

Recommendation to the Somerset County Library Commission
for the Award of Contract for
Website Design and Development 2024

Background

The current iteration of the website dates from a redesign project in 2016 which focused on updating the look and feel of the previous website (primarily coded in html) to match existing branding, and to complete the updates as expeditiously as possible. The successful bidder created a website in WordPress that allowed for SCLSNJ staff to build pages from existing templates.

SCLSNJ's Website Design and Development Project 2024 has four goals:

1. Focus on the primary site users – Library customers – and improve usability for common tasks
2. Update SCLSNJ website look and feel to be consistent with current visual identity guidelines
3. Add functionality for granular distributed management of site content
4. Ensure the site is widely usable by adhering to industry standards for accessibility and responsiveness

Process

In November 2023, the Somerset County Library Commission authorized Finance Director, Brian Morgan, to use the Competitive Contracting process in order to procure website development services. Morgan issued a Request for Proposal (RFP), the availability of which was advertised in the in the legal notices section of the Newark Star-Ledger and the Courier News, as well as posted to the homepage of the SCLS. The deadline for submitting a response to the RFP was Friday, January 19th. Due to inclement weather, the submission date was postponed to Tuesday, January 23, 2024 at 11:00 am. One addendum was issued through posting on the Library's website. On Tuesday, January 23rd, Morgan received nine proposals. One proposal was disqualified and the other eight proposals were accepted as being complete.

An evaluation team consisting of Deputy Director, Lynn Hoffman, Manager of Operations, Rebecca Sandoval, and Digital Services Manager, Richard Loomis, reviewed the proposals separately and made initial scoring decisions. The team met on January 30th to review and tally scores for each RFP. There were five categories for scoring the RFP with a maximum total of 100 points.

The categories for scoring were:

1. Understanding the Requested Work (15 points)
Demonstrates clear understanding of the scope of work, Completeness and responsiveness to the RFP
2. Knowledge and Technical Competence (25 points)
Education and training of the employees, Ability of respondent to perform all of the tasks and fulfill the stated requirements, Reputation, judgment, experience and efficiency of the respondent
3. Management, Experience and Personnel Qualifications (20 points)
Record of reliability and quality of service/references, Industry or program expertise
4. Flexibility (15 points)
Platform facilitates development by SCLSNJ staff, Demonstration of ability to be flexible during the implementation process, Willingness to work on future development
5. Ability to perform the services in a timely manner (10 points)
6. Cost (15 points)
Explanation of costs, Cost comparison, Additional services

Recommendation

The committee completed the scoring process and calculated an average score for each vendor. The total number of points awarded to the eight vendors, in descending order, were:

1. Byte Studios (88)
2. JesseJames Creative (84)
3. Joy Riot (83)
4. Interpersonal Frequency (75)
5. Technology International (75)
6. Civic Plus (74)
7. GHD Digital (63)
8. Adept Layer (57)

Based on the scoring and associated ranking, we respectfully submit our recommendation to procure website development services from Byte Studios at a cost (initial one-time cost including annual maintenance) not to exceed \$52,800. This includes Phase I, II, and III costs. including optional features.

Brian Morgan
Lynn Hoffman
Rebecca Sandoval
Richard Loomis

Jan 31, 2024