



Request for Proposals: Website Design and Development

ArtsConnection is a nationally recognized NYC-based arts education nonprofit founded in 1979. We are seeking website design and development services for a complete overhaul of our main organizational website (<https://artsconnection.org>) to increase engagement with key audiences, strengthen branding, and improve functionality.

Organization Background

ArtsConnection's mission is to create socially just learning environments that strengthen the diverse voices of NYC's children and youth, cultivating their arts and academic skills for success in a changing world. We have three main program areas:

- In School Programs – We partner with over 50 NYC public schools (PreK-12) each year spanning all five boroughs to offer arts residency programs in theater, music, dance, visual arts, media, and puppetry. Other offerings include educational performances by a range of artists and ensembles and hands-on family workshops.
- Teen Programs – We offer out-of-school programs for teens to explore NYC's rich cultural landscape, explore careers in creative industries, and develop both leadership and creative skills.
- Professional Learning – Stemming from our decades of research and experience, we provide educators with customized training and resources for effective and inclusive instruction with diverse populations of students.

All our programs are rooted in our [Joyful Arts Education Framework](#), which focuses on Agency, Belonging, and Cultural Humility to foster collaborative, inclusive, and joyful learning experiences for all students.

Our key user groups related to our website include:

- ArtsConnection staff and board
- Donors and funders
- Teaching Artists and arts educators
- Teachers and other non-arts educators
- School and other education administrators
- Teens and parents/ teachers of teens
- Parents and caregivers of young people
- Job seekers

Current State and Point of Departure

Our current main website launched over 14 years ago and uses Wordpress 5.7.12. We are unable to upgrade to a more recent version of Wordpress, and several key plugins are no longer compatible. Our site does not function well on mobile browsing and contains outdated content that we cannot easily update. We experience ongoing issues with the site, which has increasingly become a burden on staff capacity. The site contains inconsistent branding and does not accurately communicate our current organizational work and character.

In addition to our main site, we have several separate ancillary sites that have been developed and launched more recently. These sites were created out of necessity given the limitations of our main site and our desire to meet the needs of different user groups (i.e. teens, educators, and families/ caregivers). Navigation among our sites is not optimal, and branding is inconsistent across sites. In revamping our main site, we will need to explore how users can move through our group of sites more seamlessly and decide which content and features should be migrated to the new main site. Overall, we need a more unified and well-integrated web presence to communicate all that ArtsConnection offers to our various user groups, which will likely involve consolidation and sunsetting one or more of the ancillary sites.

- Teen Programs: <https://teens.artsconnection.org>
 - Target audiences: teens and parents/ teachers of teens
 - Content: program info and applications/ registrations/ art submissions, digital galleries, youth blog
- Professional Learning: <https://teachwithartsconnection.org>
 - Target audiences: Teachers and other non-arts educators, Teaching Artists and arts educators, School and other education administrators
 - Content: educator resources, research, professional learning services offerings
- Arts Assessment for Learning (Professional Learning):
<http://artsassessmentforlearning.org>
 - Target audiences: Teachers and other non-arts educators, Teaching Artists and arts educators, School and other education administrators
 - Content: educator resources
- Culture Connected: <https://www.cultureconnected.org>
 - Target audiences: Parents and caregivers of young people
 - Content: event listings from cultural partners, virtual arts activities

We are also at the end of a three-year strategic plan; one of our key priorities has been to strengthen our organizational infrastructure. Over this period, we have completed projects to assess our websites and build a shared vision for the next iteration of our main website. Prior to the launch of this consultancy, we will have conducted internal preparations, including focus

groups with various kinds of users to learn more about how they use our sites and the content/features that are most important to them.

As we look to the future, having a well-functioning, engaging, and forward-thinking website will be essential to our growth and development. Being able to clearly tell our story, communicate our programs and value proposition, and offer various kinds of stakeholders the content that is most relevant to them will be key. Since we have not made a significant investment in our main website in over 14 years, it's important that we maximize this opportunity to launch a new site that will serve us well for many years to come.

Goals and Requirements for Consultancy

Our priorities for the new website include:

- A modern, flexible platform that allows us to be completely self-reliant after launch, staff will be trained in content management for ongoing operations, we are open to the new site being based on Wordpress but would also like to explore alternative platforms to identify the ideal option for our needs
- Clearer navigation within the site and also in relation to our other sites (Teen Programs, Culture Connected, Professional Learning, and Arts Assessment), different kinds of users should easily be able to find what they're looking for, consolidation of all content from Teen Programs site (includes digital art galleries and youth blog) and Arts Assessment site into new main website, some content from Professional Learning site will be consolidated into the new site while other content will remain on the current PL site
- Spotlight on our Framework and Professional Learning resources/ services, we would like to use the new site to host our own asynchronous courses through integration with a learning platform such as Moodle, Canvas, or Thinkific, we will likely want to move at least a portion of the searchable activity library to the new main site
- Ease of use for donors and supporters, we want to explore options for implementing a "soft paywall" (i.e. prompting donors to make a small donation and/or signing up for our newsletter to access select content)
- Improved ability to track analytics and user engagement, we need to be able to easily track total monthly visitors and average engagement time
- Mobile-friendly
- Strong accessibility features, the new site should be designed with best practices for accessibility in mind
- More consistent branding
- Easier process for users to sign up for our email newsletters on the website
- Functional global site search

We are seeking the following characteristics in our selection of website consultant:

- Ability to successfully execute on our priorities to deliver a website that engages our audiences and remains true to ArtsConnection mission and values
- Previous experience with design/ development for nonprofit clients, preference for previous experience with arts & culture and/or K-12 education
- Demonstrated track record of success with collaboration with organizational staff, ability to partner with us to complete project on time and within allotted budget, strong project management
- In-depth knowledge of a range of website platform options, past experience with training staff in content management
- Ability to develop an elegant solution for reorganization of our existing websites/ consolidation of content into a more streamlined and easier to navigate web presence, ability to assess our current set of websites and make recommendations for better organization, navigation between sites, and more consistent branding
- Previous experience with creation of searchable resource libraries
- Expertise in leveraging a website to strengthen branding

Budget and Scope of Services

Our maximum budget for this consultancy is \$100,000, inclusive of all consultant labor and other expenses. Deliverables include design, development, testing, and launch of the new website and training for staff in content management for ongoing self-management.

Our timeline for the project begins in January 2026 with completion by January 2027.

Proposal Process

Interested consultants should please respond to this RFP with the following materials by 09/15/25.

- Executive summary – a high-level response to the information outlined in the RFP
- Description of your approach and a high-level timeline for the project
- Detailed cost estimate consistent with our budget and objectives
- Three examples of previous work that best exemplifies consultant's capabilities and relevance to this project

Prospective consultants can address any questions and submit materials via email to Keith Kaminski, Deputy Director for Strategic Operations – kaminskik@artsconnection.org. Please use subject line "Website Consultant".