REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) -WEBSITE REBUILD PROJECT

Issue Date: August 27, 2025
RFP Title: Website Rebuild for **Dress for Success Worldwide**
Proposal Due Date: 30 days from issue date
Contact: Armine Arustamyan, COO, aarustamyan@dressforsucess.org

Dress for Success® Worldwide is seeking proposals from qualified web design/development firms or consultants to lead a comprehensive rebuild of our website, www.dressforsuccess.org. The goal is to create a modern, user-friendly, visually compelling, and scalable site that aligns with our mission and serves as an accessible platform for engaging clients, donors, affiliates, and corporate partners.

Dress for Success Worldwide is a leading global nonprofit that helps women achieve economic mobility and ignite their confidence. Through our affiliates, we provide holistic services throughout their career journey—education, coaching, clothing, and a continuing network of support.

Primary programs and services:

- o **Career Support:** Resume assistance, mock interviews, job search strategies, coaching, networking, and access to Professional Women's Groups (PWG's).
- o **Education & Certifications:** Workshops, credentialed training, digital literacy.
- o **Financial Wellness:** Budgeting, credit building, financial coaching.
- o **Entrepreneurship:** Business development training and mentoring.
- o **Personal Styling & Clothing:** Career-appropriate attire via Style Studios, mobile units, and online.
- o **Delivery Methods:** In-person, virtual, hybrid services across 130+ affiliates worldwide and 1,300,000+ women.

Target Audiences: Clients, donors, sponsors, corporate partners, and affiliate staff.

Purpose: Our website serves as a hub for: (1) fundraising, particularly individual one-time and recurring donations; (2) storytelling, provide external facing communicator with key audiences; (3) service delivery; (4) and program/campaign promotion.

Project Goals:

- o Clearly communicate our purpose (mission), programs, and impact
- o Update and align visual design and brand with refreshed brand positioning
- o Improve user experience (navigation, accessibility, speed)
- o Define and track Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure success, such as improved site speed, increased traffic, higher online donations, user engagement, site visits, and conversion rates
- o Ensure mobile responsiveness and accessibility

- Implement easy-to-use content management system (CMS) for volunteers/women we serve
- Maximize search engine optimization (SEO) and integrate best practices, including AI searches
- Improve integration with third-party tools (Raisers Edge CRM, donation platform/Stripe/Black Baud, analytics, etc.)
- Enhance security and compliance

SCOPE OF WORK

The vendor will be responsible for completing a four-phased website overhaul.

Phase 1: Brand Refresh (Quick Launch 3 – 4 weeks)

Goal: Quick branding update on the existing website to align with the new visual identity system without changing the site structure.

Tasks:
- Conduct a discovery session (1–2 stakeholder meetings, user needs assessment)
- Audit the current website for editable vs. evergreen (static) content
- Provide a list of backend-editable areas vs. hard-coded areas that require developer support (e.g., layout templates)
- Recommend workarounds for areas not currently editable
- Update logo, brand colors, tagline, and fonts in editable areas
- Supply affiliate-facing brand update guidelines
- Deliver annotated screenshots showing changes and limitations

Deliverables:
- Fully functional website
- Updated homepage and site-wide branding
- Records of design revisions
- A clear brand guide for affiliates to budget and update their sites
- List of items needing backend developer access

Timeframe: Estimated 3–4 weeks

DFS Responsibilities: Attend check-in meetings and provide updated brand assets, edits and final approval upon phase 1 completion.

Vendor Responsibilities: Audit, update assets, and provide documentation.

Why This Matters: Aligns the public site and affiliate branding quickly, while controlling costs and minimizing disruption.

Phase 2: Website Page Updates + Donation Upgrade (6–8 weeks)

Goal: Modernize top-level pages with the new brand and improve the donor experience across worldwide and affiliate sites. Vendor to manage static design/ development, and DFS staff will manage editable content. Includes redesign of six priority pages.

Tasks:
- Design and develop six high-priority pages of the central navigation (Home, About Us, Get Involved, Client Services, News, and Contact)
- Implement mobile-first design with accessibility standards (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1)
- Refresh visual hierarchy, content layout, and calls to action (CTAs)
- Review and propose enhancements to donation flow
- Implement Stripe's "Web Elements" or alternate system improvements
- Ensure that embedded forms or third-party tools integrate with CRM
- Conduct cross-browser and mobile testing to ensure mobile-optimization, fast loading, and follow a modern grid system
- Incorporate Generative Engine Optimization (GEO) to enhance visibility and improve rankings across AI-powered search platforms and emerging technologies, in addition to standard SEO practices

Deliverables:
- Six redesigned, mobile-friendly, SEO-optimized pages
- Upgraded donation form for Affiliates (in addition to current Worldwide) with CRM integration (if applicable)
- Updated site map and internal linking structure

Timeframe: 6–8 weeks

DFS Responsibilities: Existing copy, images, and donation logic.

Vendor Responsibilities: Wireframes, development, testing, donation form integration.

Why This Matters: Strengthens the user experience and donor journey by updating key pages with the new brand and implementing a more modern, scalable donation system across global and affiliate sites.

Phase 3: Full Website Rebuild (Strategic Investment – TBD)

Goal: Build a fully modernized, scalable, visually compelling DFS website that supports global campaigns, multimedia content, CRM integration, affiliate customization, and multilingual functionality, aligning the platform with long-term organizational and audience needs.

Tasks:
- Evaluate and select the most appropriate platform (WordPress vs. builder platforms)
- Assess current hosting environment and recommend managed hosting solutions, if needed

- o Redesign the site's structure and user experience (UX strategy)
- o Develop custom templates for campaign pages, affiliate microsites and storytelling features
- o Propose a model for affiliate site governance, including:
    - o Levels of autonomy (e.g., page editing vs. full site management)
    - o Update process (centralized or decentralized)
    - o Option for a multi-site CMS architecture (e.g., WordPress Multisite)
- o Implement multilingual functionality via third-party tools or AI+ editor combination
- o Integrate with CRM, analytics, and donation systems
- o Empower affiliates with defined editing capabilities while maintaining brand consistency
- o Configure CMS for flexible use across DFS and affiliate teams
- o Ensure video content (YouTube-hosted) is seamlessly integrated
- o Build and test pop-up banners, campaign redirects, and other interactive components
- o Ensure hosting supports scalability, backups, security protocols, etc.
- o Develop and implement a disaster recovery strategy that includes automated backups (frequency), a clear restore process in case of crash or data loss and define responsibilities for Dress for Success vs. the hosting provider.

Deliverables:
- o A fully rebuilt, up-to-date, scalable DFS website on a selected CMS platform
- o New, mobile-optimized page templates and content structures
- o CRM and analytics integrations (Google Tag Manager, etc.
- o Multilingual capabilities (with documentation)
- o CMS setup with affiliate access tiers
- o QA-tested features for campaigns, pop-ups, and embedded video
- o Platform documentation and staff training materials
- o Possibility of event registration and podcast integration features

Timeframe: TBD (estimate 10–16 weeks, based on vendor discovery and platform decision)

DFS Responsibilities: Confirm platform selection based on vendor recommendation; Provide access to branding assets, campaign content, and current CRM; Identify internal priorities for affiliate site management and user permissions; Participate in discovery and design review meetings; Approve UX strategy, wireframes, and final designs.

Vendor Responsibilities: Recommend and justify ideal platform (e.g., WordPress vs. Wix/Squarespace); Lead discovery and UX strategy for donation, campaign, and affiliate experience; Design and develop the full website, including mobile optimization; Implement and test integrations (CRM, donation, analytics, translation tools); Configure CMS and user roles for DFS and affiliates, Provide training materials and support documentation; Conduct QA and performance testing.

Why This Matters: Lays the foundation for a fully modernized, scalable and flexible website that can support campaigns, multimedia, CRM integration, multilingual content, and

affiliate autonomy, ensuring the platform evolves with DFS's strategic goals and global reach.

Phase 4: Finalize, Launch & Sustain (Final Quality Assurance (QA) + Support – 2–3 weeks)

Goal: Ensure smooth launch, internal training, and post-launch troubleshooting. Ongoing support is optional and negotiable.

Tasks:
- Perform final testing across devices and browsers
- Execute accessibility check (WCAG 2.1 AA)
- Redirect mapping and domain pointing
- Monitor live launch and post-launch monitoring (first 2 weeks)
- Conduct internal team training (admin use of CMS)
- *Optional:* Propose maintenance plan or retainer for ongoing support

Deliverables:
- Launched, live website
- Staff training and admin manual
- 30-day post-launch support or optional support agreement

Timeframe: 2–3 weeks

DFS Responsibilities: Internal training schedule, approval to go-live

Vendor Responsibilities: QA, testing, training, support plan

Why This Matters: Ensures a smooth, successful launch by allowing time for final testing, staff training, and early support. Separating it from development helps catch issues, prepare internal teams, and maintain site quality for go-live.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:

Please include the following in your proposal:
- Company background and relevant experience
- Examples of comparable website projects, e.g., for other nonprofits (include live URLs + brief context)
- Proposed approach and high-level project timeline with key milestones
    - Approach to project phases, including UX design, accessibility, and CMS selection
    - Approach to integration with CRM, donation platforms and affiliate content
- Team bios or resumes of those assigned to the project, along with their functions
- The project manager and his/her/their relevant experience
- Itemized project budget, including optional support/maintenance
    - Provide tiered pricing for each phase

- References from past clients, ideally two of which are nonprofits, which include descriptions of the work performed
- Description of any trends you see in website design
- Examples of nonprofit websites you consider industry leaders
- Statement on data privacy, security, and conflict of interest
- Vendors are required to specify whether they will manage the website's hosting, security, and regular backups. Additionally, the proposal should clearly outline any relevant technical certifications or licenses held by the vendor.

TIMELINE:

- **RFP Issued:** August 27, 2025
- **Proposal Submission Deadline:** September 26, 2025
- **Finalist Interviews:** October 2025
- **Vendor Selected:** October 2025
- **Project Kickoff:** October 2025
- **Phase 1 – Brand Refresh Go-Live**
  - Milestone: November 2025
- **Phase 2 – Website Page Updates + Donation Upgrade**
  - Completion Target: February 2026
- **Phase 3 – Full Website Rebuild**
  - Development Window: March –June 2026
- **Phase 4 – Final QA, Launch & Post-Support**
  - QA + Launch Prep: July 2026
  - **Full Website Launch Target:** August 2026

Estimated timeline. Specific dates to be determined.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

The following criteria will guide our evaluation of proposals:
- Understanding of Dress for Success's mission, audience, and project goals
- Quality and relevance of experience and portfolio, including design and user experience
- Clarity and feasibility of project timeline and budget
- Technical approach to CMS, accessibility, and third-party integration
- Proposed approach and timeline
- Cost-effectiveness and value for investment
- References and past performance
- Availability of training and ongoing support

PROPOSAL CHECKLIST:

- ❑ Company background
- ❑ Portfolio
- ❑ Project approach
- ❑ Budget
- ❑ Team Bios
- ❑ Accessibility strategy
- ❑ CRM integration plan
- ❑ Support/maintenance options
- ❑ References
- ❑ Security/Privacy approach

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP) OWNERSHIP:

All custom code, graphics, assets, and deliverables developed as part of this project will be the exclusive property of Dress for Success Worldwide upon completion and final payment. The vendor agrees to transfer full ownership of these materials, including all rights, titles, and interests, to DFS.

QUESTIONS DEADLINE:

Applicants may submit any clarifying questions to aarustamyan@dressforsucess.org no later than **Friday, September 5, 2025**.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

Please send your proposal in PDF format, *DFS_WebsiteRFP_[CompanyName].pdf*, by
September 26, 2025, to: **Armine Arustamyan, COO**
Email: aarustamyan@dressforsucess.org
Subject Line: RFP Submission – Website Rebuild