

## **Request for Proposals:**

# **Web Development Services with Accessibility Expertise**

### **Overview**

We are a nonprofit disability organisation based in the Western Cape, with over 25 years of experience supporting nearly 100 member organisations. Operating remotely across the region, our team consists of one full-time staff member, with additional part-time staff and volunteers.

We have secured funding to enhance our online communication and engagement with various stakeholders.

We are seeking a **South African-based web development company** (not an individual) with expertise in creating accessible Web sites, for ad hoc projects. The selected company must have proven experience in accessibility-focused development and a solid understanding of best practices for disability-friendly digital interfaces. Our immediate focus is on implementing a new WordPress theme to improve accessibility, particularly for users with disabilities.

### **Project 1**

1. **WordPress theme implementation:** Select and implement an accessible theme that complies with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 (AA level).
  - **Key users:**
    - Blind and low vision users using screen readers and other assistive technologies.
    - Dyslexic users, with a focus on readability and contrast adjustments.
    - Users with cognitive impairments who require simplified navigation and content presentation.
    - Deaf users who may require captioning for video content.
    - Users with mobility impairments who use voice commands.

2. **Back-end interface:** Ensure an intuitive, accessible back-end that enables blind content creators to easily upload and manage content using screen readers and other assistive media.
3. **User testing and feedback:** You will have access to advice and testing by our board who are made up of people with diverse disabilities.

### Future projects

1. **Member database integration:** Develop and integrate a customised member database into WordPress. The database will house critical information on our members and their needs and will also be used by our Coordinator for daily operations. Where possible, this should be done using standard well-supported plugins.
2. **Custom membership forms** Design and implement membership forms with conditional fields that allow for dynamic user experiences depending on the responses.
3. **Web site redesign** Rebuild the site for improved navigation, usability, and performance in line with our new content strategies.

**Team collaboration:** You will work closely with our Vice-Chair, Coordinator, and blind content creators, ensuring their needs are integrated into all stages of development. Effective communication and collaboration are key to the success of this project.

### Technical requirements

1. **Accessibility compliance:**
  - The site must meet WCAG 2.1 AA standards.
  - Ensure compatibility with assistive technologies, such as screen readers (e.g., JAWS, NVDA) and speech recognition software.
  - Incorporate accessibility features like keyboard navigation, ARIA labels, and alt text for all media.
  - Advise on and implement video captioning for Deaf users.
2. **Mobile responsiveness:**
  - The site must be fully responsive and accessible on mobile devices, ensuring that accessibility standards are maintained across all major platforms.

3. **SEO and performance:**

- Implement SEO best practices to optimise searchability and performance.
- Ensure fast load times, even with the integration of accessibility tools.

4. **Security and data protection:**

- Adhere to South African privacy laws (POPIA) and implement security protocols for user data protection.
- Advise on secure login processes for content creators and members.

5. **Training and documentation:**

- Provide accessible training for our staff, particularly our blind content creators, on how to manage and update the site using assistive technologies. (These are users who are already using accessible technologies expertly in their daily work.)
- Supply documentation where necessary on Web site management and troubleshooting, e.g., guidance on when to update the plugins, where to get help, and what not to touch.

**Proposal requirements**

If your company has a proven track record in accessibility-focused web development and can meet the above requirements, we invite you to submit a proposal. Please include the following in your submission:

- **Company overview:** Highlight your experience and specialisation in accessibility web development.
- **Relevant case studies:** Provide examples of similar projects you've completed, especially focusing on accessibility solutions.
- **Proposed timeline and milestones:** Outline a clear timeline for the completion of Project 1, including testing and feedback phases. (Feel free to contact our Vice-Chair on WhatsApp if you need clarity on the scope.)
- **Cost estimate:** Provide a detailed cost breakdown for Project 1 and outline your hourly or project rates for future work.

- **Team structure:** Introduce the key team members who will be working on this project, including their relevant experience with accessible development.
- **Support and maintenance:** Describe your approach to ongoing support, updates, and any potential long-term maintenance agreements.

**Submission deadline (extended):** Monday 14 October 2024

Please send your proposal and any questions to:

Project Owner: Tania Melnychuk (Vice-Chair: Western Cape Network on Disability)

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