



Ella Sharp Museum Website
Request for Proposals

Department of External Affairs

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Communications Coordinator

517.787.2320

1. Project Background

The Ella Sharp Museum, founded in 1965, offers programs, exhibits and experiences preserving community history, advancing art appreciation and understanding, connecting children with science and, through the Cell Block 7 Museum, explores Jackson's prison history. Our 10 acre campus includes the Hadwin Center with exhibit galleries, program spaces, rental facilities, and offices; the Merriman Sharp farmhouse, a one-room schoolhouse, a log cabin, barn and other historic structures; and the Hurst Planetarium. Our mission focuses on providing opportunities to connect our community with history, the arts, and science. We received American Alliance of Museums accreditation in 1978 and have been reaccredited twice. One of the first small museums in the country to receive such distinction, the Ella Sharp Museum is one of only 38 accredited institutions in the state of Michigan.

The current build of ellasharp.org was made in early 2016, and launched in October of 2016. The site was built around an ecommerce engine or plugin to sell products such as classes, planetarium shows, and donations online. This structure limits the functionality of our site given current needs. We know that 69.83% of patrons who come to our site visit pages "ABOUT," "EXHIBITS," and "VISIT," suggesting most traffic is looking for WHY and HOW they should visit Ella Sharp Museum. Our current objective for the site is therefore to make it easy for visitors to find the most relevant information needed to physically visit our museum, including but not limited to, ticket pricing, hours, current exhibits, planetarium shows, how to get here, etc. Now we seek to redesign our site to be more user-friendly and make the most important information more accessible, while not losing the ability to purchase memberships, buy tickets to special shows, and make donations online.

2. Project Objectives

- a. We aim to build a destination and landing site for all web traffic, a hub of information about Ella Sharp Museum's exhibits, classes, events, and all programming
- b. Our goals for this website are to provide answers to the questions people ask when looking to visit our museum, enroll in a class, or find more information on an educational workshop or event
- c. Through this project, the Ella Sharp Museum hopes to generate a more consistent and clear online presence
- d. Build in commerce functionality to allow for donations, membership renewals, and tiered ticket levels to be purchased through site
- e. Projected budget is \$10,000. Vendors may propose an alternative budget but should keep in mind that cost will be a major criterion in evaluation and selection

3. Scope of Work

- a. We are asking the vendor to provide:
 - i. Initial meetings to discuss sitemap and most relevant information to a visitor

- ii. Discussion and assessment on current visuals to evaluate the need for more photography and video content
 - iii. Several rounds of changes to each client approval stage (copy, design and build)
 - iv. Advice on how site is currently hosted, and best way to host in the future.
 - v. Advice on creation and timing of site backups
 - vi. Search engine optimization and google analytics access
 - vii. Training for staff on management of web content, how to navigate site, and instruction for making changes
- b. A projected timeline for this project should be clearly stated in proposal

4. **Proposal Format**

- a. Proposals must be submitted electronically to Erik Lyman, Communications Coordinator, at erikl@ellasharp.org. Deadline for submission is 5 p.m. on Friday, July 13, 2018.
- b. Proposal must include:
 - i. Overview (not to exceed two pages) that outlines the approach and goals for the website redesign; include brief description of how you have approached similar projects in the past and links to completed projects
 - ii. List of tasks and who is responsible for each
 - iii. Plan for consulting with museum staff on site map, provision of content, and training of staff to make future changes
 - iv. Detailed timetable for completion – desired timeframe is 90 days from issuance of contract to completion of new website. Preference may be given to vendors that can complete project in 60 days
 - v. Budget
 - vi. One-page resume for each member of project team and description of his/her role in the project
 - vii. List of 3 references

5. **Evaluation**

Proposals will be evaluated by the Department of External Affairs and the Executive Director of Ella Sharp Museum. Bids may also be reviewed by the Finance Committee of Ella Sharp Museum. Criteria include budget, timeline, qualifications of project team, and past work completed by vendor.