

## Background

The Ohio Access to Justice Foundation (the “Foundation”) is a nonprofit<sup>1</sup> Ohio organization that promotes equal access to justice by enhancing and improving civil legal services statewide to address the unmet civil legal needs of low-income Ohioans. The Foundation is the largest funder of civil legal aid in Ohio, deriving most of its income from two primary sources: (i) interest earned on lawyer trust accounts (IOLTA) and interest earned on title agent trust accounts (IOTA) and (ii) a civil filing fee surcharge. The Foundation also receives other funding, including but not limited to grants and private donations.

**Office Location:** 88 E. Broad Street, Suite 720, Columbus, Ohio 43215

**Number of Employees:** 13

## Project Summary

We are seeking proposals from qualified web design and development firms to redesign and develop our website in 2026 to better communicate our mission and drive engagement. **This project will include both migration of some existing content, as well as design and creation of new content.**

**Website URL:** [www.ohiojusticefoundation.org](http://www.ohiojusticefoundation.org)

**Existing pages:** ~55 core functional pages

**CMS:** Wordpress

**Hosting:** AWS

While the Foundation website is currently built on WordPress (CMS) and hosted on AWS, we are re-evaluating our entire tech stack and do not require the future website to use either of these platforms. We are seeking a partner who can provide expert guidance on the optimal CMS and hosting environment for a modern, high-performing, and easily maintainable nonprofit website. Proposals that recommend either a modern WordPress/specialized hosting solution or a migration to an entirely new platform are equally welcome.

Your proposal should clearly recommend a CMS and hosting platform, along with a detailed rationale that considers:

- The Foundation’s preference for simplifying its overall tech stack (e.g., potential alignment with our planned Azure-based applications).
- The goal of providing a robust, user-friendly CMS that simplifies content management for non-technical staff.

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation is exempt under Section 501(C)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code.

- Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) and long-term maintainability.

## Challenges

The existing website was developed in 2017, and the backend has not been actively managed since 2022. The Foundation is seeking a complete redesign and development of the existing website. There is existing content that may be selectively audited and recreated as needed, rather than migrated directly from the current site. Current challenges include:

- Slow load times when featuring video or large images.
- Lack of backend maintenance, to include stale PHP.
- Misalignment with current Foundation priorities and mission, which is to ensure that Ohioans who are low-income or who lack access can fully and fairly participate in civil systems that produce just outcomes. With the Foundation's expanded focus on access to justice initiatives, the redesigned website's structure and messaging needs rethought to better align with our audiences (lawyers, banks, and grantees primarily) so that they can further engage with our work.

## Project Details

The new website should prioritize the following goals:

### Design Requirements

- Strengthen our online presence through a modern, inclusive design.
- Align with our organizational brand and values.
- Enhance storytelling through multimedia content.
- Incorporate a board member portal accessible only to a specified group to include confidential documents for board member review and the ability to communicate with one another.

### Information Architecture

- Provide a robust, user-friendly CMS that simplifies content management for non-technical staff.
- Support for an audit of our current content to identify strong existing content to be migrated or recreated on the new website.
- Clarify content pathways for key audiences: grantees, lawyers, and partners.
- SEO best practices (structured data, meta tags, schema).
- GEO (generative engine optimization), to include AI search optimization and structured data implementation, to ensure content is discoverable and citable by AI-powered search engines and large language models (LLMs).

## Technical Requirements

A successful proposal must address the following technical requirements:

- Short-term health and performance audit to assess the stability of the current site. In the event that high-impact issues are identified, the vendor would provide a separate quote to address those issues. The goal of this is to ensure the security and stability of the existing site during the development phase of the new site. This is intended as a stop-gap to prevent any critical failures while the new site is in development.
- Migration of existing website content, as necessary.
- Ensure accessibility and performance compliance per WCAG 2.2 Level AA or higher
- Mobile-first, responsive design
- Secure SSL implementation

## Analytics Requirements

- Enable the Foundation to measure website performance against its strategic goals, including driving engagement and clarifying content pathways for key audiences. Key KPIs may include but are not limited to:
  - Bounce rate,
  - time spent on page,
  - total visits,
  - traffic sources, and
  - top landing pages.
- Recommend and implement a robust and modern analytics platform with full configuration and training for Foundation staff
- Implement detailed event tracking to measure audience engagement across the website. This tracking may include, but is not limited to:
  - Clicks to all external links and data portals
  - Downloads of key resources or documents or dwell time
  - Completion of forms.

## External Platforms Requirements

The Foundation manages several data collection portals, which are managed outside the website CMS. The website vendor is not expected to design, build, or maintain program portals or forms that are part of the external systems. These systems include:

- [IOLTA/IOTA remittance management](#) (current, to be replaced),
- Azure-based custom web application for the Loan Repayment Assistance Program (LRAP) (in development),

- Azure-based custom web application for IOLTA/IOTA remittances (future development),
- Fluxx for grant applications (in development),
- Stripe for donations, and
- [Paladin for pro-bono volunteer management](#).

The vendor's scope is strictly limited to the public-facing website. The website vendor will be responsible for providing intuitive jumping-off points for links to external systems. The vendor is not expected to deeply integrate with any of these external systems, nor will they be embedded within the new website architecture.

A successful proposal must address the following requirements for these external platforms:

- Create clear navigation to ensure that website visitors are logically, securely, and properly routed from the website to the relevant external system URLs.
- Focus on informational content, to include hosting public-facing FAQs, resource pages, or other related content. The website will not collect or store sensitive program data on the website CMS.
- While real-time data flow visualization is **not within the immediate scope** of this phase, the solution must be architected to ensure this capability is not precluded. The vendor should demonstrate how the proposed UI/UX and data structures can seamlessly integrate live streaming data at a later date from Azure PowerBI without requiring a fundamental redesign of the core interface.

## Deliverables

Expected deliverables include, but are not limited to:

- Discovery and planning process
- Audience-informed site architecture and sitemap
- Wireframes and visual design concepts
- Assistance with content creation including imagery and input to copywriting in collaboration with the Foundation
- Fully functional and responsive website design and development
- CMS configuration and implementation
- Accessibility compliance (WCAG 2.2 Level AA or higher)
- AI search optimization and structured data implementation
- Quality assurance testing and launch support
- CMS user documentation and training materials
- Technical documentation (codebase, integrations, hosting setup, analytics)
- Post launch support
- Ongoing maintenance and support services (to be quoted separately)

Proposal and Project Timeline

RFP Issued	11 May 2026
Deadline for Submission of Questions	29 May 2026
Deadline for Notification of Intent to Bid	4 June 2026
Answers to Submitted Questions Provided to all Prospective Vendors	5 June 2026
Proposals Due	12 June 2026
Interviews	6 to 10 July 2026
Selected Firm Notified	17 July 2026
New Site Launch Goal	Early 2027

Budget

The anticipated budget for this project is \$45,000 to \$65,000

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on:

- **Demonstrated experience building websites** for non-profits or similar organizations
- **Clear understanding of user experience** that foregrounds accessibility, device optimization, and audience-centered design
- **Training and support capacity** that facilitates long-term sustainability of the website
- **Qualifications and relevant experience of the project team**, and the specific role each team member will play on the website’s development
- **Budget** required to achieve the project objectives
- **Vision and understanding** of the current problems, as well as the Foundation’s mission, audiences, and goals
- **Communication and collaboration**, with a demonstrated ability to clearly communicate project objectives and implementation plans

## RFP Response Requirements and Submission Instructions

## Response Requirements

Please include the following information in your submission:

- Company Profile
  - Company name, address, and primary contact information
  - Brief description of your company (size, location, services)
  - Relevant experience with specific examples
- Web Development Services
  - Describe the technologies, languages, development environments, etc. that will be used
  - Describe proposed timeline and milestones
  - Describe options related to ongoing support/maintenance
  - Describe procedures for future enhancements/edits
- Fees
  - Provide your fee schedule (milestones) and total cost estimate
    - Fees for development services, migration services and training services
    - Ongoing monthly support/maintenance fees
    - Fees for enhancements/edits to original applications
    - Fees associated with bug fixes
  - Describe any additional fees associated with your proposal
- References
  - Provide three business references for clients who would be willing to discuss your services.

## Response Instructions

- Submission Deadline - Responses to the RFP are due no later than 3 p.m. (EST) on 12 June 2026 and must be submitted via email to: [jrieman@ohiojusticefoundation.org](mailto:jrieman@ohiojusticefoundation.org).
- Interviews - Representative(s) of selected finalists will be invited to meet and present to the Foundation. Interviews will be held the week of 6 to 10 July 2026
- Any questions or inquiries must be submitted by 5 June 2026 **only to:**  
Jennifer Rieman  
(614) 715-8572  
[jrieman@ohiojusticefoundation.org](mailto:jrieman@ohiojusticefoundation.org)