

The Aloha Foundation
Request for Proposal: Website Redesign
October 16, 2020

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1. Introduction

The Aloha Foundation is soliciting Requests for Proposals (RFP) to identify an agency to redesign our website: www.alohafoundation.org. We are looking for a vendor who has demonstrated experience in managing website redesign projects and expertise in best practices for successful website design, development, and deployment. Not required, but a plus, is a vendor who has experience working with organizations in camping or education.

Maintaining a high-quality, professional online presence is vital to the strength and future of the Aloha Foundation. A strong website is one of our most important business assets for sharing information, building credibility, and gaining competitive advantage. The most recent redesign was completed in 2016. It's time!

In September 2019, we launched our new visual identity, which includes a main Foundation logo, six camp logos, and six corresponding program-specific graphics (see our [style guide](#)). We chose not to make significant changes to our website at that time, as we anticipated a full website redesign in 2020-2021.

2. Project Timeline

10/16/2020	Aloha RFP announced
11/2/2020	Agency responses due by 5:00 p.m. EDT
11/6/2020	Notification of selected agency by 5:00 p.m. EST
Week of 11/9/2020	Initial kick-off meeting for selected agency and Aloha
4/1/2021	New website launched
Through 5/1/2021	Website performance monitored and any issues resolved

3. General Information about the Aloha Foundation

The Aloha Foundation is a Vermont-based nonprofit that operates summer camps, family camps, and education programs emphasizing simplicity, the outdoors, and living in community.

Vision

The Aloha Foundation will be a preeminent camp and an innovative educational institution. Our social and educational programs, environmental stewardship, and thought leadership will benefit children, families, communities, and leaders.

Mission

To inspire people of all ages to learn, explore, grow, and become their best selves.

Values

Balancing respect for tradition with desire for innovation, the Aloha Foundation values simplicity, inclusivity, integrity, safety, and connection to nature. Our programs foster self-awareness, teamwork, respect, and fun.

Our six main camps and programs are located on five campuses on Lake Morey and Lake Fairlee in Fairlee, Vermont:

- 1) Aloha (for girls grades 7-10, founded in 1905)
- 2) Hive (for girls grades 1-6, founded in 1915)
- 3) Lanakila (for boys grades 3-8, founded in 1922)
- 4) Hulbert Outdoor Center (leadership and outdoor education for participants of all ages, founded in 1978, same campus as Lanakila)
- 5) Horizons Day Camp (co-ed pre-k through 7th grade, founded in 1997)
- 6) Ohana Family Camp (founded in 2008)

More than 10,000 participants visit our camps and programs annually and we enjoy an active and passionate alumni constituency of approximately 4,000 households. The Foundation employs about 475 seasonal staff and 25 year-round staff.

4. Business Goals

The 2016 redesign in WordPress was a vast improvement from the previous website, however, it is not fully responsive and our website visitors have difficulty finding the basic information they need such as program descriptions, dates, and tuition.

The primary business goals of the new website are to:

- 1) Generate more leads
- 2) Increase brand awareness in our market
- 3) Offer our constituents an easy, user-friendly way to learn about our programs and philosophy through compelling copy, videos, and photos
- 4) Promote organization as an industry leader by sharing expertise related to camping, education, child and human development, etc.
- 5) Build community and connections with constituents (new and current families, donors, alumni, staff)

5. Project Objectives

The project objectives are to:

- 1) Resolve pain points of current website (outlined in section 8)
- 2) Incorporate, highlight, and build recognition of Aloha's new visual identity

- 3) Feature responsive web design while optimizing speed
- 4) Adhere to accessibility standards
- 5) Add more expert content (provided by the Aloha Foundation) that is compelling, educational, and useful to families, for example, articles on parenting, child development, how to pick the best camp for your child, benefits of outdoor education, etc.
- 6) Incorporate clear, compelling calls to action throughout the site (provide value through new additions such as a camper readiness checklist, for example)
- 7) Integrate social media plug-ins for easy sharing (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- 8) Continue to give Aloha the flexibility to make basic content updates and changes

6. Project Scope

The scope of this project includes:

- Site migration plan
- Robust and easy-to-use Content Management System (CMS)
- Creative design services
- Mobile-friendly design
- Accessible design
- Advise Aloha on planning and updating copy with a focus on keyword-centric content
- Sitemap development and site planning, auto-generated sitemap
- Wireframe mockups for the new site
- Metadata migration
- SEO (what technical aspects will you perform with the new site; how will keywords and titles be determined; list measures that will be incorporated to evaluate effectiveness of the changes)
- Templates for new pages or content (5-8)

Later this fall, we will be launching a new alumni store hosted and managed by a third party. We need to have a link on our new website to direct alumni and others to the store. We will do the same for our new uniform vendor.

In the future, we will want to add an alumni network, likely through a third-party app.

7. Target Audiences

Our primary target audiences are:

- 1) Prospective families
(looking for info. about any of our six programs, such as program descriptions, cost, dates, philosophy, logistics, director bios, daily schedule, photos)
- 2) Current families
(seeking info. about any of our six programs, such as program descriptions, dates, tuition rates, registration, health forms, packing lists, access to summer online photo albums, etc.)

- 3) Alumni and donors
(seeking news, online giving or donation options, swag, events, trustee information)
- 4) Wedding couples or event groups
(want info. about booking a wedding, reunion, or other event at Ohana or Hulbert, facility info., food, staff, services offered)
- 5) Teachers, school administrators, and other professionals
(looking for info. about school or professional development programs at Hulbert or to learn more about Success Counseling workshops)

Other important visitors

Current and potential seasonal staff members
(seeking employment info. and hiring forms for any of our six programs or other staff-related info., important dates, submit applications)

Camping or educational professionals
(want to connect with staff, learn about our programs or philosophy, conduct research)

8. Current Website: Platform, Usage, and Pain Points

Our current platform is WordPress. We manage basic updates, forms, new pages and posts, and other tasks internally and would like to continue to have that ability, whether we use WordPress or learn to use some other platform.









The digital marketing agency [Wield](#) hosts our website and takes care of web development needs beyond what we are able to handle in house. Examples include selecting and installing a plug-in to enable pop-up messages and integration of a form with a third party like Raiser's Edge or BluePay (note: we are transitioning to Stripe with our new enrollment database CircuiTree). Wield will also assist us when staff time is limited and we do not have the bandwidth to, for example, upload a series of new videos or publications. Since the departure of our social media coordinator at the end of August, Wield has also been managing our 14 social media pages (Facebook and Instagram for each program, plus two pages for the Foundation).

Current Usage

Current page load speed is slow, likely due to issues such as the size of the photos on the site and the hosting of outdated or unused plug-ins, which need to be audited and removed in the next iteration of the site. We want to optimize speed for visitors to our site while keeping mobile-friendly design in mind.

A Google PageSpeed Insights reports outlines these opportunities for improvement:

Opportunities – These suggestions can help your page load faster. They don't **directly affect** the Performance score.

Opportunity	Estimated Savings
▲ Preload key requests	 2.28 s ▾
▲ Reduce initial server response time	 1.25 s ▾
▲ Eliminate render-blocking resources	 1.01 s ▾
▲ Defer offscreen images	 0.9 s ▾
▲ Serve images in next-gen formats	 0.9 s ▾
■ Remove unused CSS	 0.45 s ▾
■ Remove unused JavaScript	 0.45 s ▾
■ Efficiently encode images	 0.15 s ▾

General page diagnostics and passed Google audits are below.

Diagnostics – More information about the performance of your application. These numbers don't **directly affect** the Performance score.

▲ Ensure text remains visible during webfont load	▾
▲ Does not use passive listeners to improve scrolling performance	▾
▲ Serve static assets with an efficient cache policy – 61 resources found	▾
■ Minimize main-thread work – 2.8 s	▾
● Avoid chaining critical requests – 23 chains found	▾
● Keep request counts low and transfer sizes small – 83 requests • 2,220 KiB	▾
● Largest Contentful Paint element – 1 element found	▾
● Avoid large layout shifts – 3 elements found	▾
● Avoid long main-thread tasks – 11 long tasks found	▾

Passed audits (17)

- Properly size images
- Minify CSS
- Minify JavaScript – Potential savings of 3 KiB
- Enable text compression
- Preconnect to required origins
- Avoid multiple page redirects
- Use video formats for animated content
- Remove duplicate modules in JavaScript bundles
- Avoid serving legacy JavaScript to modern browsers – Potential savings of 10 KiB
- Avoids enormous network payloads – Total size was 2,220 KiB
- Avoids an excessive DOM size – 612 elements
- User Timing marks and measures
- JavaScript execution time – 0.8 s
- Minimize third-party usage – Third-party code blocked the main thread for 230 ms
- Avoids `document.write()`
- Avoid non-composited animations
- Avoids large JavaScript libraries with smaller alternatives – 0 large libraries found

Most of our leads on the current site come from Google Organic traffic and Google PPC traffic. Google Organic is our biggest source of leads. After Google Organic and PPC come Yahoo/Bing Organic, our Raiser's Edge email campaigns, and a few from Facebook.

Below are the top pages from which our visitors are leaving the site. The tuition and enroll pages are likely because visitors may not be ready to commit (as with the enroll page) or as with the tuition page, they have found the info they needed and are simply ready to leave the site. This, however, needs deeper analysis.

1. Home page
2. <https://alohafoundation.org/aloha-hive-lanakila-dates-tuition/>
3. <https://alohafoundation.org/aloha/>
4. <https://alohafoundation.org/lanakila/>
5. <https://alohafoundation.org/enroll/>

The overall conversion/lead rate is very low (.055% for 2020 and in 2019 it was .08%) because the main goal of the current site was to upgrade the user experience and increase traffic, not generate and track leads. This is our primary goal for the new site, as noted above.

Primary Pain Points

- Difficult for constituents to find basic information quickly and easily

The biggest challenge we face with our website is making sure a wide variety of audiences can find the information they need easily. What a 70-year-old alumnus is looking for is very different from what a 30-something current camp parent of a nine-year-old son is looking for. Or a teacher interested in bringing her students to Hulbert in the winter for a school program. Or a college student wanting more information about being a summer camp counselor.

Current camp parents, for example, need to quickly access logistical information about our summer programs from the home page. This is not part of our current design, so we use a "temporary" workaround (adding two buttons to the home page) that is inconsistent with the rest of the website structure and design.

- Lack of flexibility and inability to easily adapt or incorporate new information

Another issue we encounter frequently is the question of new, emerging information and where it should go in our existing website structure. For example, in summer 2020, we formed a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force and needed a new page for us to share our DEI work and progress, event information, the task force member list, Humans of Aloha series, and other news. There was no logical or highly visible place for

the page to live so we added it to an existing dropdown menu and created a button on the home page (again, a workaround).

Temporary messaging on the website home page is another solution we need (examples include COVID updates, office closing notification, etc.). Currently we do not have an effective option for this, other than pop-up messages, which we've learned can confuse or deter visitors.

Great photos are one of our most impactful assets. Our current WordPress theme lacks flexibility in photo formatting (being able to move a background photo slightly so a page title or subtitle can be more easily read, for example). We face this time-consuming challenge regularly and would like our new site to be more flexible.

- Not responsive

Some areas of our current website are not easily accessible from mobile devices. In 2019, we saw over 27% more mobile traffic, ~8% more desktop traffic, and ~10% more desktop traffic over 2018.

Note: in 2020—an abnormal year when we had to cancel our five summer programs due to COVID-19—we've seen desktop traffic increase over 20%, mobile traffic decrease almost 40%, and traffic from visitors using tablets decrease over 50%.

Our new site needs to be responsive and designed mobile-first.

In August 2020, 108 respondents completed our website survey ([summary here](#); password = **rfp2020**) to offer feedback about our current site. The answers to the last question (#13), which is open-ended, is perhaps the most helpful. Respondents included a mix of current parents, staff, Trustees, and alumni. Many of them confirmed the pain points listed above.

9. Competitor Websites

Some of our competitors include:

Farm & Wilderness

Plymouth, Vermont

Based in Vermont like the Aloha Foundation, Farm & Wilderness shares a similar organizational structure with 8 distinct camps underneath the umbrella of a Foundation. We like a number of aspects of the F&W site: easy navigation for visitors; clear calls to action; use of video and large, impactful photos throughout the site; alumni network, and more.

Other competitors

We also like aspects of these competitors' sites: uncluttered home page in some cases, ease of navigation, incorporation of video and great photos, clear calls to action.

[Chewonki](#)

[Camp Pemigewasset](#)

[Camp Dudley/Kiniya](#)

[Camp Walt Whitman](#)

[Sanborn Western Camps](#)

10. RFP Response Instructions and Requirements

Please include the following information in your proposal response and email it to Jenn Merritt, Director of Communications at jmerritt@alohafoundation.org. Please contact Jenn with any questions you may have at (802) 333-3400, ext. 3110.

- Overview of your company
- Overview of how you will meet our objectives
- Profile of team to be assigned to our account
- Key differentiators about you
- Scope of your work (research, design, development, post-launch errors, corrections, etc.)
- Explanation of your proposed platform/CMS
- Outline of your website design & development strategy
- Proposed website timeline from kickoff to launch
- 3 recent website design & development examples (include camp and education work, if any)
- Pricing with optional elements line-itemed
- Contact information for 3 references
- Training and ongoing support