

**Office of Administration and Finance**  
Holyoke Community College  
303 Homestead Ave  
Holyoke, MA 01040

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**Holyoke Community College**  
**Web Redesign and Development**

**RFP # 25-01**

ISSUE DATE:  
December 23, 2024

PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED BY:  
January 28, 2025 at 11:00AM

DELIVER PROPOSALS TO:

Holyoke Community College  
Business Office  
Attn: Brian Jackson  
303 Homestead Ave  
Holyoke, MA 01040

## 1. Purpose

Holyoke Community College (HCC), a state agency in Massachusetts, is seeking to create a new website experience with a comprehensive redesign of its current website and implementation of a flexible content management system (CMS) to improve its web development efforts. The Web Redesign & Development project aims to upgrade and replace the existing software used for editing, designing, and publishing content on the college's website. The selected vendor will not only provide design and templating solutions but will also assist in implementing the new system and offer ongoing support and maintenance services.

Additionally, HCC plans to implement a new managed hosting environment for this redesigned website (see Addendum A for the RFQ for Hosting) and its existing web hosting solutions. Interested parties are invited to submit proposals outlining their services, pricing, and rates for the redesign, hosting, or both.

## 2. Timeline

RFP Issue Date: December 23, 2024 Submit questions specific to the RFP by: January 7, 2025 by 3:00pm  Response to questions posted by: January 14, 2025 Proposals due by: January 28, 2025 by 11:00am  Online presentations for semifinalists: February 10, 2025 Onsite presentations by finalists: February 17, 2025  Anticipate proposal award date: March 17, 2025
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Dates may be revised due to unforeseen circumstances. Every effort will be made to inform respondents of changes to the timeline. Please note that the finalists will be required to participate in a one-day on-site demo to an HCC user group for final evaluation.

## 3. Contact Information

This Request for Proposal (RFP) has also been distributed electronically using the CommBuys system (<https://www.commbuys.com/bsa/>). The project name is **Web Redesign and Development**, and the project number is 25-01. Correspondence to HCC should include this project number as well as the title. Interested parties are advised to check the “last change” field on the summary page of this RFP on CommBuys to ensure that they have the most recent information. If you are having trouble viewing or downloading any of the files on CommBuys, please contact the CommBuys help desk at [OSDHelpDesk@mass.gov](mailto:OSDHelpDesk@mass.gov).

Information submitted in response to this RFP is subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law, M.G.L., Chapter 66, Section 10, and to Chapter 4, Section 7, Subsection 26. Any statements in

submitted information that are inconsistent with these statutes shall be disregarded. The Commonwealth makes no guarantee that any services will be purchased from any contract resulting from this RFP.

In lieu of a Bidders' Conference, any questions concerning the specifications must be emailed to [bjackson@hcc.edu](mailto:bjackson@hcc.edu) by January 7, 2025 by 3:00pm – no phone calls. The answers to those questions will be posted as an amendment on CommBuys on January 14, 2025

#### **4. About HCC**

Established in 1946, Holyoke Community College, located in Holyoke, MA, serves a diverse community with rapidly evolving needs. Over 7,000 students annually enroll in more than 90 associate degree and certificate options, and more than 5,500 elect noncredit and workforce development courses. The college provides a university-caliber education and exceptional preparation for success, including a comprehensive academic and personal support system. A vibrant, accessible, and welcoming campus community enables HCC students to thrive.

#### **5. Current Situation**

The college presently hosts its website with Ingeniux (a custom CMS). It contains 5000+ unique web pages within itself with over 12,000 URLs referenced both internally and externally from the site.

At present, 10 regular users have the authority to post using the Ingeniux content management system. A Full-time Web and Digital Content Manager, a member of the Institutional Advancement Office of Marketing and Strategic Communications, is the chief maintainer of data on this website.

In the past, there has been no centralized management, through a web team or individual, of overarching information architecture and content, growth strategy, project prioritization, or policy/guideline development and enforcement. It is our intent, via centralized management and adoption of the open-source WordPress CMS or equivalent CMS, to appropriately manage the HCC web presence.

Additionally, some college functional areas have external hosting arrangements with private vendors, which may or may not link to the college website. These external sites, in most cases, will need to be re-integrated back into the main HCC website via section/department “mini sites” or multisite installation.

Target audiences and users of the HCC website include but are not limited to:

- Prospective students
- Current students
- Administration, faculty, and staff (full-time, part-time, and contract)
- Grant and special program administrators and participants
- Business and industry; Community partners and organizations; schools, colleges and universities, and government agencies.

- Event planners and promoters who seek to publicize college events and attract attendance/enrollment.
- The external community (parents/families of students, alumni, donors, board members, and trustees), as well as news media, job seekers, library database users, and the general public who rely on the HCC website as a source for college information.

## **6. Objective**

### Ease of Use

Holyoke Community College aims to offer a user-friendly content management system (CMS) environment accessible to front-line staff and other content contributors without expertise in HTML markup language. The editing interface should resemble widely-used, intuitive word-processing applications, allowing users to view their formatting changes directly on the screen without needing to review the underlying code. We have chosen to use WordPress or equivalent flexible CMS as our CMS moving forward but are open to the correct software implementations as long as they can meet our needs and provide the access needed.

### Improve Information Accuracy

The overall quality of the information is to be improved by eliminating inaccurate and redundant content. All pages should be accurate, up-to-date, and comprehensive.

### Branding

The CMS theme should support the current HCC brand and maintain the HCC image and style conventions.

### Marketing

The CMS should facilitate the delivery of marketing material, including newsletters, email, etc., with the appropriate plugins.

### Reduce Duplication of Information

Wherever possible, information should be stored once and reused multiple times. Examples include profiles, event notices, content relevant to HCC programs and services, and story headlines across an entire site.

### Improve Customer Experience

The CMS theme and UI should enhance the college's ability to provide an easy-to-use, full-featured, accessible environment for website visitors.

### Workflow System

The CMS theme and UI must provide a robust workflow mechanism. A good workflow system

supports different levels of workflow complexity, for instance, a press release may require only an author and editor to review the page prior to publication, while an academic program page might require several people across multiple offices to review and approve the information prior to publication.

#### Granular Control of Pages by Both Individuals and Groups

The CMS theme and plugins should support access rights, both by groups (e.g., pages only editors can see) and by individuals (pages editable only by Marketing and Communications).

#### Ability to Integrate/Syndicate Multimedia Assets

The system should support natively the use of video, SVG, and audio files.

#### Technical Support

The vendor should offer 24x7 technical support.

#### Compatibility with Existing College Systems

Integrate content within the Banner portal system and Award Spring/Razor's Edge fundraising system. Login information integrates with Azure SSO using SAML.

#### Standards Compliance Checking

The system should be able to enforce HTML compliance and Section 508/WAI Accessibility compliance. The live website should be viewable on all current browsers, including Edge, Firefox, Chrome, and Safari. It should appear and function equally well on both Windows and Mac platforms.

## **7. Project Goals**

1. Recreate and greatly enhance the college's existing website to provide a resourceful, informative, and marketing asset that provides a user-friendly environment that emphasizes access to the college's services and departments and business opportunities.
2. Develop a cost-effective, easy-to-use, interactive, and architecturally sound website that is flexible enough to support the college's Internet needs for a minimum of five years.
3. Create a standardized format and enhanced graphical look for all pages, thereby establishing a unified theme throughout the college's website.
4. Complete design and coding for the design of the home page of the website to be integrated into a CMS theme using page and component templates.

5. Complete design and coding for the design of a template to be used on interior pages of the site, including CSS styles for fonts, colors, headings to at least H6 level, data tables, links, navigational elements, search elements, lists (both <ul> and <ol>), and up to 10 additional elements to be agreed upon later.
6. Includes programming of actual functionality on the site.
7. The general website design and elements will include accessibility, usability, appeal, functionality, and ease of incorporating future features.
8. Although the college has some specific requirements, we are also interested in your ideas for content and, more specifically, your approach to redesigning the style of the college's website. We encourage respondents to consider and propose alternative solutions and recommendations.

## **8. Design Requirements**

1. The navigation on the page for users must be clearly visible, intuitive, and accessible to people with disabilities.
2. The design must have a clean and integrated appearance.
3. The design must translate easily over into subsequent pages or sub-domains that will need to use that style.
4. The design must encourage visitors to move deeper into the site.
5. The photos on the front page must communicate the diverse segments of the community served by HCC and the resources available.
6. Feature Requirements: The website will require the following features using designs accordingly:
  - a. Online forms
  - b. Events Calendar
  - c. News and events
  - d. Faculty and Staff Directory
  - e. Photo Gallery
  - f. Maps and directions
  - g. Easily integrated video
  - h. SEO Core Features

## **9. Site**

## **Implementation**

1. If your theme or plugin uses templates to place content, describe the steps in creating a

- template.
2. Describe the skill set needed to create or maintain these templates.
  3. Describe how your product applies or enforces style restrictions and constraints on text or graphic content. For example, if the text content is longer than the area allotted for placement, or the graphic content is smaller or larger than the allotted space.
  4. Does your theme or plugin support templates that allow content to be dynamically queried from the RunTime server? Explain in detail how this is accomplished and how non-technical users can create these queries on their pages.
  5. Does your theme or plugin allow the bulk import of existing web pages and assets into the CMS?

## **10. Product Support and Training**

1. Describe your standard theme or plugin support offering and its cost.
2. Describe your software maintenance contract, the warranty, and the maintenance service provided under the warranty. Provide the costs for the next three (3) years.
3. Are there any limitations to the number or type of technical support calls that a customer can make each year?
4. Do you provide 24/7 technical support? If so, is there an additional cost for this?
5. How are technical support issues escalated and resolved? Describe the typical resolution process.
6. Describe your training program. Include class schedule and length, and indicate whether training is offered at your site or at the customer's site. Indicate whether or not any training materials are provided.
7. Describe the different roles and skill sets required to support the product.
8. Describe the professional services offered to facilitate installation and customization. What are the rates for such services?

## **11. Vendor Information**

### **Company Information**

Please provide the following information about your company:

1. Short history of the company:
2. Description of the company's products and services: and
3. Number of years in business.

### **Vendor Experience and References**

The successful vendor must demonstrate a proven ability to successfully perform tasks and to complete and deliver website features, as described in this RFP. HCC will determine the vendor's stability, adequacy of resources, staffing, products, and experience on the basis of the bidder's proposal and on checks of references provided by the bidder.

1. Please provide at least three (3) customer references.
2. Provide at least three (3) site references (provide URLs) showcasing the use of your product.
3. Vendor Qualification

Vendors must meet a minimum set of criteria to be considered for this project. Please respond only if you meet all of the following requirements. Vendor:

- Has been in operation for at least three (3) years;
- Has extensive experience with higher education;
- Does all development, implementation, and design in-house or with a design partner (no subcontractors);
- Can provide references for successful prior projects with comparable scope;
- Can demonstrate outstanding budget, quality, and timeline control.

## **Proposal Preparation and Evaluation Criteria**

Vendor proposals should be delivered as electronic MS Word or Adobe PDF documents.

### **Executive Summary**

### **About Us**

### **Project Budget and Timeline Estimate**

### **Terms and Conditions**

### **References and Supporting Material**

### **Required Forms**

*Please include full contact information and URLs for at least three (3) references. Additional supporting materials may also be included.*

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The college reserves the right to select the vendor most appropriate for the project. Proposals will be evaluated on completeness and timeliness of the proposal, adherence to the needs and standards set forth herein, documented recommendations, and value. The college reserves the right to waive stated requirements, negotiate further with vendors, discontinue the evaluation process, award based solely on the merits of a proposal without in-person presentations, or choose not to award to any respondent. The college has no obligation to explain why a vendor was or was not selected or to inform respondents of any course of action other than their selection or non-selection.

## **Preparation Costs**

All preparation and presentation costs incurred by vendors in responding to this proposal request are the sole responsibility of the vendor. All documentation submitted to HCC as part of a response to this proposal becomes the property of HCC, unless otherwise requested by the vendor at the time of submission.



## Confidentiality

The college reserves the right to review the content of vendor responses with internal or external persons for the purposes of deciding on a vendor.

## Submission

Vendors should **email** their proposals in attached MS Word or PDF format to: Brian Jackson at [bjackson@hcc.edu](mailto:bjackson@hcc.edu) by 11:00am on January 28, 2024.

Questions about this proposal or *COMMBuys* procedures should be submitted to:

Brian Jackson  
Holyoke Community College  
303 Homestead Avenue  
Holyoke MA 01040  
(413) 552-2495  
[bjackson@hcc.edu](mailto:bjackson@hcc.edu)

Supporting documentation may be forwarded via email, or postal mail the above address. Refer to the timeline for submission dates. Questions about or additional information required to respond to this proposal may be addressed to above.

## Additional Information

The college completed a needs analysis and web redevelopment strategy. The strategy phase addressed: needs/preference research, schematic information architecture, and navigation; management, policies, and procedures; content management system (CMS) recommendations, third-party software integration; and Web 2.0/social media (analytics, interactivity, syndication, collaboration, and personalization); and a resource development plan (human and equipment).

The College Web Redesign Committee Chairs will manage project decisions and provide an overall direction.

The College Web Redesign project will be a partnership between individuals at the college and the web contractors; we expect the work to be collaborative.

The college's web team anticipates being in regular contact with the design firm for ongoing discussions and timely decision-making as outlined in the vendor's Service Level Agreement that should be provided with your response to this RFP.

We expect a predetermined timeline with built-in checkpoints and updates about progress.

The new website, design, images, products, and information must be original and shall become the property of the college, including development tools, programming code, and implementation materials.