



Website Design & Development Request for Proposal

Summary

The Center for Human Rights and Global Justice (CHRGJ) at New York University's School of Law seeks proposals to design and develop the Center's new website. This will be a concept-to-completion production. The purpose of this RFP is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates and to provide the candidates with the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.¹

The existing website at <http://chrgj.org> was originally designed and produced in 2009 and has been modified several times since then. The site is maintained with in-house resources, but limited assistance post-launch is requested.

Timeline:

RFP Sent: January 28, 2016

Responses Due: February 22, 2016

Goal for new website launch: June 2016.

Budget for new website: \$15,000 – \$18,000 (\$20,000 including post-launch assistance.)

This is an open and competitive process.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of sub-contractors you must clearly state this in your proposal. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. The CHRGJ will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by CHRGJ's legal counsel, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

¹ NYU is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer regardless of race, color, religion, creed, sex, marital status, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, on-the-job injury, sexual orientation, political affiliation or belief. Decisions are made without consideration of these or any other factors that employers are prohibited by law from considering

CHRGJ Overview

In 2002, CHRGJ was established to bring together and expand the rich array of teaching, research, clinical, internship, and publishing activities undertaken within the NYU Law School on issues of international human rights law.

Having built a reputation for its academic and clinical work in an array of human rights subjects (e.g. counter-terrorism, corporate abuses, caste discrimination, gender-based violence, economic, social, and cultural rights) CHRGJ is positioned at the crossroads of advocacy and scholarship. The center capitalizes on its unique setting to interrogate the human rights field from a critical perspective. CHRGJ brings together scholars and practitioners to strengthen both human rights practice and theory, and foster engaged academic inquiry, research, and writing.

The Center aims to make substantive, cutting-edge and sophisticated contributions to human rights research and legal scholarship and to participate in original and constructive ways in on-going policy debates relating to human rights.

From 2015-2017, the Center's scholarship, workshops and events will be focused on the theme of "Inequality, the Global Economy, and Human Rights".

The Center hosts around 20-25 research scholars and practitioners, and has six permanent staff members.

Current Website

Our current website at <http://chrgj.org> is about 6 years old and does not serve us well anymore:

- The design is outdated and the navigation is clunky;
- The structure is not intuitive, with too many sub-menus and important pages buried under layers hierarchy;
- Many documents feature on several pages in a confusing way. Cross-referencing should have a clear and easy-to-understand logic;
- The site does not make it immediately clear what we are known for and it is not possible to view multiple announcements at once;
- The search engine is not adequate.

Overall, the site lacks clear ways for our visitors to find what they want and engage with our research — even staff sometimes have a hard time finding things on the website. Revisions have happened in a piecemeal way, and over time the back end has grown increasingly disorganized. We need a website that is easier to navigate for users and easier to manage for contributors.

Our Audiences

We have three primary audiences: (1) human rights practitioners and policy-makers; (2) academic peer institutions and scholars; (3) current and prospective students. One of the biggest challenges in redesigning our website is to ensure that it speaks to each of these audiences, without alienating the others.

We are aware that these different audiences have different (or even contradictory) needs, and that different esthetics may be more suitable to one audience or another. One strategy would be to work with a ‘neutral’ home page from which people enter various sections of the website that have a layout that is more appealing to them. Currently our website does not *reflect the needs and – stylistic – preferences of these various audiences* well: the website is not scholarly enough for academic audiences, while not having enough of a hands-on feel for practitioners. We need a layout that does not just mix elements appealing to the various audiences, but that, instead, intelligently guides users to where they need to be – with those pages reflecting their priorities and stylistic preferences. We want to ensure that the new website provides an interface that allows users from very different “audiences” (with potentially very different perspectives, interests and needs) to experience or navigate the website in different, tailored ways, which enable users with different profiles to readily access the types of information that interest them most. Note: Our audiences are primarily but *not exclusively* domestic (US-based), and we specifically seek to broaden our appeal to users in other countries.

Our primary audiences are as follows:

1. *Human rights practitioners and policy-makers*

- **Who they are:** These users are active as lawyers, policymakers, advocates, activists and journalists in the field of social and economic rights (right to water, right to health, right to food, right to sanitation, gender-based violence, racial injustice) and in the field of civil and political rights (protest and assembly rights, freedom of information act litigation, CIA rendition and secret detention);
- **Where they are:** We aim to be relevant to NGOs, legal clinics and governmental organizations in both the Global North (e.g., NYC, Geneva) and the Global South;
- **What they want:** These users are likely to be principally interested in our *publications* – research, reports, articles, and online commentary – and information regarding our clinical work (activities of the affiliated Global Justice Clinic). These groups may operate with a limited budget, and our research, workshops and lectures can therefore be an important resource for them to further develop their own strategies. This audience may also seek out our reports because of their standing and authority;
- **What we want to convey:** We want to highlight the practical relevance of our work to current human rights issues and policy debates, through images and an easy search function that allows users to find information about *both* publications *and* events or announcements. We want to present ourselves to them as a center engaged in rigorous academic work that has direct application to the human rights issues on

which they focus (particularly our clinical work, through the affiliated Global Justice Clinic), and that can help them to better understand the policy context in which they operate. As a significant portion of these users may not have a legal background, we want to ensure that the information on our website is accessible and appealing to non-lawyers/those without formal legal training. Communication with this group should stress the relevance of our academic work for their own practical work by highlighting the ways in which our analyses matter on the ground. We want this group to recommend our resources to other colleagues and organizations. For this audience, the primary purpose of the *website is a document center and good event calendar*.

2. Academic peer institutions and scholars

- **Who they are:** These are scholars, professors, and other academic professionals mainly from the legal field, but many of whom are likely to have an interest in interdisciplinary work (political science, anthropology, social movements, gender, development, etc.)
- **Where they are:** These users are chiefly from peer institutions in the United States and secondly in Western Europe and Australia, but we would like to broaden our appeal to human rights institutes in a broader range of countries.
- **What they want:** Scholars visit our website typically to look for specific documents. They cannot be expected to muddle their way through the current layered structure of menus and submenus, but should have easy access to an advanced search interface. Scholars looking for one topic should also see information about other topics or documents that are useful for them.
- **What we want to convey:** While the principal interests of this audience would be primarily in our publications (accessible through a searchable database) as well as scholar and faculty profiles and bios, our own principal concern with this group is reputational, that they perceive the Center as attracting high-quality researchers and scholars and producing high-quality academic research and writing. The website should showcase the many domains we're active in and the many activities the Center and its staff are undertaking, by highlighting the faculty, staff, and scholars affiliated with the Center and making their work readily accessible through a searchable database.

3. Current and prospective students

- **Who they are:** Current law students or prospective law students
- **Where they are:** JD students at NYU who are looking to see what the school offers in the field of international human rights. They are in the U.S., but are likely to have an international orientation. Our goal would be to also generate more visibility amongst prospective students that are not yet in the U.S.
- **What they want:** Students currently use our website mainly for information about jobs and other student opportunities (such as coursework, fellowships, etc). We want

to also draw them to the substantive work that we do, so that they start using the reports/articles/etc when writing papers or when starting a new job. The ‘student opportunities’ section on the website should intuitively draw them to other relevant parts of the website.

- **What we want to convey:** Website as an interactive tool to find events and opportunities.

We want these audiences to have incentives to start following us on Twitter and to hit the Twitter button under announcements regularly, to increase our visibility on social media. This option should be easy, visible and inviting.

In addition to these three audiences, we also want the website to be readily accessible and appealing to potential funders, who need to get a good overview of the many things that are happening here at a glance. To this audience the academic and societal impact and relevance of our work should be clear. At the same time, the website should not create the impression that we are policy advocates or that our main goal is to influence policy-making. There should be a highly effective ‘about the Center’ page that ensures that certain kinds of summary/overview information are easily accessible, at a glance, in a visually appealing format that profiles the range of activities in which the center engages. Existing or past funders are mainly large established foundation (Ford Foundation, Open Societies Foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies, etc), who are looking for reliable partners on the one hand and for innovative projects and approaches on the other hand – *website as a portfolio of our activities and publications*.

New Website Objectives

Our primary Internet objective is to continue to build our ‘brand’ identity, awareness, and interest in the Center and the research it does.

We seek to create a flexible, informative user-friendly website that is easy to maintain. We must develop a friendly site that can deliver large amounts of constantly changing information to our key audiences.

1. Design should be lighter, more visually stimulating and more inviting to navigate

- More images, less text heavy, more visually pleasing;
- Homepage consisting of slideshow boxes: events, what’s new, publications, opportunities, e.g. www.law.nyu.edu;
- Top bar should show all the different things we engage in, without people having to click and look at a drop-down menu, “issue areas”, e.g. <http://www.ciel.org/>;
- ‘About us’, opportunities, issue areas, etc should all have different weight.
- Eliminate redundant sub-menus

- Eliminate list format for listing events and announcements: we need to be able to prominently promote multiple things simultaneously;
- Intuitive navigation, concise messaging, compelling visuals
- Project gravitas and innovation at the same time, e.g. <http://humanrightscenter.law.stanford.edu/>

2. *User interface should present comprehensive information in a readily accessible, searchable format*

- Good content management system: consolidate all published documents in one documentation center with an advanced and intuitive search function for publications;
- Advanced search function (site-wide);
- Showcase new publications while also having a user-friendly archive of older publications;
- Provide easy links to this documentation center in all relevant sections of the website;
- Information uploaded on one part of the website should be available and cross-referenced in multiple locations;
- Also information about events should be more visible (not just a list view, but a more appealing lay out, since events are often what draws people to our website. The events section should also have a search function that allows searches by date, topic, etc.)

3. *Content management should facilitate frequent updates of events and cross-postings*

- Information uploaded on one part of the website should be available and cross-references in multiple locations
- New web-based tools to deliver timely and relevant answers to audiences' questions;
- Focus on substantive work, e.g. <http://www.odi.org/>

4. *Homepage should generate more traffic , better reaching our audiences*

- How to draw people to the website? <http://useofforceproject.org/#project>
- How to encourage them to stay there and browse?
- How to encourage them to share what they have found on social media?
- How to ensure that audiences come back regularly?
 - Promote involvement through programs and events
 - Provide regular news updates that keep people coming back
 - Strengthen relationships with community partners, donors, scholars

5. *Website must be safe and secure using HTTPS and a hardened CMS.*

6. *Website should work well on mobile devices and tablets using best practices of responsive design*

7. *Website should comply with accessibility standards and best practices to ensure that people with disabilities can use our website*

Optional New Website Functionalities

We would love to have the following in our new website, depending on how these elements would impact timeline and/or budget. Please provide cost for these elements separately, and note if any additional design or development time would be required.

- Homepage video, e.g. <http://tisch.nyu.edu/>
- Advanced SEO work
- Interactive image backgrounds and scroll over icons that facilitate scrolling around on the website, e.g. <http://www.joincampaignzero.org/#vision>

Proposal scope and guidelines

Discovery:

Confirm audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, name recognition, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, phasing, and budgetary constraints, resulting in a creative brief.

Design:

Website information architecture, graphic look and feel, user navigation, home page and main navigation templates for each of the main navigation links.

Development Guidelines:

- An easy-to-use content management system (CMS);
- Easily updated;
- Intuitive navigation;
 - Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner and require no more than three levels of “drill down” for the user to find the desired information.
- Clean and focused design with strategic use of images, common theme;
- Current color scheme is based on logo, which might have to change to project a more innovative feel;
- *All* applicable content should be imported from current site

- *Loss of data would be a major problem, since the website is currently our live documentation center.*
- Optimized with SEO best practices;
- Specific SEO for the document center that searches through pdf's (and that can single out pdf results from others, so as to allow for a specific document search, as opposed to a more general search on the website);
- Social media integration (share buttons, follow buttons, etc.);
- Web site must not require plug-ins as a default;
- Fast Loading Pages;
 - The web site must be designed with a balance of text and graphics such that each page loads in 4 seconds or less on the average computer.
- Email update sign-up form/ListServ capabilities;
- Scheduled posts feature;
- Contact Form;
- Donate Form
 - We do not have existing e-Commerce systems or other tools that the new site should be connected to.
- Analytics
 - Gather e-mail, areas of interest and demographic information from visitors in a format that permits the CHRGJ to maintain a single database of users and e-mail each according to their area of interest and profile.
 - Provide training and all necessary support to permit easy use by a selected CHRGJ staff person.
 - Info on web traffic analysis, Path analysis, Visitor trends, Page views, Entry pages, Top pages, Exit pages, Page – length of stay, browsers and platforms.
- Provide necessary software and licenses to maintain site internally – within the cost of the contract
- Project Management
 - An assigned project manager will be made available to present information and coordinate with CHRGJ staff, including a reasonable number of meetings to present design and development solutions.
 - Once the web site has been completed and accepted by the CHRGJ, the web site design and all of its contents, software and architecture become property of the CHRGJ
 - Testing of site on all applicable platforms to ensure web site works as promised. Explain testing plan through development process
 - Delivery of site for internal hosting.

Budget details

As listed in the summary, our budget for this project is \$15,000 - \$20,000. While we prefer the most cost-effective solution, all proposals that fall within this range will be considered and weighed based on their merits. Proposals that foresee limited further assistance to the website after the initial launch will be given preference. Please provide several cost proposals to accomplish the scope outlined above. The budget must encompass all design, production, and software acquisitions necessary for development and maintenance of the web site.

List pricing for:

Phase I: Discovery, Requirements Planning & Site Definition

Phase II: Site Development, Testing and Deployment

Phase III: Post-Launch Support

All costs associated with the delivery of the project should be presented in a flat rate, fee for service format.

Proposal contents

Please include the following in your proposal response:

- Overview of how you will meet our objectives
- Explanation of your proposed platform/CMS
- Outline of your website design & development strategy
- Proposed website timeline from kickoff to launch
 - The time frame for completion of the project will be evaluated. In addition, time frames will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore, a realistic time frame for completion is requested.
- Details about your team
 - Describe your experience in producing sites for non-profit and/or academic projects.
 - Organizational capacity to take on this project
 - What type of team will be assigned, what will each person's role be? Please provide a brief bio for each staff member
- Recent design & development examples
 - List the five web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation.

- Describe testing and support plan
- References for three former or current clients
- Pricing with optional elements line-itemed
- Terms and conditions

Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications and budget should not exceed 35 pages.

Cover Letter should be signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company (1-2 pages).

Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- Suitability of the Proposal – the proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- Aesthetic Capabilities – Prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, user friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.
- Candidate Experience – Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Value/Pricing Structure and Price Levels – The price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposer. CHRGJ is able to accept pro bono service and recognize the provider to the full extent allowed by the Internal Revenue Service, including naming the proposer within the web site and other collateral as a CHRGJ supporter and partner.
- Proposal Presentation – The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
- Demonstrated commitment to high service level agreements (SLA).

RfP & project timeline details

RFP Sent: January 28, 2016

Responses Due: February 22, 2016

Finalists Selected & Contacted : March 1, 2016

Winner Selected & Contacted : March 7, 2016

Project Kick-off : March 14, 2016

New Website Launch Target Date: June 2016

Thank you for your interest in responding to this RFP with a proposal for our new website. We look forward to your response.

If you have any questions, please contact Anam Salem, program coordinator, ens232@nyu.edu.

Send proposals to: Tine Destrooper, Managing Director, tine.destrooper@nyu.edu.