



THE KAIZEN COMPANY

Request for Proposals RFP# KZN-Incubator-0002
Website Service Level Maintenance and Support Agreement

RFP Issuance Date: July 26, 2021

Questions Due Date: July 29, 2021 by 10:00 a.m. (EDT)

Questions Posted: July 30, 2021 by 6 p.m.

Proposal Submission Due Date: August 9, 2021 by 10 a.m. (EDT)

Notifications of Award: August 11, 2020 by 10 a.m. (EDT)

Anticipated Start Date: August 16 (ideal date) or August 23, 2021

Reference: RFP# KZN-Incubator-0003

SUBJECT: Competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) No. KZN-Incubator-0003, Website Service Level Maintenance and Support Agreement

The Kaizen Company (Kaizen) is seeking proposals from qualified firms interested in operating a website service level maintenance and support agreement for WorkwithUSAID.org., a platform and ecosystem designed to catalyze and support the power of partnerships in international development and operate as a go-to resource for Agency partners.

Kaizen intends to issue a fixed-price, cost-effective subcontract to a suitable vendor that demonstrates the capacity to deliver these services. This RFP provides additional information that will allow an offeror to understand the scope of the effort and develop a proposal in the format desired by Kaizen and the Partnerships Incubator.

The information presented in this RFP is furnished solely for the purpose of assisting the offeror in making its own evaluation of the Scope of Work and does not purport to be all-inclusive or to contain all the information you may require. This RFP is not an offer by The Kaizen Company to contract, but rather an attempt to establish a common framework for The Kaizen Company to evaluate potential service providers. The offeror should make its own investigations, projections, and conclusions to verify independently the information contained in this RFP, and to obtain any additional information that it may require, prior to submitting a proposal.

All questions, comments, requests for clarifications, and RFP submissions must be sent to operations@partnershipsincubator.com no later than the date and time indicated above (July 29, 2021 by 10:00 a.m.). Questions will not be entertained after this date.

If substantive questions are received which affect the response to the solicitation or if changes are made to the closing date and time as well as other aspects of the RFP, this solicitation will

be amended. Any amendments to this solicitation will be issued and posted on the procurement opportunities page of the Kaizen website. Offerors are encouraged to check Kaizen's website periodically.

Issuance of this Request for Proposal (RFP) does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Kaizen. We reserve the right to reject any offer received in response to this request and shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the offeror in the preparation and submission of the proposal.

Thank you for your interest, and we look forward to your participation.

Statement of Work (SOW)

Background

The Partnerships Incubator is assisting USAID in undertaking activities for partners to lower barriers to understanding and working with the Agency. The website WorkwithUSAID.org was established to provide a robust platform to aid the Agency in meeting its partnership goals.

In order for WorkwithUSAID.org to serve as a successful launchpad for this new way of working with USAID, we seek IT services support through a service level maintenance and support agreement to aid the in-house team with back-end expertise and advisory services, be available to address general platform issues and urgent and scheduled maintenance requirements, and be available to work with the Partnerships Incubator team during the public launch of the site, the public-facing beta usage phase (e.g., a time-frame that includes a rapid and expansive influx of users).

WorkwithUSAID.org Architecture

In terms of technology, the WorkwithUSAID.org platform uses cutting-edge technology and industry best practices. While the site incorporates new technology standards, it is built with stability in mind, balancing advanced attributes with stability attributes. It uses a microservices architecture due to the multiple platform components.

This microservices architecture structures the entire USAID application as a collection of loosely coupled services including HTML, CSS, Strapi (Content Management System), ReactJS, NextJS, MariaDB (MySQL), RabbitMQ (Message Broker), NodeJS/NestJS, Maxwell (CDC), Typescript, GraphQL, Apollo Federation, GraphQL Mesh, Elasticsearch, GitlabCI, Chatbot.com, Accessibe.com, Google Cloud, Google Storage, Google's Kubernetes service (GKE) to deploy the site's backend services, Vercel to deploy the frontend apps.

Additional details of the website's infrastructure (e.g., technologies, services, hosting) will be provided to the vendor selected for this work.

Website Support, Advisory, and Maintenance

The Service Provider will be providing website and IT issues advisory services and technical support to the project management and UX teams and provide issue advisory services. The Partnerships Incubator is seeking an agency partner to help us to guarantee a safe, secure, and optimum visitor experience for the site that is expected to go live in early fall. The vendor is expect to accomplish the following:

1. **Website Support and Maintenance:** Manage software updates, performance enhancements, file backups, development updates, debugging, improvements in functionality, analytics reporting,
2. **Ongoing Uptime Monitoring:** Monitor uptime of WorkwithUSAID.org and be proactive

in documenting any issues that are discovered during the engagement.

3. **General Support:** Site security, design updates, site analytics, application development, code audit, SEO optimization, monthly innovation sessions/discussions, proactive changes to reduce risk, etc.
4. **Incident Documentation:** Register issues and incidents for incident tracking and communication about each specific incident and status.
5. **Communication:** Provide support via a mutually agreed upon platform during the EST workday Monday through Friday.
6. **Performance Maintenance:** Help us keep this site performing to optimum technical capacity and at the highest possible level
7. **Emergency Notifications:** Handle emergency notifications or actions that affect the live status of the site and requests ideally within a 1-2 hour period and general, non-emergency requests within a 24-hour period.
8. **Fixes Documentation:** Provide proactive documentation on technical fixes that may be required to prevent Website downtime.
9. **Health Check Report:** Provide a monthly system health check report to the WorkwithUSIAD.org Project Manager.

Web Hosting Security - For informational Purposes Only (The website must be maintained in compliance with the [OMB Memorandum M-15-13](#) and the [Binding Operational Directive 18-01](#)). To guarantee the HSTS of the website, verification of the chosen hosting provider must support TLS (Transport Layer Security), the modern and secure version of an SSL. The developed website must enforce HTTPS and HSTS. If there is a mail service, it must employ STARTTLS and have valid SPF/DMARC records. You may not use SSLv2/SSLv3 or 3DES and RC4 ciphers.

Duration and Location

Performance Period and Location: 1) Aug 16 (or 23), 2021 - September 30, 2022

Submission Information

RFP RESPONSE (PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DUE AUGUST 9, 2021, 10 a.m. EDT):

Build your RFP response to cover:

- **Capability Statement:** A narrative not to exceed two (2) pages (approximately 1,000 words) that explains the firm's capability to perform the scope of work, activities, tasks, and deliverables. **Make sure to include documentation of your service provision package, tools, approaches, etc.**
- **Past Performance:** Submit an itemized list of current and past similar work and assignments completed in the past five years that were similar in size, scope, and complexity.

- **Personnel:** The offeror will identify key team leaders and essential personnel proposed to perform the requirements of this scope of work, activities, tasks, and deliverables. The narrative will include the percentage of staff time of principals and managers in this activity.
- **Fees:** Provide a breakdown of the proposed costs you believe are **realistic** and **reasonable** for the work described in your technical approach. Include pricing innovations (e.g., roll over hours, turn around time, ability to add on flex hours) and other details that would be beneficial to us. Cost proposals from firms shall be presented in USD and valid for 120 days.
- **References:** References from a minimum of two (2) clients worked with in the past two years on activities similar to this scope of work. Include the contact information: company or organization, name, phone number, and email.

Evaluation Criteria: Your responses will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Capability Statement** (40%)
- **Past Performance** (15%)
- **Personnel/Staffing** (10%)
- **Budget** (30%)
- **References** (5%)

Payment Terms

The initial contract for this scope of work will include August (truncated month), September, October, and November and will be renewed in three-month increments based on performance and mutual agreement of both parties through 9/30/2022. Payment to the vendor will be made based on the monthly basis.

For August, we expect the vendor to invest staff time in getting up to speed on all components of the website including the back-end, Strapi, and the public-facing components (about 20 hours). For September, October, and November, we expect the vendor to be available up to 40 hours per month. Following the launch, we will move to more of a maintenance level kind of service structure at approximately 20 hours per month.

RFP Timeline

Activity	Due	Notes
RFP released	July 26, 2021	Posted to the Kaizen website and shared on LinkedIn and other social media channels.
Questions about the RFP	July 29, 2021	Submit to operations@partnershipsincubator.com on July 29 by 10:00 a.m. (EDT)
Questions posted	July 30, 2021	Kaizen will post answers to vendor questions by 6 p.m. EDT July 30

Response Due	August 9, 2021	Submissions will be accepted anytime until August 9 by 10:00 a.m. (EDT)
Notification of award	August 11, 2021	The winning firm will be notified before 10:00 a.m. (EDT)

Disclaimer

This RFP represents only a definition of requirements. It is merely an invitation for submission of proposals and does not legally obligate The Kaizen Company to accept any of the submitted proposals in whole or in part, nor is The Kaizen Company obligated to select the lowest-priced proposal.

The Kaizen Company reserves the right to negotiate with any or all firms, but with respect to price, costs, and/or scope of services. The Kaizen Company has no contractual obligations with any firms based upon the issuance of this RFP. It is not an offer to contact. Only the execution of a written contract shall obligate The Kaizen Company in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such a contract.

Branding Policy and Strategy

Branding Strategy Implementation and Marking under this contract must comply with the “USAID Graphics Standards Manual” available at <http://www.usaid.gov/branding> and any successor branding policy as detailed in the [Automated Directive System \(ADS\) Chapter 320](#).

USAID Disability Policy

The offeror will ensure compliance with USAID Disability Policy (December 2004). The objectives of the USAID Disability Policy are (1) to enhance the attainment of United States foreign assistance program goals by promoting the participation and equalization of opportunities of individuals with disabilities in USAID policy, country and sector strategies, activity designs and implementation; (2) to increase awareness of issues of people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries; (3) to engage other U.S. government agencies, host-country counterparts, governments, implementing organizations and other donors in fostering a climate of nondiscrimination against people with disabilities; and (4) to support international advocacy for people with disabilities. The full text of the policy paper can be found at the following website: <http://www.usaid.gov/about/disability/DISABPOL.FIN.html>

USAID through Kaizen via service providers, therefore, requires that the service provider does not discriminate against people with disabilities in the implementation of USAID programs and that it makes every effort to comply with the objectives of the USAID Disability Policy in performing the contract. To that end and within the scope of this contract, the service provider’s actions must demonstrate a comprehensive and consistent approach for including men, women, and children with disabilities.