standard computers or tablets or mobile devices (i.e., responsive to both touch and mouse-click environments), while providing graceful degradation for older browsers. Website URLs should predominantly be clean URLs, and organized hierarchically with category wording so that usage reports can be generated easily from Google Analytics.

This design must be mobile device friendly without compromising well-laid out web page design for computer users.

VIII. Proposal Format

Proposals should include information outlined in this section:

1. Describe in detail the firm's proposal to address the requirements outlined in this RFP. This should include plans for:
    a. how the website design will prioritize space and content to the primary audiences.
    b. how primary audiences will be motivated to engage.
    c. idea(s) to encourage user-generated content.

2. Confirmation that the project can be completed within the timeline provided by the Camden Conference.

3. Provide a brief history of the firm and its experience providing services for organizations like Camden Conference.

4. Document examples of the firm's experience in designing/developing similar functionality to each of the project requirements.

5. List the project team (including programmers and designers) and short biographies of each team member. Indicate any portions of the work, if any, which will be sub-contracted and to whom.

6. Provide a list of the firm's clients comparable to Camden Conference indicating the length of service of each account. Include contact name, telephone number and website URL. A minimum of three references that may speak to projects of similar scope is requested.

7. Describe the project process and methodology including sample deliverables from past projects of similar size and scope.

8. Explain methodology for demonstrating to and training Camden Conference in use of new website.

9. Describe the fee structure and how Camden Conference will be charged. The costs involved may be categorized separately as redesign, implementation costs, maintenance costs, and software licensing costs. Also include the firm's plan for post-deployment maintenance, support and upgrades including hourly rates for services. The price you quote should be inclusive, if your price excludes certain fees or charges you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

10. If hosting services may be provided, clearly identify cost as well as description of the hosting platform, uptime, server location, data backup and integrity plan.

11. Document choice of content management system. Our preference is to use WordPress.

12. Document experience illustrating expertise in:
• Template design
• Providing design services for non-profit organizations and associations
• Developing/deploying content management systems with custom components which allow for self-management by an organization.
• Integrating e-commerce solutions
• Developing services using third party APIs
• Developing viral, user-generated content sites and/or applications

13. Proposal must contain signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

VII. Basis of Selection
Camden Conference is seeking a comprehensive proposal from qualified firms for fulfilling these objectives. Firms are expected to show a demonstrative capability of this type of work.

Camden Conference will evaluate proposals and, if a firm is to be selected, select the firm on the basis of:

1. The firm's plan to achieve the goals stated in this RFP in a comprehensive manner.

2. The firm's experience, examples of work, qualifications and successes in providing similar services, and in particular, the firm’ s ability to deliver world-class design on a website platform;

3. The firm's references from non-profit organizations, and other clients comparable to Camden Conference.

4. The firms pricing and timeline.

5. The quality of the proposal, responsiveness to requirements and adequacy of information provided.

6. The firm's plan for hosting, post-deployment maintenance, support and upgrades and rates for these services.

Submission of a response to this RFP does not bind Camden Conference to engage the firm to provide the requested services. The firm is solely responsible for the costs it incurs in responding to this request for proposal.

Camden Conference will negotiate contract terms upon selection. Maine-based firms will be given preference if they meet our goals for design and function. All contracts are subject to review by the Camden Conference Board of Directors, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

Camden Conference RFP Website Re-Design
Content & Navigation Architecture Example

Home Page

Search
BUY TICKETS
Contact
Social Media links

FEATURES

Camden Conference Brand: Tag line, history & mission (since…), community, Volunteers, why here, free community events, February conference at 3 venues (links to photos), previous speakers highlighted, link to past speaker/bios who attends,
&
2015 (current) Conference: Topic and Dates, summary paragraph of topic; (Link to Schedule and List of Speakers w/Bios, when available) ATTEND: links to tickets, accommodations, etc.

Featured Video (removable)

Featured slideshow (speakers, audiences, Russia, Camden, etc.)

Topical Weekly Content: Global issues content, topic-related book reviews, general foreign affairs news/commentary; track activities of coming speakers

'SUB-BRANDs' with possible graphic icons:

2015 CONFERENCE PROGRAM
Topic overview
Speakers

COMMUNITY EVENTS opens to new Community Events 'homepage'
- All Community Events and special event information: a list and event description
- Searchable by location/venue.
- List of related local events
- Facebook link for post-event summary, user-generated comments, and photos

EDUCATION: opens to new Education 'homepage'
- News Stories: Schools, Students, Teachers, Conference Activities, Photos, Scholarships
- Student Contests: Essays, Research Proposals, etc
- Curriculum Enrichment Program (CEP) (2008-2014)
- Faculty Resources: Course Design, Reading Lists, Digital resources, Events, Videos, Media Links, Organization Links
- Facebook links for High School Teachers, College Faculty, Students and General Public
- Contact: EC Chair, EC Vice-Chair

VIDEOS (recent, digital archive)

CALENDAR: Monthly, click on event for details, ticket purchase; sort function by location

TABS for other pages

2014 Conference (most recent conference): opens as a homepage for all Conference information
Agenda, Topics, Speakers, Photos, Videos
Alphabetical List of all speakers (also photos?)
Keynote Speaker (Photo and Bio)

Speakers (past speakers alpha list and bio links): opens as full page with all info

Support Us: opens as full homepage for Fundraising information

- Make a Donation
- Make an Automatic Monthly Donation
- Become a Member
- Renew Your Membership
- Become a Business Sponsor
- Become a Volunteer

Archive: opens as homepage for archives with search function
Conference Posters open to: Past Conference Topics/Conference Agenda/ Speakers/Videos &/ Photos
Past Keynote speakers/bios
Videos (16:9 aspect ratio) (with Search Function)

About us: opens as a homepage for About
History
Community partners (Libraries)
Volunteers
Become a volunteer

Who We Are
Board of Directors
Advisory Board
Staff
Contact: Address, phone
(auto email: President@, programdirector@, administration@, volunteer@)

Camden & Midcoast Maine
Getting Here
Travel & Accommodations
Local Culture, with links to PenBay Chamber, Bay Chamber, PopTech, The Strand, museums, bookstores

Search Capabilities: Topic, Geography, etc.

Links: Vimeo, U-tube, Facebook, Linked in, Camden, Belfast and Rockland Public Libraries