Terms of Reference (ToR)

ICLEI.org website redevelopment project
Selection Documentation for Goods, Works & Services
For ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

1. Contact

Requested By: Angelo Becker, Senior Officer, Communications, ICLEI World Secretariat
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Date: 11 February 2022
Location: Bonn, Germany

2. ICLEI Background

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is a global network working with more than 2,500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. Active in 125+ countries, we influence sustainability policy and drive local action for low emission, nature-based, equitable, resilient and circular development.

3. Project background

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability intends to redevelop and re-launch the World Secretariat website (https://www.iclei.org) in a WordPress environment.

This project will update the CMS-backend experience of iclei.org for staff users. The technical approach should be based on enhancing the existing custom Wordpress theme provided by ICLEI, which is already used by some of our regional offices such as: http://southasia.iclei.org/ and https://japan.iclei.org/ja/.

The WordPress customized theme is based on Advanced Custom Fields (ACF) (without using Visual Composer plugin). This approach has been implemented in previous projects as mentioned above and is the preferred approach.

We would like to launch this first phase of the project as quickly as possible.

Additionally to the enhancement of the existing theme, as a second phase of the project, we would like to revise the existing solution used to enable searching and displaying of ICLEI activities and other content within the website. Sourced from a centralized global database for ICLEI’s activities and knowledge products, the proposed and developed SUIs will increase the visibility and other communications metrics by making them available on ICLEI’s global website.
4. Objectives

We are seeking a firm to help us build out the existing Wordpress theme and implement a dynamic search user interface (SUI) integrated into the theme for the website (iclei.org).

Content for the front-end static pages will be sourced from the Wordpress backend. However, some sections will be API driven and shall operate off a locally cached version of the dataset, which shall be updated from a separate database on a daily basis from an API call. The API calls will be provided by ICLEI and are not included in the scope of this work.

The two main areas of API calls to be developed are for the Activity Database and E-Library Database.

**Activity Database**

ICLEI is engaged in hundreds of activities in more than 2,500 cities, towns and regions worldwide. We are engaged in 140+ programs, projects, initiatives, research, tools, methodologies, networks, partnerships, events, and capacity building and advocacy activities together with local and regional governments. All our activities are guided by five interconnected pathways that are designed to facilitate integrated sustainable urban development. The activities are captured by ICLEI staff and other external stakeholders through a simplified internal user interface that populates the global database. This simplified interface has been designed internally and will be provided as PSD files as part of this project.

**E-Library Database**

The ICLEI E-Library will be a centralized global database for ICLEI’s knowledge products built on the experience gained from the Activities Reporting Database. It will be the main interface for all ICLEI offices for disseminating knowledge products to increase visibility and other communications metrics. The virtual library (ICLEI E-Library) will enable Global ICLEI staff to update knowledge products and data about knowledge products in one place and also provide external audiences with access to ICLEI’s publications online and in a consistent and professional manner. The process of collecting the ICLEI knowledge products is fairly similar to that of the activities as mentioned above. A search interface has been designed internally and will be provided as PSD files as part of this project.
The Activity Database and the E-Library Database will each have their own SUI. The two SUIs will mainly be for searching, filtering and displaying results on iclei.org and should be fully integrated into the current user experience of iclei.org.

The proposed SUIs shall be built on a framework such as Nuxt.js to power the frontend and ensure high performance when rendering the displays (final choice based on benefits to be discussed).

The main objectives of this project are:

- We need a theme that is created in full accordance with the designs and functional requirements without extra time & effort and hardcoding that are needed to deal with limitations of the build-in page builder code and functionality.
- Develop the theme with optimal code by using only the necessary code, functions, styles, plugins.
- Having a theme that is easier and faster to maintain and scale in the long run.
- Launch an initial version of the Wordpress installation (Phase 1) as quickly as possible, allowing staff users to make changes to the content while additional Phase 2 work is being completed.
- Create a fast-loading, stable user experience that can withstand high traffic and data processing.
- Enable external audiences to access ICLEI’s publications and activities online in a consistent and professional manner.
- Use optimized search functionalities such as microcopy, autocomplete, among others to enhance the user search experience.

5. Scope of Work

The following is the scope of work for the development of this project, in close cooperation with the Communications and Knowledge Management Teams. Phase 1 and Phase 2 can be completely concurrently, but our overall objective is to launch Phase 1 as quickly as possible. Please include each of these tasks in the estimate.

**Phase 1 - WordPress Launch**

1. Create new installation of provided theme
2. Perform WP & theme upgrade to provided installation
3. Content migration from existing iclei.org (this is optional - please itemize in the estimate)
4. Redirects of old pages to new URLs
5. Ensure best possible SEO performance during transition
6. Mobile responsive optimization
7. Beta testing
8. Phase 1 launch
9. Site maintenance - 12-month period

**Phase 2 - Activity Database and the ICLEI E-Library (API and SUI)**

10. Convert provided design files to HTML
11. Customization of CSS in theme
12. Building onto existing Wordpress theme and website structure, implement API driven pages to be built with a proposed front-end framework, such as React.Js or Nuxt.Js (must be agreed upon after consultation with ICLEI). Solution for these pages should be based on performance/speed as the main priority.
13. Develop local cache for data retrieved from APIs (APIs provided by ICLEI)
14. Integrate data from local cache into front-end display
15. Beta testing
16. Interface launch
17. Site maintenance - same 12-month period as above

6. Assumptions

- ICLEI will select a firm and will explain to them the goals and vision on the backend and frontend functionality and design. The project objectives and offered technical approach may be changed in accordance with this new information.
- ICLEI will provide final designs for conversion to required templates.
- ICLEI will assure fast communication on arising questions in order to reach the deadline goals.
- ICLEI will provide domain hosting and server setup for production needs. This is our preferred solution for hosting.
- ICLEI will set up a Slack channel and ticketing system on Redmine. Alternatively, the selected firm could propose a ticketing system that they already use.
- The final scope of work and its costing may change upon getting more information from ICLEI on their goals, vision, functional requirements, etc.
- Firm will provide access to a test platform to access the development at any given stage and define a process by which ICLEI can give input and feedback iteratively.
- ICLEI will provide all needed credentials/API/endpoints for ICLEI’s global database and global contacts database for investigation.

7. Requirements

- Compatibility on all browsers, including Internet Explorer 11 & Microsoft Edge if possible
- Stable for potentially high traffic and dynamic elements
- Mobile-friendly / responsive design
- Fast-loading and optimized for low-bandwidth users
- Clean coding
- Strong coding documentation (in platforms such as Github or Gitlab)

8. Milestones

These are the estimated milestones, but they can be adjusted based on the start date or requirements from the chosen consultancy.
Projected project start date: 8 March 2022
Phase 1 launch: 4 weeks
Phase 2 launch (starting either after Phase 1 or concurrent): 8 weeks
Refinements, testing and additions finished: 4 weeks
Maintenance period: 12 months

9. Costs

Please itemize costs as much as possible in the bid. Any options with price differences shall be included in the bid. In addition, the hourly and daily rate at which additional, unforeseen work would be charged should also be included.

10. Terms and condition

All content, documents, reports, and other materials prepared as part of this assignment shall be the property of ICLEI and shall be handed over upon completion of the assignment. The provider shall not pass on to any third party any data, document, reports, or other materials prepared or obtained during the assignment and 3 years thereafter.

11. Applying

Interested parties are requested to submit a proposal, including costs, by 25 February 2022 CET to Mr. Angelo Becker via angelo.becker@iclei.org.

For any queries, please contact Angelo Becker via the email address above.

12. Evaluation

- Parties will be evaluated on the following criteria:
- Cost of proposed services (70%)
- Demonstrated past experience developing similar scope projects (30%)