**Request for Proposal: Website Design and Development for
Michigan Learning Channel (MLC)**

Purpose

The Michigan Learning Channel is accepting proposals to design and develop a new website for the platform; this will be a concept-to-completion project. This RFP aims to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates and provide the candidates with the criteria for which they will be judged.

Given significant shifts in digital education standards and the age of the existing website, MLC's current website, michiganlearning.org, no longer effectively meets the needs of its users. To address these shifts the Michigan Learning Channel is rebuilding its site to better serve educators, students and parents across the state of Michigan. The new website will focus on building an interactive environment with available lesson plans in an easy-to-use dashboard that works for Educators, students and the people that help support their education in school or at home.

About Us

The Michigan Learning Channel (MLC) is a statewide public television partnership offering instructional content to support the education of students and to provide alternative resources for families and teachers. Designed to enrich school learning, the instructional content is aligned with Michigan's educational standards and follows widely accepted sequences for mastering skills throughout the school year.

The full-length lessons, short digital segments, and supplemental teaching and learning resources, are created and presented by Michigan educators and subject matter experts. Nearly every program has supplemental educational activities, downloadable resources and additional digital content to build on the lesson.

This programming is being broadcast on special on-air channels established by each of the participating public television stations in Michigan. These stations include: WCMU (Alpena, Cadillac, Manistee, Mt. Pleasant), WDCQ (Delta College Public Media) (Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo), WKAR (Lansing), WNMU (Marquette, Upper Peninsula), WTVS (Detroit), and WNIT (Michiana) It is also available as a livestream and stored for on-

demand viewing on a variety of digital platforms, ensuring accessibility to all students, teachers and families in the state.

In addition to the statewide broadcast, the multi-station partnership has created opportunities for increased education engagement staffing across the state. Each partner station has an engagement team member who shared content regularly with teachers and learners in their communities, while helping to build unique content and brand awareness through outreach, community events, and instructional coaching and support in educational spaces.

Michigan Learning Channel is an education initiative operated by Detroit PBS. We partner actively with National PBS and PBS member stations across the state. All content is offered at no cost to schools, families and caregivers.

Strategic Requirements

The new website needs to have an improved user experience from an engagement standpoint and be more accessible. It should have a unique user experience for each primary user group (Educators, Students and Parents) and allow them to find and interact with content differently based on what their needs are. The site should also restructure how content is found to simplify the process. Recent educator and audience surveys as well as insights from market research should also inform website strategy.

The Michigan Learning Channel Website will:

1. Deliver information about our work and community. Effectively communicate to our intended audience and user groups an understanding of what the Michigan Learning Channel is, what we do, and how we do it.
2. Allow users to easily find shows and lessons, build lesson plans and download resources using accessible, user-friendly features that our target audience would expect.
3. Migrate all existing content to the new site and have a clear content taxonomy.
4. Integrate with other platforms to build a cohesive experience for our users such as Google Classroom, PBS Video On Demand (Served via PBS Media Manager) PBS Learning Media, YouTube, and other partner educator platforms as needed.

5. Have an AI Chat Bot functionality that serves as a virtual engagement coordinator and searches across the website and other integrated platforms to make recommendations to the user about based on their audience group and what they're looking for.
6. Provide a means for users to easily connect with us, ask questions and submit feedback at every step on lessons and other parts of the site.
7. Have a user dashboard with unique and easy-to use functions for each user group such as "Add to Favorites" for Parents or "Build Lesson Plan", "Add to Calendar", "Take Notes" for Educators or "Build Playlists/Collections" for students.
8. Have the ability to assign work to students from the site dashboard or via PBS Learning Media integration.
9. Showcase PBS national and MI stations and partnerships
10. The new station website platform will be maintained for at least five to ten years with incremental updates as technology advances.

Technical Requirements

Currently, all the MLC website operates on WordPress and is maintained by in-house resources with technical support and hosting from a third-party vendor. We are open to exploring other platform/CMS options based on the specialized needs of the new site. Core technical requirements include:

- User experience and user interface design
- Google Tag Manager tags to identify key user activities across the site
- WYSIWYG drag and drop content editor on the backend
- Standardized/templatized pages/posts for building pages and delivering content
- Responsive for mobile devices, tablets, and desktops
- Adheres to WCAG website accessibility standards
- Must be designed with SEO best practices in mind
- Integration of tools and platforms like PBS Learning Media (PBS's platform that provides educator and student resources), LMS, EdPuzzle, Peardeck, Google Classroom, Youtube, Goosechase, Iterable
- AI Chat Bot functionality that serves as a virtual engagement coordinator
- Install Microsoft Clarity
- Ability to embed video, including PBS Media Manager, YouTube, and live streams
- Video playlist functionality

- Utilize and improve upon existing content taxonomy
- Provide a dashboard/user portal for different user groups (students, educators, etc)
- Ability to schedule a homepage carousel feature rotation, either using images or video assets
- Blog/article functionality
- Lessons, Lesson Plan functionality
- Image carousel functionality
- Events calendar functionality
- Site search functionality
- MLC TV schedule integration
- PBS KIDS Education resources integration
- Show station localization for statewide PBS Stations
- Social media integration with feed display
- User account/profile functionality to be integrated with PBS Learning Media account
- RSS functionality
- Google Analytics tracking
- Programmable display ad functionality using Google Ad Manager
- Ability to utilize pop-up messages that use third-party tools like OptinMonster

User Accounts

- Administrative access and management tools for internal users
- Admins create user accounts
- Admins need the ability to code HTML/CSS/JS with error correction
- Actions we'd like to handle include:
    - Add /modify images, text, menus, headers, categories, articles, static pages, blog content, video content, sidebar content
    - Add/modify tracking codes as needed (Facebook Pixel, Google Tag Manager, Ads Manager/DFP, etc.)
    - Admins can add editors to specific content areas
- Editors should be able to create articles, lessons, lesson plans add videos, and publish content
- An intern or contributor role should be available, where we can create content and give them credit, but they cannot publish

Budget
We are budgeting up to $75,000 for this website.

Method of Evaluating the Response
Michigan Learning Channel will evaluate proposals with a strict emphasis on quality. Furthermore, the public expects quality stewardship of financial resources. Once evaluated, the most qualified and reasonably priced firm will be selected. The station may ask finalists to present their proposals before making a final selection. In your response, please include the following:

- An outline of how you intend to address the areas of the proposal that are noted above
- Please provide your qualifications, experience, and references for the personnel responsible for the project
- Examples of prior work
- Details on your company's ability to meet the timeline and target dates established
- The Michigan Learning Channel is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion; our strategy is to work with vendors who embrace similar values; please share your company's DEI commitment

Target Dates
- **Proposal deadline for agencies: August 15, 2024**
- Station review and vetting period: August 16, 2024 through August 26, 2024
- Vendor selected by: September 4, 2024
- Project kick-off date: September 10, 2024
- Target website launch date: February 5, 2025 (tentative)

Please submit questions and final proposals to:
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