



Web Designer Request for Proposals

Maryland Humanities is seeking a qualified Web Designer with a proven track record in creating organizational websites that are visually appealing, and intuitive and easy for visitors and users to navigate. Our current website, while functional, does not reflect the user-friendliness and modern design necessary to engage a broader audience and fully represent the dynamism of our programming. We aim to transform our website into a dynamic, accessible, and inviting platform that enables us to reach new audiences and deepen existing connections.

ABOUT MARYLAND HUMANITIES

Maryland Humanities is a statewide non-profit that employs 16 staff persons and has a 28-person board. The organization's current main programs include a robust grant program, One Maryland One Book, Maryland History Day, and Museum on Main Street. A comprehensive overview is available online at <https://www.mdhumanities.org/about-us/>.

Mission: Maryland Humanities creates and supports bold experiences that explore and elevate our shared stories to connect people, enhance lives, and enrich communities.

[Humanities Now](#), our new Strategic Plan was adopted in December 2021.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Maryland Humanities has been recognized for its transformational impact by program participants, yet our current website fails to capture that spirit. This comprehensive website redesign is aligned with our strategic plan, specifically Initiative 2 – Growth & Reach, which focuses on establishing branding and messaging strategies to differentiate Maryland Humanities and build excitement and engagement. The new website will build upon our recent work with a Communications Consultant toward this goal.

We have increasingly considered our role in the ecosystem of humanities work across the state of Maryland, and how we can foster trust and relevance among a dynamic population. For this reason, it is imperative that our values guide the Web Designer's work. More specifically, we'd like our website to reflect our commitment

to strengthening communities of belonging, while also celebrating and embracing the various cultures, identities, and the lived experiences of all Marylanders. To this end the Web Designer must engage various populations and listen deeply to their needs, ensuring the website is uplifting and creates space for a variety of partners' stories.

SCOPE OF THE WORK

Maryland Humanities seeks a Web Designer with a proven track record of excellence in developing and implementing user-friendly, engaging, and accessible websites.

This designer will work in partnership with the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Advancement to capitalize on the creativity and networks of the Maryland Humanities board and staff.

Website Needs:

- Shift from WordPress to a more user friendly platform.
- More modern up to date design consistent with our branding and color palette.
- Accessible to viewers in multiple languages.
- Site should have interactive elements that encourage visitors to stay and engage with the content.
- Ability to solicit and process online donations.
- User friendly event calendar.

Scope of Services:

- Conduct an assessment of our current website.
- Evaluate peer organizations' websites and examples to establish a meaningful and unique redesign plan for Maryland Humanities, engaging Board members, staff, and key stakeholders.
- Design and implement a new website for Maryland Humanities, incorporating the branding and messaging strategies developed by our Communications Consultant.
- Hold interviews and listening sessions with users to compare the efficiency of using the new website with the old website, and adjust the user experience based on those results.
- Provide a final redesigned website that centers our values and priorities.

For more background on the goals and evaluation criteria Maryland Humanities will use for the final product, [visit here](#).

Criteria

Proposals will be rated and ranked based on the following criteria:

1. Overall match between the RFP requirements and proposal: Understanding of scope, objectives and completeness and coherence of response (25 points).
2. Qualifications and previous work of consultant (25 points).
3. Demonstrated ability of consultant to carry out communications plan of similar character and size and working with diverse audiences (25 points).
4. Ability to work within the timeframe and budget (25 points).

Timeline & Budget

Project will begin no later than September 2024 and be completed by March 2025.

Most of the work will be done via Zoom or another platform of your choice.

The anticipated budget for the project is \$10,000-\$15,000 including expenses.

Proposal Content Requirements

Your proposal must be submitted electronically as a PDF, be no more than ten (10) pages, and include the following information:

- Please explain your understanding of the scope of services and how this aligns with your skills and experience.
- Please give examples of how you have incorporated a racial equity lens into your work.
- Provide estimated cost and timeline.
- Include a similar product from previous website design work that the person or team has led.
- Include a list of key personnel and a CV or resume of everyone who will work on the project.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Those wishing to submit proposals should do so by no later than August 16h at 5:00 p.m. by submitting the proposal and any company materials indicating qualifications to: Lindsey Baker, lbaker@mdhumanities.org.

The Selection Committee will conduct interviews during August-September 2024 with prospective consultants to discuss their proposal in greater depth and evaluate its alternatives with an expected agreement by the end of September 2024.

You may contact Lindsey Baker, CEO, at lbaker@mdhumanities.org for further information or with questions.

Additional Information pulled from the grant application to The Baker Fund, which has provided funding for this effort.

Purpose of the request and anticipated results:

Maryland Humanities will seek a Website Designer with a proven track record for excellence in renovating organization websites with the result of higher usability and engagement. Our current website, while functional, lacks the user-friendliness and modern design necessary to engage a wider audience and fully reflect the dynamism of our programming. Our work has been lauded as "transformational" by program participants, but our website fails to capture that same spirit. This project will be a comprehensive website redesign and renovation; transforming our digital space to create a dynamic, accessible, and inviting platform that empowers us to reach new audiences and deepen existing connections. Our strategic plan includes Initiative 2 - Growth & Reach: establish branding and messaging strategies to clearly differentiate Maryland Humanities from other organizations and build excitement and engagement. A new website will be a logical next step after our work with the Communications Consultant toward this goal.

Maryland Humanities has increasingly considered our role in the ecosystem of humanities work across the state and how we can further foster trust and relevancy among a dynamic population, and this understanding will inform the Website Designer's work. Our values will guide the Website Designer's work, such as our belief in strengthening "a community of belonging, celebrating and embracing each authentic self, lived experience, identity, and idea." To produce the appropriate, value-aligned website for Maryland Humanities, the Designer must engage various populations and deeply listen to their needs. Further, we envision the resulting website to be uplifting and create a space for partners' stories.

The Consultant's Key Activities:

- Conduct an assessment of our current website
- Evaluate peer organizations' websites and exemplars and engage Board members, staff, and key stakeholders to establish a redesign plan that is meaningful and unique to Maryland Humanities
- Design and implement a new website for MH, implementing the branding and messaging strategies produced by our Communications Consultant
- Hold interviews and listening sessions with users to compare the efficiency of using the new website with the old website and adjust user experience based on these results
- Provide a final renovated and redesigned website that centers our values and priorities

As a statewide organization focused on the cultural sector, we strive for value-informed growth in service of our ecosystem of partners. We believe an investment in our website will hone our organizational voice and result in a more cohesive external presence, drawing more people into

our collective work to demonstrate our distinct role in this ecosystem and serve more people better.

We would like our new website to be more effective for its users. Users should be able to find specific information quickly, discover new information that applies to them, and feel welcomed by the site's accessibility and style. To ensure these results, we will expect the following results from the Website Designer:

- A better-branded website
- The website is easier to navigate and more intuitive
- There is clear messaging across the website
- The website feels engaging to users

When these results are met, we anticipate the following results for our mission-driven work:

- Increased depth of resources and places for connection on our website
- Increased number of individual donors
- Increased website interaction and user engagement