

Terms of Reference for the Development and Relaunch of <https://isdc.org>

10 April 2018

Introduction

ISDC – International Security and Development Center (ISDC) is seeking an individual or a company to (re-) design and implement the relaunch the website <https://isdc.org>. A successful contractor should provide a cost-effective offer for the complete product covering all stages of the web development process and migration from the old site.

ISDC provides evidence-based analysis and policy advice on the interactions of security, conflict, violence and fragility with socio-economic development, growth, employment and poverty alleviation. We collect and analyse data, publish reports, advise public and private stakeholders, and build networks and capacity. We are experts in economics, political science, peace research and development studies. We are international, independent, non-for-profit and non-partisan. We are based in Berlin and collaborate with a broad range of partners in academia, policy making and practice. ISDC was founded in 2014; we currently have a Berlin-based staff of five.

Objectives of the Website

- Serve as a business card for ISDC;
- Promote visibility of ISDC as an organisation and its individual team members in the research, policy, donor and media communities;
- Communicate in a simple and clear way current and past research activities, events, and products;
- Act as a platform for sharing expertise, knowledge and resources, for example through blogs and policy briefings etc.;
- Serve as a tool to strengthen the network of professionals, researchers, students and policy makers working on our topics;
- Increase the visibility and quotation of publications;
- Document and save past products and outputs produced by ISDC;
- Increase newsletter subscriptions.

Additional information about ISDC is available on the current ISDC web site: <https://isdc.org>.

Target Audiences

The intended users of the website include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Policy makers and practitioners: Development practitioners, policy makers, ministry and agency officials, NGO staff;

- Donors: international agencies and organisations, European and German foundations; NGOs;
- Academia: university professors, lecturers and other academic staff, researchers, PhD students; other graduate students;
- Others: (potential) partners, customers and contractors.

Geographical scope: international audience, including development and conflict-affected countries (with mobile and/or low-speed internet access).

Language of the website: English only (except for obligatory legal texts).

Scope of Work

The contractor will be required to create (design, develop, test and implement) a web site within the designated timeline which meets the following criteria:

1. The website should be developed on a secure open source platform (Wordpress, Drupal etc).
2. The web design should be simple and clean, making the web site easy to understand and easy to maintain. Design templates can be used instead of original design. However, templates should be easy to customise for ISDC staff according to the changing and growing needs of ISDC. If templates are adjusted, there should be a minimal need to keep adapting these in the future (especially with outside expertise).
3. The web site should be easy to maintain for non-specialist staff and research assistants or interns at ISDC. We do not intend to hire a designated web editor!
4. The web solution should have a fast load and response time, be search-engine friendly and adhere to security best practices.
5. Web content should be compatible and rendered appropriately on a wide variety of different browsers (Firefox, Internet Explorer, Safari and Chrome) and gadgets in geographical areas with various bandwidth speeds.
6. A backend database of products, such as publications, projects subsites (e.g. www.lifeinkyrgyzstan.org), should be developed enabling easy access, search and counter-reference functions.
7. The web solution should enable integration of already existing project websites with a possibility of migration form a different server (e.g. www.hicn.org).

The web development is a one-off task aimed at providing a ready-made product with all subsequent maintenance done by ISDC staff. It should be endeavoured that as many changes as possible be made from the CMS user interface. All copyrights for the new website will be held by ISDC.

The contractor will communicate closely with ISDC during all stages of the website development process. Input and feedback from ISDC will be sought to find and test possible technical and design solutions.

The backup, code and source files will be delivered in full to client on closing of the contract. The contractor will have an automated testing system that checks for broken hyperlinks on the site.

The contractor will ensure the integration of search engine optimization tools. The SEO work will include: Keyword research & analysis, Site analysis, Competitive analysis, Site content optimization, HTML code optimization, Search Engine submission (free search engines) Link exchange.

Selection Criteria

The contractor should have:

- Proven experience of web design and support.
- Strong experience in developing widely used open source platforms, such as Drupal WordPress, etc.
- Understanding of end users needs to match with adequate technical solutions.
- Fluent English.
- Physical presence in Berlin may be a plus.
- Capacity to complete the project by late July 2018.

The proposal should

- Clearly establish an understanding of the services required and separate out activities according to the areas of work listed above;
- Describe the communication process with the client;
- Include a detailed fixed budget broken down by activities;
- Provide references of past works.

Design Specifications

The website should have a full-screen scroll design including areas:

- News;
- Publications;
- Projects (listed chronologically: current and past);
- Who we are: core team, affiliates, partners – donors, opportunities (e.g. internship announcements);
- Themes;
- Countries;
- Methods.

These “access routes” should be connected in a web-like style. For example, a visitor may click on “costs of conflict” as a topic, then find an expert there and click on that person’s bio and then click there on “panel data” as a method that ISDC works on - and each time receive a bundle of resources. Most items on the web site would be tagged in multiple ways, e.g. a project on costs of conflict may use panel data and have been produced by multiple staff members.

Profiles of team members should include hyperlinked references to relevant projects, countries, methods and publications.

- What we do (vision, scope of work, including themes and methods)
- Where we work (perhaps an interactive map of the world with project locations – interlinked with projects and team member profiles involved)
- Resources (lists of journal articles, reports, books, working papers)

- Blog (original ISDC blog entries and reposts from external websites)
- Events (upcoming and past, integrated calendar).
- Widget areas should include links to social media, a field for the newsletter subscription, contact (Impressum in German), search functionality on the website.

The website should facilitate streaming of information between different social media platforms. Currently these include Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. News items will also be used to build the newsletter.

At times, we run projects with their own web identity and address. It should be possible to run these in parallel in a similar fashion, with the option of archiving the content under our own web site when the project ends. See, for example, www.lifeinkyrgyzstan.org and www.hicn.org.

The contractor should suggest options for a suitable navigation menu architecture with excellent visibility of the content areas. Background of the website should be neutral; photo and infographic placement should amplify the content without distracting from it.

Our favourite designs in the related field of work include:

<http://www.gppi.net/home/>

<http://www.globalpolicy.science/>

Submission Process

The deadline for the submission of proposals is 2 May 2018. Proposals should be sent by email in a single pdf file to Myroslava Purska at purska@isdc.org.