



Request for Proposal

Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (CORE)

Request for Proposal #CORE-109

Update Website Design and Development Project

April 29, 2019

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2. Overview

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit competitive proposals to establish a contract for the updated design and development of CORE's site, <http://www.coresourceexchange.org>.

2.2. IRC Overview

Founded in 1933 at the suggestion of Albert Einstein, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover, and gain control of their future.

Working in over 40 countries, the IRC is a leader in humanitarian relief - bringing sustained support to regions torn apart by conflict and disaster. In addition to our work overseas, the IRC also has 29 U.S. resettlement offices that help newly arrived refugees by providing immediate services. The IRC advocates on behalf of the displaced by addressing the root causes of conflict and standing up for the world's most vulnerable populations. The IRC's strategy centers on its ambition to continue to improve the scale and effectiveness of IRC programs worldwide with evidence of what works best to impact people's lives in conflict and fragile settings.

2.3. CORE Overview

The Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (CORE) at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) is a technical assistance program designed to strengthen linkages between overseas Cultural Orientation (CO) programs for refugees approved for admission to the United States and Reception and Placement (R&P) activities conducted upon their arrival. Funded by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau for Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), and implemented by the IRC, CORE provides information, materials and technical assistance to overseas CO programs and to domestic refugee service providers.

A refugee is a person who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence. A refugee has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. Most likely, they cannot return home or are afraid to do so. War and ethnic, tribal and religious violence are leading causes of refugees fleeing their countries.

The primary target audience for the CORE site is domestic and overseas refugee resettlement staff involved in delivering CO. They can vary in experience and understanding of CO, from interns and volunteers to staff whose primary responsibility is CO delivery. Users come to our site to learn the basics of CO through our Online Certification Course and deepen their knowledge by accessing webinars, lesson plans, toolkits, and other resources.

3. Desired Services

3.1. Problem to Solve



IRC began the Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange (CORE) in 2015, taking over from the previous technical assistance provider for CO, Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). Initially CORE created its website (coresourceexchange.org) to house relevant materials created under CAL, notably curriculum, welcome guides, and backgrounders. However, over the past four years, CORE has evolved to include online courses, new resources, webinars, and other digital channels ([another website for refugees and a mobile and desktop app](#)). While CORE has expanded its offerings, coresourceexchange.org has not undergone significant updates in alignment with these changes.

In late 2018 and early 2019, CORE conducted a review of coresourceexchange.org, which included conducting user testing and working with a digital marketing agency to analyze the site and identify pain points that could be remedied. Through this process, CORE identified user experience as a major problem, linked directly to the architecture of the site. Currently, some of the most relevant and popular resources are buried on the site. The digital marketing agency helped design a sitemap, which the CORE team has updated. The next step for CORE is to implement this new sitemap alongside a fresh design and user experience that is modern and follows all current website best practices. Ultimately, the coresourceexchange.org site needs a design that better highlights all the site has to offer in a more intuitive design that is cohesive across all pages and leads visitors through resource offerings.

For this scope of work CORE envisions the following:

- Nine designed page templates to move current content into. Templates listed in [deliverables below \(3.4\)](#), represent the main types of pages on the CORE site. The templates should be easy to use and adapt into new pages in the future.
- A refreshed theme (including button styling, font sizing, spacing recommendations) that will keep the site looking consistent with its present look.
- Assistance moving site over to new design and QA. Depending on cost, a CORE member could input all content into templates, but would need help turning new site live and checking for errors.

CORE currently uses WordPress with Divi and various plugins. CORE is hoping to stay with Divi for this project, but would be open to considering a switch if it wasn't cost and time prohibitive. CORE won't need new logo, branding or color schemes during this project.

Please note that CORE would like a strong emphasis on User-Centered Design. During CORE's website analysis, resettlement staff did card sorting activities that were used to design the new sitemap. While CORE won't have time or funds for user testing in this project, the pages should be set up in a way that the CORE staff can easily make changes after conducting user testing in the future.

3.2. Refugee Communications Channels

CORE also manages other digital channels designed for refugee use. This project will not involve any redesigns of those products, but they are important to consider in a site refresh. These channels didn't exist when the original site was created, so CORE would like to improve usage of those channels by highlighting them better on the CORE website design. While the



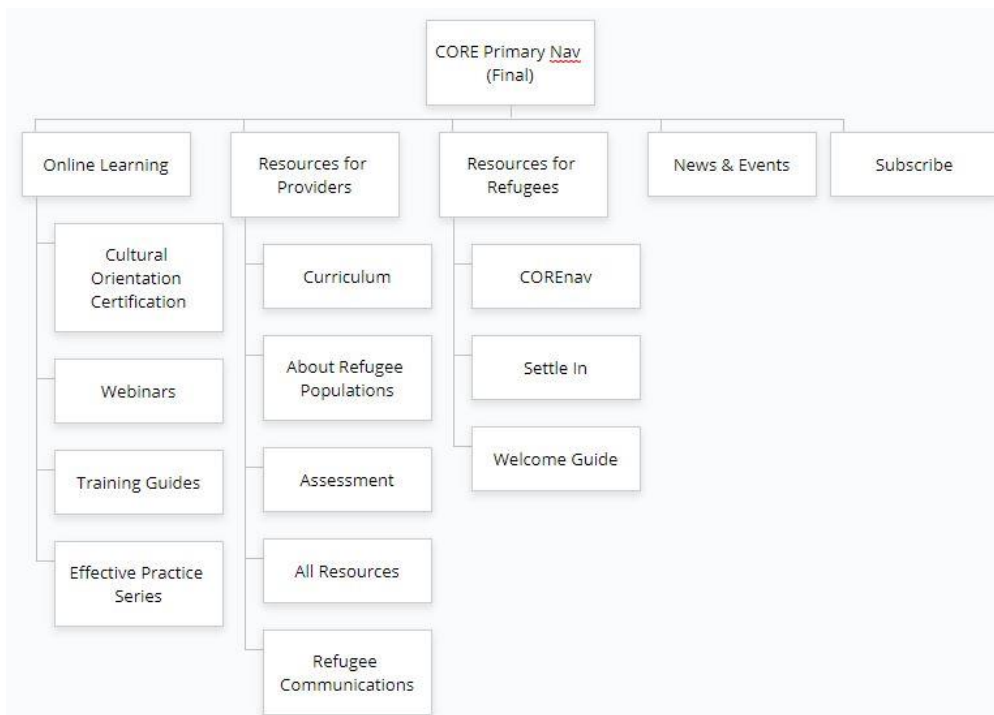
channels can be used by refugees independently, our primary stakeholders are still resettlement staff. CORE relies on staff working directly with refugees to use the refugee communications materials during CO sessions and to help install the mobile app on refugee phones.

Refugee-Facing Mobile App – *Settle In* is a [mobile](#) and [desktop app](#) that serves as a Cultural Orientation travel companion for refugees throughout the resettlement journey from pre-departure to post-arrival. With a focus on an interactive, personalized experience and on-the-go needs, *Settle In* allows refugees to jump directly into any chapter and find iterative, instructional lessons followed by easy, game-like quizzes.

Refugee-Facing Website – The CORE *Resettlement Navigator* (<https://www.corenav.org/>) is a mobile optimized website that provides refugees with clear and vital U.S. resettlement and CO information. This website presents a wealth of refugee-facing content in a variety of formats (videos, podcasts, PDFs) and is currently available in multiple languages.

3.3. Sitemap

New site map CORE would be implementing with this design refresh:





3.4. Deliverables

Bidder shall provide detailed pricing information for each deliverable below.

Note: Virtual meetings will be considered, if face-to-face meetings are cost-prohibitive.

Project Phases	Deliverables	Proposed Cost
Discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A kickoff meeting with CORE • Discovery report to ensure alignment • Weekly check in meetings during project to update on progress 	
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two design concepts for each of the following nine pages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homepage • Primary nav landing (Online Learning, Resources for Providers, Resources for Refugees) • CO Certification Course landing page (Course itself staying as is) • Resource collection (Would be used for any resource collections including Curriculum, About Refugee Populations, Assessment) • Webinars • News • Page for any content currently in PDF • An “All Resources” search/browse page • A Refugee Populations detail page 	



Design and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One final wireframe and design comp for each page type above • A minimum of two rounds of revisions for design comps • Templates and theme uploaded into CORE WP 	
Client Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates corresponding to review and feedback after client testing 	
Deploy: No later than September 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training Digital Content Manager on new templates • Assistance moving content to new templates (please provide cost to be on call for issues and also cost to move all content for CORE) • New site design live and analytics tracking set up 	
Ongoing Improvement and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of a retainer for ongoing site updates and troubleshooting 	

3.5. Technical Specifications

- WordPress CMS, preferably in Divi
- All current plugins integrated
- During switchover, little-to-no downtime for site, specifically the Online Cultural Orientation Certification Course
- Strong user-centered and responsive design
- Analytics – set up collection method to track user behavior data, downloads and performance. Note: Site is already tracking in Google Analytics.

3.6. Project Management

The chosen vendor will be responsible for project managing their team through the design and development process while adhering to the deadlines and deliverables listed below in collaboration with the CORE team lead.

4. Proposal Requirements and Format

Please note that the finalist will need to pass a conflict of interest review that is standard for all International Rescue Committee partners.

The Bidder shall be responsible for all costs associated with the preparation and submission of its bid, and IRC hereinafter referred to as “the Purchaser”, will in no case be responsible or liable for those costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the bidding process.

4.1. Mandatory Requirements

The bidder must provide the following information in the proposal:

- Describe up to three design engagements that include substantially similar experiences or functionality to this project. Describe the problem, the approach taken, and the outcome. Include portfolio of work.
- Creative strategic approach to CORE’s project



- Proposed timeline from kickoff to launch. Project must be complete by September 15, but CORE will give priority to a vendor that can complete project sooner.
- Proposed price schedule per deliverable
- List and professional profiles of key staff identified for this project
- Full contact information for three references.

4.2. Provider Organization

The bidder should outline their organization and describe how this qualifies the organization to be responsive to the requirements of the RFP. Please provide information about: Company mission, company history, company size, company skills and talent, customer service structure, technical licenses/certifications relative to the service being offered, proof of insurance, and registration.

4.3. Deadlines and Delivery

Bid closing date: Proposals should be submitted by 5pm EST on May 31.

Proposals will be delivered via email to Michal Panner, Operations Officer, at michal.panner@rescue.org, and copy to Mohamed Obaidi at mohamed.obaidi@rescue.org.

4.4. Budget and Term

Accepting proposals for up to \$25,000. The contract resulting from this RFP will commence upon CORE's signing of the contract and will end **no later than September 15th**. Preference will be given to a vendor that can complete quality work sooner.

4.5. Contact Guidelines

A prospective Bidder requiring any clarification of the Bidding Documents may notify the Purchaser in writing during the specified Question and Answer period as indicated in the RFP Timeline below. All questions from bidders and their subsequent responses during the RFP process will be shared with all of the bid respondents.

Please direct inquiries to Operations Officer Michal Panner at michal.panner@rescue.org and copy Mohamed Obaidi at mohamed.obaidi@rescue.org.

4.6. RFP Timeline

- **RFP published** May 1, 2019
- **Intent to Bid** May 10, 2019
- **Questions regarding proposal received** by May 13, 2019
- **CORE responds to questions** by May 22, 2019
 - All questions received by bidders will be shared with other respondents
- **Full RFP Proposal Submissions:** Due May 31, 2019, 5pm Eastern Time
- **Bidder selected:** By or before June 14, 2019
- **Contract negotiation and execution:** June 17 – June 28, 2019
- **Project initiation:** Week of July 1, 2019



5. Evaluation of Proposals

CORE reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids and to accept the bid deemed to be in the best interest of CORE and is not bound to accept the lowest price bid submitted.

The responses shall be evaluated by a committee of no less than three CORE staff members. Selection criteria will include:

Criteria	Weight (%)
Vendor background and experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous work with nongovernmental and nonprofit organizations on multicultural, international, and/or developing country projects is preferred • Previous work specifically in virtual learning or knowledge exchange platforms and sites that offer large quantities of documents for download • Expertise in WordPress and Divi • Ability to adjust project schedule to accommodate funder reviews and occasionally multi-stakeholder input 	20
Quality of work samples and creative approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated ability to simplify and modernize sites to enhance site usability • Design strategies for enhanced user engagement 	20
User-centered design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulated approach to assessing and addressing user needs and behaviors • Ability to accommodate a variety of users worldwide interested in a variety of learning opportunities (online courses, webinars, lesson plan PDFs) 	20
Technical expertise and support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to create a design that can be easily managed by a range of experience levels • Technical agility in finding solutions and addressing problems • Ability to implement best practices in user experience, ADA compliance, SEO • Top-level industry standards for user security 	30
Reasonableness/competitiveness of proposed compensation for services	10

Websites to Reference:

These sites have features that CORE would like to emulate in regards to the online learning design, usability, intuitive layout, and presenting a wealth of information in a simplistic yet engaging way.

Homepage design (clean, simple, modern): <http://www.mailchimp.com>

Learning collection pages and organization:



- <https://generalassemb.ly/>
- <https://www.coursera.org/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/>
- <https://kayaconnect.org>
- <https://switchboardta.org/resources/>

About page: <https://generalassemb.ly/why-ga-is-worth-it>

6. Other Terms and Conditions

INSURANCE

Prior to the commencement of the work to be performed by the successful Bidder, the Bidder shall file with IRC Certificates of Insurance evidencing compliance with all requirements contained in this RFP. Acceptance and/or approval by IRC does not and shall not be construed to relieve Bidder of any obligations, responsibilities or liabilities under the contract awarded by this RFP.

IRC SMALL & DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS GUIDELINE

It is the policy of IRC to encourage the greatest possible participation of disadvantaged businesses as bidders. IRC has established goals for each of the following disadvantaged business categories:

- Small Business (SB)
- Small Disadvantaged (SDB) including Alaska Native Corporations and Indian Tribes,
- Women-owned and Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned (WOSB)
- Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone),
- Veteran Owned Small Business (VOSB)
- Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned (SDVOSB) Small Businesses and “Other than Small Business”

For purposes of this bid response, bidders should indicate their eligibility for any of the above-listed categories. If chosen as a finalist, you will be required to provide your registration number as well as additional information.

WITHDRAWAL OF RFP

Proposals may be withdrawn before the RFP submittal deadline by submitting a written request to the Contact Person. Re-submittal before the RFP submittal deadline can be made; however, they may not be re-submitted after the deadline.

RFP COSTS

All costs incurred in the preparation and presentation of proposals to the RFP shall be completely absorbed by the responding party to the RFP. All documents submitted as part of the RFP will become property of the IRC. Requests for specific material to be returned will be considered. Any material submitted that is confidential must be clearly marked as such.

AWARD BASIS



At the option of the IRC, finalists for the Agent designation may be selected for a final round of negotiations; however, applicants are encouraged to present their best offers with their initial submission. IRC reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals, to waive any irregularities in any proposal process, and to make an award of contract in any manner in which IRC, acting in the sole and exclusive exercise of its discretion, deems to be in IRC's best interest.

CONTRACTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Once an applicant is approved as the exclusive Agent, the successful respondent will enter into a contract with the IRC. Contract discussion and negotiation will follow the award selection. Bidders must be amenable to inclusion, in a contract, of any information provided whether herein or in response to this RFP, or developed subsequently during the selection process.

CONTRACT TERMS

Firms that are selected as the exclusive Agent are eligible to enter into a service contract. The IRC may terminate the contract upon written notice to the Agent of not less than thirty (30) days.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

The IRC emphasizes that all respondents will receive full consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sex, disability, age or sexual orientation. Minority and women-owned firms are especially encouraged to respond to this RFP.

LIMITATIONS

The IRC, reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals and to waive any informality in the solicitation process. Total proposal length excluding cover letter, details of professionals who will provide services, and contact information of client references, should not exceed 12 pages.

TYPES OF EMPLOYEES

Consultant: A consultant is a type of independent contractor who is engaged through a consulting agreement or similar contract. A consultant may be an entity or individual. A consultant, like any type of independent contractor, is not an "employee" of IRC, receives no employee benefits and is not protected by employment, labor or tax laws. Properly classified individual consultants generally have their own ongoing businesses -- whether they are sole proprietorships, corporations, LLPs or LLCs --- offer their services to the public, have more than one client, and have their own equipment. Typically, consultant's fees are based on a schedule of deliverables.

Regular Employee: A regular employee is hired by the IRC to provide services to the IRC in exchange for compensation.



Limited Term /Temporary Employee: A limited-term employee is hired to provide services to the IRC in exchange for compensation. Their assignment has an end date which is noted in the hire letter and does not exceed three years.

Short Term/Casual Employee: A short-term employee (sometimes referred to as a casual worker) is hired by the IRC to provide services to the IRC in exchange for compensation and works no more than 180 days (six months) in any given 12 month period.

Occasional Employee: An occasional employee is hired by the IRC to provide services to the IRC in exchange for compensation and works less than 1,000 hours in a calendar year. An occasional employee's status shall be reviewed every three years.



International Rescue Committee, Inc.

Intent to Bid

IRC Reference #: CORE#109

Company Name _____

(Please indicate #1 or #2 below)

1. It is the intent of this company to submit a response to the (Title of RFP) Request for Proposal.

Please provide a name and email address for the person within your company that should receive notices, amendments, etc. that are related to this RFP:

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Signature (if faxed) _____

Title of Person signing _____

Date _____

We realize that this is an intent to bid and in no way obligates this company to participate in this process.

2. This company DOES NOT intend to participate in this RFP.

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

Please email this form at your earliest convenience to the attention of:

Name Michal Panner (michal.panner@rescue.org)

Name Mohamed Obaidi (mohamed.obaidi@rescue.org)

