

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS # 2026-021
Web Design & Brand Strategy Consultant for New England Environmental
Finance Center (NEEFC)
RESPONSE ADDENDUM #1
October 14, 2025

CLARIFICATION

The following document includes responses to questions submitted by a total of approximately 10 potential applicants.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you expect that site to have a sub-brand, so that the content is differentiable on your site / retains its own identity? Or is the point of bringing the sites together to merge the brand and present everything in a unified way?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects SNEP Network branding to remain the same, but would like the information from snepnetwork.org to be integrated into the new neefc.org website. Presumably it will have its own page(s) on neefc.org, alongside pages for other NEEFC programs. Some of the content such as Tools & Resources, Webinars, etc. will be integrated with other NEEFC program content so users can find this information in one central place for all NEEFC programs.

2. We also found the Buffer Restoration site; do you want to include that content as well? Does that site need it's own sub-brand? Or do you not know, and would you like support in figuring that out?

ANSWER: The Buffer Restoration site is a standalone resource and does not need to be integrated into the neefc.org website. It should be included as a link in a list of multiple external resources on the site.

3. Do you have a sample or comparable brand guide that's illustrative of the weight of brand guide you're hoping for?

ANSWER: The refreshed brand guide should generally include the following components:

- “Brand story”
 - Mission
 - Priorities
- Language guidelines
 - How to refer to NEEFC and its programs in relation to Cutler, USM, UMaine, EPA, etc.

- Key terms
- Visual Identity
 - Logo
 - Logo variations
 - Program logos (SNEP, NEWIN, BetterBev)
 - ✦ And how they are positioned with NEEFC i.e. “a program of the New England Environmental Finance Center”
 - Guidelines for logo usage (alone, in relation to each other, and in relation to partner logos)
 - Typeface(s)
 - Color palette
 - Icon assets

4. Is NEEFC open to a complete rebranding (new logo, typography, color palette), or Are there existing brand assets (logos, templates, photography, illustrations) that must be retained/updated?

ANSWER: NEEFC is open to a complete rebranding, but it is not a requirement of the RFP.

5. Is there a preferred content management system (e.g., WordPress, Drupal, Webflow, etc.) or should the vendor recommend one based on accessibility and ease of use?

ANSWER: The current NEEFC website uses WordPress, but the team is open to proposals recommending any CMS platform.

6. Are there any specific third-party tools or APIs (forms, CRM, mailing lists, analytics, etc.) to integrate?

ANSWER: The new site should support integration of Airtable and GIS.

7. How many pages (approx.) do you anticipate for the new website including subpages and migrated content?

ANSWER: NEEFC will work with the selected contractor to determine the necessary number of pages for the new site.

8. How many affiliated programs must be represented under NEEFC?

ANSWER: There are three major affiliated programs (SNEP Network, NEWIN, and BetterBev) that must be represented under NEEFC. This scope of work does not include branding for affiliated programs, but does include co-branding with refreshed NEEFC branding.

9. Will content writing and migration be handled internally or by the vendor?

ANSWER: NEEFC staff can contribute team resources for content writing and migration, but is looking to work with the developer to determine the most efficient process for migrating existing content. NEEFC staff will contribute any technical writing.

10. For snepnetwork.org, should content be merged under neefc.org or redesigned separately?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects the content from snepnetwork.org to be merged with the overall neefc.org site, while maintaining the connection to SNEP Network as one of NEEFC's multiple programs.

11. Is it required for the vendor to have prior experience with Government Organizations?

ANSWER: No

12. Do you expect the vendor to manage the hosting after completing the project?

ANSWER: NEEFC anticipates website hosting and maintenance to be managed by NEEFC staff after the completion of the project.

13. Can you provide total number of workflow & process required customization or improvements?

ANSWER: NEEFC will work with the selected contractor to determine the necessary content for new site.

14. Is it required for the vendor to perform tasks on-site, or can it be done remotely?

ANSWER: Work can be performed remotely.

15. Can you share any website examples that you'd aspire to look like?

ANSWER: The NEEFC team has been compiling website examples and will share those with the chosen firm.

16. Should the new website include multilingual support or remain English-only?

ANSWER: Google translate compatibility is desired.

17. You mention including guidelines for sub-branded NEEFC programs as part of your brand strategy refresh.

- Are you expecting that all your programs will be rebranded with your new sub-branding, and that they'll no longer use their existing logos (e.g. SNEP Network's green logo with the bird and fish)?
- Is there a need for distinct sub-branding for each of your programs? If so, can we have a full list of all programs that would need this?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects program logos (SNEP Network, NEWIN, and BetterBev) to remain the same, but would like to establish brand hierarchy with the NEEFC logo (create guidelines for how NEEFC is represented alongside program materials, i.e. "a program of the NEEFC"). NEEFC does not anticipate distinct sub-branding for each program.

18. Are there any specific needs or expectations you have for the following website features?

- Resource library
 - Any types of resources significantly different from what you have on your current site?
 - Sortable tables and dynamic features
- Map(s)
- "Other dynamic features," as listed on your RFP
- Blog-like functionality, like your current News & Events page
- Events (are you interested in an events calendar?)

ANSWER: The new site should support the integration of Airtable and GIS. The NEEFC is currently developing a sortable and searchable table for funding opportunities which is built in Airtable that we would like to embed in the website. The NEEFC is open to incorporating an events calendar into the new website.

19. How is online registration for things like the Crucial Conversations for Mastering Dialogue training usually handled (currently closed)?

- We see that this registration is free. Do you ever accept online payments for other event registrations?

ANSWER: Most event registrations are through Zoom. Event registration is not expected within the scope of work of this project.

20. Is snepnetwork.org the only existing external website you'd like to incorporate into your new site, or are there other ones, too?

- Do you have an expectation of what would happen to the other site(s) once your new site is published? (If not, we're happy to provide a recommendation here.)
- Would we be able to communicate with stakeholders/site owners from SNEP Network and any other incorporated sites, whether directly or through your team?

ANSWER: [Snepnetwork.org](#) is the only external website we would like to incorporate into the new site. NEEFC expects the [snepnetwork.org](#) domain to redirect to the [neefc.org](#) website. NEEFC owns the [snepnetwork.org](#) site and NEEFC staff working on the SNEP Network program will be available for communication throughout the development process.

21. Do you want to carry over all content from SNEP Network's site? Here are the specific buckets of content we'd like to plan for, if they're needed:
- News & Stories content
 - Newsletter archives
 - Events, with or without archived events
 - On-demand webinars
 - Leadership Exchange podcasts
 - StoryMap content (Wareham Leadership Exchange, project pages, Bylaw Review Tool)
 - ArcGIS maps

ANSWER: Yes, it is expected that all content from [snepnetwork.org](#) will be integrated into [neefc.org](#). Our team is open to discussion about how far back we include archived newsletters/events.

22. It looks like you use Mailchimp for your newsletter signup—do you want to maintain that?

ANSWER: Newsletter support is not expected within the scope of work of this project.

23. You mention "marketing" in the list of what needs to be incorporated onto the site.
- Do you already have other marketing tools in use, and if so, what are they?
 - Do you have any specific needs or expectations for new marketing tools integrated with your website as part of this build?

ANSWER: The "marketing" aspect of the site should allow NEEFC to advertise upcoming events, opportunities, and other updates relevant to our community. This content will be developed and updated by NEEFC team members.

24. Are you using any other specific plugins or third-party integrations that need to be maintained or replaced?

ANSWER: The new website should support GIS and Airtable.

25. Should all current pages/information from both neefc.org and snepnetwork.org be migrated to the new site, or are you looking to archive outdated content?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects outdated content to be archived.

26. Are there existing user accounts or login systems that need to be migrated?

ANSWER: No.

27. Do you have a need for copywriting for your new website, or will you be updating any written content in-house?

ANSWER: Any major changes to substantive content (new or rewritten) will be handled by NEEFC staff. We anticipate the selected firm to be involved in limited content development as it relates to text to navigate the website, transition between sections, and/or introduce pages/sections where detailed subject-matter knowledge is not required.

28. Do you want to keep the new site on your current hosting through the University of Maine, or are you interested in vendor-provided hosting?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects to continue hosting the site through USM; however external hosting is possible if there is a compelling reason to do so.

29. If you stay on the University of Maine's hosting, are there any technical constraints or security requirements we should be aware of?

- Will the website need to integrate with any central services or databases from the university?

ANSWER: Not that the team is aware of.

30. Do you have any expectations for your project timeline beyond the RFP process? Any goals for when you'd like to have the brand finalized and the website launched?

ANSWER: NEEFC does not have a specific deadline. The team anticipates website and branding project to be completed approximately 6 months from the contract start date, but defers to firms' expertise on timeline to achieve the desired product.

31. Is your \$55,000 budget allotted just for the design and development services outlined in your RFP, or is it inclusive of hosting, web maintenance, and/or licensing costs, too?

ANSWER: As stated in RFP, there is potential for additional funds for ongoing technical support

32. Are there any constraints or requirements from your EPA funding that we should be aware of?

ANSWER: None that are relevant at this time.

33. Is there an incumbent for this contract? If so, please provide the incumbent name, current contract number, duration, historical level of effort, and value of the contract.

ANSWER: There is no incumbent/current contractor. To date the website has been built/managed in house by the NEEFC and USM team.

34. Will the incumbent be eligible to bid on this project?

ANSWER: N/A

35. Can the work be performed remotely?

ANSWER: Yes.

36. If remote work is allowed, can a part of the work be done from outside the US, such as in India?

ANSWER: Remote work performed outside of the US is allowable.

37. Could the University clarify the anticipated project start date and target completion or launch timeline?

ANSWER: Anticipated start date in mid-December with possibility to start in early January if holiday schedules require. NEEFC does not have a specific deadline. The team anticipates website and branding project to be completed approximately 6 months from start date, but defer to firms expertise on timeline to achieve the desired product.

38. We would like to propose Drupal as the content management system (CMS) for this project. Given its flexibility, scalability, and security features, would the University accept Drupal as the content management system (CMS) for this website redesign project?

ANSWER: The current NEEFC website uses WordPress, but the team is open to proposals recommending any CMS platform.

39. Will the vendor be responsible for hosting setup and migration, or will hosting be managed by the University IT department?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects to continue hosting the site through USM; however external hosting is possible if there is a compelling reason to do so.

40. If the hosting setup falls under the vendor's scope, we recommend using Acquia for hosting the proposed Drupal-based solution, as it provides enterprise-grade performance, security, and scalability optimized for Drupal environments. Would the University accept Acquia as the hosting provider for this project?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects to continue hosting the site through USM; however external hosting is possible if there is a compelling reason to do so.

41. If hosting responsibilities are included in the vendor's scope, will the associated hosting costs be covered under the stated project budget of approximately \$55,000?

ANSWER: As stated in the RFP, there is potential for additional funds for ongoing technical support.

42. Are there any existing content migration tools, APIs, or databases that will be provided to assist in migrating content from the current sites?

ANSWER: No

43. Does the migration scope include full integration of snepnetwork.org into neefc.org, including preservation of all existing content, redirects, and SEO metadata?

ANSWER: Yes the scope includes full integration of snepnetwork.org into neefc.org

44. Will the branding refresh involve a complete logo redesign or refinement of the existing logo?

ANSWER: NEEFC is open to a complete rebranding, but it is not a requirement of the RFP.

45. Should the vendor include messaging and tone development as part of the brand strategy or focus only on visual elements?

ANSWER: Brand guidelines should focus mostly on visual elements, but some support on defining brand story and mission is expected.

46. How will stakeholder feedback on branding, such as logo, colors, and hierarchy, be collected through workshops or University-led reviews?

ANSWER: Feedback will be provided through meetings (virtual or in person) with NEEFC team members.

47. How many staff members will require training in CMS usage? Is the training required onsite or virtual?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects up to 3 team members to be trained on CMS usage. Training can be remote.

48. Will there be an opportunity for ongoing technical support or maintenance after the project launch, or should this be proposed as an optional service?

ANSWER: As stated in RFP, there is potential for additional funds for ongoing technical support

49. Approximately how many pages will the new website contain (including subpages and migrated content from snepnetwork.org)?

ANSWER: NEEFC will work with the selected contractor to determine the necessary number of pages for the new site.

50. Is the university looking for a detailed breakdown of the deliverables, or can the offeror provide hourly rates for the personnel who will be working on this project?

ANSWER: Hourly rates are acceptable; NEEFC encourages applicants to utilize the table outlined in the RFP.

51. What is the expected project timeline or completion date (e.g., 3 months, 6 months)?

ANSWER: Anticipated start date in mid-December with possibility to start in early January if holiday schedules require. NEEFC does not have a specific deadline. The team anticipates website and branding project to be completed approximately 6 months from start date, but defer to firms expertise on timeline to achieve the desired product.

52. How many university staff members need to be trained on content management and brand implementation?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects up to 3 team members to be trained on CMS usage.

53. Should we include pricing for a defined support period (e.g., 3- or 6-month post-launch), or will that be handled under a separate support agreement?

ANSWER: As stated in the RFP, there is potential for additional funds for ongoing technical support

54. The RFP mentions integrating snepnetwork.org into neefc.org. Could you please confirm whether other existing NEEFC program websites (e.g., NEWIN, BetterBev, etc.) are also expected to be integrated or consolidated under neefc.org?

ANSWER: Snepnetwork.org is the only program specific site we would like to integrate into the neefc.org site. The BetterBev standalone site (<https://betterbev.org/>) is a multi-partner website not solely owned/updated by the NEEFC. There is no standalone website for NEWIN. All three programs will have program-specific content/pages on the updated neefc.org page, with the largest amount of new content coming from snepnetwork.org.

55. For the Landscape Analysis, should the focus be primarily on understanding how other Environmental Finance Centers communicate and visually represent their work for reference in shaping NEEFC's brand and website design?

ANSWER: Other references for landscape analysis can include environmental nonprofits and other mission driven organizations.

56. Could you confirm whether we may include design mock-ups or visual samples as part of our proposal submission?

ANSWER: Yes, design mock-ups or visual samples may be included in proposals.

57. Regarding branding, should the work include a logo redesign or refresh, or should it focus on developing a comprehensive brand guide building upon the existing 2022 logo?

ANSWER: NEEFC is open to complete rebranding or refinement of the existing logo. The scope of work of this project includes a comprehensive brand guide.

58. Could you please specify what types of communications collateral are expected (e.g., brand guide, print materials, presentation templates, or digital/social media assets)?

ANSWER: For communications collateral, NEEFC is looking for brand guidelines, logo lockups, and a small library of icons. Other communications collateral (templates, presentations, social media) is not included in the scope of work for this project.

59. Could you confirm whether NEEFC has a preferred CMS platform (e.g., WordPress, Drupal) or whether respondents may recommend one?

ANSWER: The current NEEFC website uses WordPress, but the team is open to proposals recommending any CMS platform.

60. Is website hosting included in the project scope, or will hosting continue under NEEFC's current arrangement?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects to continue hosting the site through USM; however external hosting is possible if there is a compelling reason to do so.

61. Does NEEFC currently maintain any development or staging environments that can be used for the redesign, or should setup of these environments be included in our scope?

ANSWER: The current NEEFC website uses WordPress. The new website is expected to have development and staging functionality.

62. The RFP mentions third-party integrations (maps, forms, marketing, and resource tools). Could you please specify any existing tools or platforms currently used (e.g., Google Maps, Mailchimp, Airtable, etc.) that should be integrated into the new site?

ANSWER: The new website should support GIS and Airtable.

63. Is compliance with ADA, Section 508, and WCAG 2.2 sufficient, or do you require a VPAT or similar accessibility documentation at delivery?

ANSWER: Compliance with ADA, Section 508, and WCAG 2.2 is sufficient.

64. Will the new website store or process any protected University data (FERPA or otherwise) under the "Standards for Safeguarding Information"?

ANSWER: No.

65. Should the website include multilingual support for non-English audiences? If so, which languages or translation approach is preferred?

ANSWER: Google translate compatibility is desired.

66. Could you share the anticipated project start date and target go-live timeframe to align our proposed schedule?

ANSWER: Anticipated start date in mid-December with possibility to start in early January if holiday schedules require. NEEFC does not have a specific deadline. The team anticipates website and branding project to be completed approximately 6 months from start date, but defer to firms expertise on timeline to achieve the desired product.

67. Could you share the anticipated project start date and target go-live timeframe to align our proposed schedule?

ANSWER: Anticipated start date in mid-December with possibility to start in early January if holiday schedules require. NEEFC does not have a specific deadline. The team anticipates website and branding project to be completed approximately 6 months from start date, but defer to firms expertise on timeline to achieve the desired product.

68. The RFP mentions a budget of approximately \$55,000, with a note about potential additional funds for ongoing support. Could you confirm whether NEEFC is open to allocating additional budget for post-launch technical support if required?

ANSWER: As stated in RFP, there is potential for additional funds for ongoing technical support

69. Can we please get the Excel version of Exhibit 1?

ANSWER: An Excel version will be posted to our website at:

<https://www.maine.edu/strategic-procurement/upcoming-bids/>

70. You “strongly prefer” higher-education references (ideally multi-campus). To confirm, this is a preference—not a requirement—and strong non-profit/public-sector references are acceptable and will be scored accordingly?

ANSWER: Yes, strong non-profit/public-sector references are acceptable for this project and proposals that do not include higher-education references will definitely be considered.

71. Are you open to having vendors bid on certain parts of the project, rather than the entire engagement?

ANSWER: Only proposals that address the entire scope of work will be considered.

72. Would NEEF be interested in reviewing a cost-effective proposal that focuses on these two pieces?

ANSWER: Only proposals that address the entire scope of work will be considered.

73. 1.1.3: "Though this document is primarily for the NEEFC, all campuses in the University of Maine System must be afforded the use of this solution, with all the same terms and conditions applicable to the various University locations." Please explain how this solution might be used by other University locations?

ANSWER: This is standard language in UMS RFPs. Disregard

74. 1.1.4 "develop communications collateral." What collateral will need to be developed?

ANSWER: For communications collateral, NEEFC is seeking brand guidelines, logo lockups, and a small library of icons. Other communications collateral (templates, presentations, social media) is not included in the scope of work for this project.

75. "NEEFC program logos" will these need to be developed or will the refreshed brand just need to work with these existing logos? If we are developing new program logos, how many?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects program logos (SNEP Network, NEWIN, and BetterBev) to remain the same, but would like to establish brand hierarchy with the refreshed NEEFC logo (create guidelines for how NEEFC is represented alongside program materials, i.e. "a program of the NEEFC"). NEEFC does not anticipate distinct sub-branding for each program.

76. "Wants the new website to have the capacity to host tools such as resource libraries, sortable tables, maps, and other dynamic features" are any of these deliverables for this scope of work, or are we just ensuring they can be integrated easily in the future?

ANSWER: These tools are developed by NEEFC (using platforms including Airtable and GIS) and should be able to be integrated into the site.

77. 1.1.5 "using a process that engages NEEFC staff and key stakeholders throughout" Who are the stakeholders? Approximately how many people in total fall under staff and key stakeholders? Is there a preferred engagement/communication method (e.g. in-person meetings, Zoom calls, surveys,)

ANSWER: NEEFC staff includes 9 individuals. Live meetings (in-person or remotely) are expected for communication.

78. Please confirm, the website snepnetwork.org would be fully integrated into the NEEFC site, so in the end there is only one site? Do you expect all content from SNEP to carry over?

ANSWER: Yes, the scope includes full integration of snepnetwork.org into neefc.org. NEEFC expects some content from snepnetwork.org to be archived.

79. <https://snepnetwork.org/snep-network-news/> is a traditional blog will these be combined with NEEFC?

ANSWER: This links to an archive of SNEP Network newsletters, which should be migrated into the neefc.org site, presumably under a new SNEP Network program page/subpage.

80. Will any of the other program websites be merged into the NEEFC site?

ANSWER: Snepnetwork.org is the only external website we would like to incorporate into the new site. NEEFC expects the snepnetwork.org domain to redirect to the neefc.org website. NEEFC owns the snepnetwork.org site and NEEFC staff working on the SNEP Network program will be available for communication throughout the development process.

81. How much will the content change from the existing site to the new site? Will you require assistance with writing or other content development?

ANSWER: Any major changes to substantive content (new or rewritten) will be handled by NEEFC staff. We anticipate the selected firm to be involved in limited content development as it relates to text to navigate the website, transition between sections, and/or introduce pages/sections where detailed subject-matter knowledge is not required.

82. "Compliance requirements and WCAG 2.2 web accessibility standards." Do you require AA or AAA compliance?

ANSWER: Compliance with ADA, Section 508, and WCAG 2.2 is sufficient.

83. "Ease of use analytics" do you already have analytics set up or does it need to be set up? If it is set up, is it Google Analytics or something else?

ANSWER: NEEFC has previously used Google Analytics but it has not been maintained.

84. Should the brand strategy deliverables include messaging frameworks (ex. key messages, tone of voice, brand story, etc.) in addition to visual elements?

ANSWER: Yes, NEEFC would like some support on big-picture brand messaging (mission statement, brand story).

85. Are there other microsites or affiliated programs aside from the SNEP Network expected to be integrated into the new website structure?

ANSWER: Snepnetwork.org is the only external website we would like to incorporate into the new site. NEEFC expects the snepnetwork.org domain to redirect to the neefc.org website. NEEFC owns the snepnetwork.org site and NEEFC staff working on the SNEP Network program will be available for communication throughout the development process.

86. Will NEEFC staff provide website copy and program descriptions, or should the selected firm include copywriting and content editing within the website design and development process?

ANSWER: Any major changes to substantive content (new or rewritten) will be handled by NEEFC staff. We anticipate the selected firm to be involved in limited content development as it relates to text to navigate the website, transition between sections, and/or introduce pages/sections where detailed subject-matter knowledge is not required.

87. Per Appendix E, the RFP states that NEEFC strongly prefers references from higher education institutions. While we understand NEEFC is housed within a university, would NEEFC consider references pertaining to successful completion of projects related to NEEFC's mission of building community capacity to advance the protection of critical environmental resources and foster resilient communities?

ANSWER: Proposals that do not include higher-education references will be considered.

88. Do you anticipate a full redesign of the NEEFC logo, or do you envision more of a light refresh with updated guidelines?

ANSWER: NEEFC is open to a full rebranding, but it is not a requirement of the RFP.

89. For program logos (SNEP, NEWIN, BetterBev, etc.), do you expect us to redesign these logos, or just create a brand hierarchy system that makes them work cohesively under the NEEFC umbrella?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects program logos (SNEP Network, NEWIN, and BetterBev) to remain the same, but would like to establish brand hierarchy with the refreshed NEEFC logo (create guidelines for how NEEFC is represented alongside program materials, i.e. “a program of the NEEFC”). NEEFC does not anticipate distinct sub-branding for each program.

90. How many distinct websites or microsites need to be consolidated under the new neefc.org? The RFP mentions snepnetwork.org — are there others (e.g., BetterBev, NEWIN) to be integrated at launch?

ANSWER: Snepnetwork.org is the only external website we would like to incorporate into the new site. NEEFC expects the snepnetwork.org domain to redirect to the neefc.org website. NEEFC owns the snepnetwork.org site and NEEFC staff working on the SNEP Network program will be available for communication throughout the development process.

91. How many total pages of content (across neefc.org and other program sites) do you expect to be migrated into the new site?

ANSWER: NEEFC will work with the selected contractor to determine the necessary number of pages for the new site.

92. Will NEEFC staff handle content migration (copy, PDFs, images, resources), or do you expect the consultant to manage that process?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects to contribute team resources for basic content migration and plans to determine best practices along with chosen developer.

93. Are there existing CMS platforms in use today (e.g., WordPress, Drupal), or are you looking for our recommendation on which CMS to use going forward?

ANSWER: The current NEEFC website uses WordPress, but the team is open to proposals recommending any CMS platform.

94. Should we budget for developing copy across the full site, or just providing information hierarchy and a content outline?

ANSWER: Any major changes to substantive content (new or rewritten) will be handled by NEEFC staff. We anticipate the selected firm to be involved in limited content development

as it relates to text to navigate the website, transition between sections, and/or introduce pages/sections where detailed subject-matter knowledge is not required.

95. If the vendor is developing copy, will staff provide programmatic source copy?

ANSWER: Any major changes to substantive content (new or rewritten) will be handled by NEEFC staff. We anticipate the selected firm to be involved in limited content development as it relates to text to navigate the website, transition between sections, and/or introduce pages/sections where detailed subject-matter knowledge is not required.

96. The RFP mentions tools like resource libraries, sortable tables, and maps. Do you already have specific tools in mind (e.g., ArcGIS, Airtable, Gravity Forms) that we need to ensure work with the CMS?

ANSWER: The site should support Airtable and GIS integration.

97. Will NEEFC provide access to existing SEO/analytics tools (e.g., Google Analytics, Tag Manager), or should we build those in from scratch?

ANSWER: NEEFC has historically used Google Analytics but it has not been maintained.

98. What stakeholder group(s) would be trained within the provided scope?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects up to 3 staff members to be trained.

99. Is the \$55,000 budget firm, or is there flexibility if expanded scope (such as full program logo redesigns or extensive content migration) is required?

ANSWER: As stated in the RFP, there is potential for additional funds for ongoing technical support

100. What is your target launch date for the new website and brand system?

ANSWER: Anticipated start date in mid-December with possibility to start in early January if holiday schedules require. NEEFC does not have a specific deadline. The team anticipates website and branding project to be completed approximately 6 months from start date, but defer to firms expertise on timeline to achieve the desired product.

101. Beyond the listed goals (clarifying mission, increasing recognition, integrating programs, etc.), are there any specific business or engagement metrics NEEFC uses to measure success (e.g., site traffic, partner conversions, media mentions)? Is the goal of

this project primarily brand alignment, public engagement, funding visibility, or an even balance of these?

ANSWER: NEEFC would like to have basic analytics capability including site traffic. The goal of the new website is a combination of those listed.

102. What are the top priority audiences for the refreshed brand and website—government partners, funders, communities, or general public?

ANSWER: Top priority audiences for the refreshed website include groups seeking technical assistance (municipalities), partner organizations, and funders.

103. Does NEEFC have a content strategy or editorial calendar currently in use that informs how updates are prioritized?

ANSWER: No

104. Does this project include developing a communications narrative or messaging framework for staff to use beyond the website (e.g., presentations, grant language)?

ANSWER: NEEFC would like support in refining their mission statement, but does not require major messaging guidance beyond mission and brand story.

105. Should the selected firm evolve or completely redesign the NEEFC logo, or simply establish consistency with sub-brands?

ANSWER: NEEFC is open to a complete rebranding, but it is not a requirement of the RFP.

106. Are there existing visual assets or templates (e.g., slide decks, brochures) that must be included in the new brand guide?

ANSWER: No.

107. What level of autonomy will the selected firm have in proposing color palettes, typefaces, and imagery beyond the existing logo and colors?

ANSWER: NEEFC is open to branding proposals that the firm sees fit, but expect the final decision to be a collaborative process.

108. Is there a stakeholder preference for maintaining continuity with the University of Southern Maine or EPA affiliations in visual identity?

ANSWER: There are not specific requirements for visual identity. NEEFC branding often appears alongside partner branding, including UMaine, USM, EPA, and other environmental and water infrastructure organizations.

109. Will the brand guide need to include co-branding standards for partner organizations (beyond NEEFC programs)?

ANSWER: The scope of work does not include co-branding standards for partner organizations outside of NEEFC programs.

110. Should the brand strategy include tone of voice and messaging pillars, or remain limited to visual identity?

ANSWER: NEEFC would like support in refining their mission statement but does not require major messaging guidance beyond mission and brand story.

111. Is there an existing CMS or hosting platform currently in use for neefc.org and snepnetwork.org?

ANSWER: The current NEEFC website uses WordPress, but the team is open to proposals recommending any CMS platform.

112. Should the new site be centrally hosted under the University's IT environment or independently managed by NEEFC?

ANSWER: NEEFC anticipates the site will continue to be hosted under USM.

113. Are there specific security, privacy, or data storage standards to comply with, beyond ADA/WCAG 2.2 accessibility?

ANSWER: Compliance with ADA, Section 508, and WCAG 2.2 is sufficient.

114. Does NEEFC anticipate multi-site functionality (e.g., separate microsites for sub-programs)?

ANSWER: Microsites for sub-program are not within the scope of this project.

115. Will the project include migration of existing databases, document repositories, or form integrations (beyond standard content)?

ANSWER: No.

116. Are there any third-party integrations (such as GIS maps, Salesforce, Constant Contact, etc.) that must be included?

ANSWER: The new website should support integration of Airtable and GIS.

117. What is the volume and format of existing content to be migrated (number of pages, PDFs, videos, forms)?

ANSWER: NEEFC will work with contractor to determine the necessary content for the new site.

118. Are there specific analytics or reporting tools the new site must support (e.g., GA4, Tag Manager, Hotjar)?

ANSWER: NEEFC has historically used Google Analytics but it has not been maintained.

119. Will NEEFC require multilingual functionality?

ANSWER: Google Translate compatibility is desired.

120. Are there hosting or domain management responsibilities expected of the vendor post-launch?

ANSWER: NEEFC expects to continue hosting the site through USM; however external hosting is possible if there is a compelling reason to do so.

121. How many internal stakeholders will participate in workshops, feedback rounds, and approvals?

ANSWER: NEEFC includes 9 staff members. Only NEEFC staff will be directly involved in feedback process.

122. Will external audiences or partners (e.g., state agencies or nonprofits) be included in the discovery phase?

ANSWER: Only NEEFC staff will be directly involved in the discovery phase.

123. Are there specific content accessibility needs (e.g., screen reader optimization, large-print versions, dyslexia-friendly formats)?

ANSWER: Compliance with ADA, Section 508, and WCAG 2.2 is sufficient.

124. How will NEEFC define and measure usability success—task completion, survey feedback, analytics benchmarks, etc.?

ANSWER: To be determined.

125. Should the UX strategy include persona development or is that data already available internally?

ANSWER: NEEFC would like support in persona development.

126. Does the scope include content writing or editing, or will NEEFC provide all copy?

ANSWER: Any major changes to substantive content (new or rewritten) will be handled by NEEFC staff. We anticipate the selected firm to be involved in limited content development as it relates to text to navigate the website, transition between sections, and/or introduce pages/sections where detailed subject-matter knowledge is not required.

127. Are there preferred tone, terminology, or editorial standards NEEFC wishes to align with (e.g., EPA language, academic tone)?

ANSWER: Tone on the main website should remain professional, but there are not specific guidelines or standards the site needs to follow.

128. Will existing assets from snepnetwork.org and other sub-programs require content rewriting to align under one voice?

ANSWER: Any major changes to substantive content (new or rewritten) will be handled by NEEFC staff. We anticipate the selected firm to be involved in limited content development as it relates to text to navigate the website, transition between sections, and/or introduce pages/sections where detailed subject-matter knowledge is not required.

129. Should the contractor anticipate SEO research and keyword optimization beyond baseline setup?

ANSWER: Baseline SEO and keyword optimization will be adequate for the scope of this project.

130. Is there a plan for ongoing content updates (e.g., blog posts, publications), and should the site be structured to support them?

ANSWER: Yes, the site should be structured to support ongoing content updates by NEEFC staff.

131. How many NEEFC staff members will need to be trained on CMS use?

ANSWER: NEEFC anticipates up to 3 staff members will be trained.

132. What is the expected format and depth of training—recorded sessions, live workshops, written manuals, or all three?

ANSWER: To be determined; there are not specific requirements for training format.

133. Will NEEFC require post-launch monitoring or analytics reporting support, or will that be handled internally?

ANSWER: Post-launch monitoring and analytics reporting will be handled internally.

134. Are there any performance metrics or warranty periods expected for technical support post-launch?

ANSWER: As stated in the RFP, there is potential for additional funds for ongoing technical support