

Request for Proposals:
Bellwether Rebrand and Website Creation
Released December 2021

1. DESCRIPTION, PURPOSE, AND OBJECTIVES

Bellwether Education Partners is seeking a branding and website development team or individual to support our efforts to revitalize and improve our brand architecture and visual identity, and to lead in the creation of a new bellwethereducation.org. The team or individual will be expected to lead the process of translating the content, ideas, and vision of Bellwether's staff into a polished and cohesive brand and website. All substantive decisions around the brand architecture, visual identity, and website content will remain with the Bellwether team; however, we do encourage proposers with personal interest, lived experience, and/or a background in the subject matter to describe their perspective in the proposal and to offer input throughout the process.

Bellwether Education Partners Rebrand

We would like our brand architecture and visual identity to ensure external stakeholders (potential clients and partners, including districts, schools, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, policymakers, advocates, practitioners, foundations, and the media) understand:

- Our service offerings and the different work we do.
- How Bellwether Education is differentiated from our peers in the sector.
- The priority Bellwether Education places upon our commitment to a broad approach to diversity.
- How our workstreams are distinct but create synergy across the organization.
- How they can engage with Bellwether.

The brand architecture should [reflect our core values](#) and provide the Bellwether team with a cohesive and inspiring brand identity.

Our goal is that our new brand architecture and visual identity will provide a clear understanding of who Bellwether is and what we bring to the education sector, in line with our new strategic plan and vision for field engagement. The Bellwether team would like to walk away from this process with a collection of collateral that reflects the new branding, including but not limited to:

- Branded social media guidelines (e.g., a video backdrop step-repeat, watermark for future videos, etc.)
- Template materials for proposals and publications that allow for flexibility based on staff needs (e.g., a small set of publication templates such as an executive

summary two-pager, a 10-page report, a 20-page report, guidance on embedded infographics/data visualization, etc.)

- Concept materials for additional collateral, including slide deck templates, written proposals, letterheads, business cards, and more

Bellwether Website Creation

We would like our new website to:

- Have visual appeal to engage audiences quickly
- Speak to multiple audiences (potential clients and partners, including districts, schools, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, policymakers, advocates, practitioners, foundations, and the media) by using an intuitive and logical organizational structure that follows a clear narrative and a holistic approach to our work
- Be agile and adaptable to changing needs (e.g., building additional interior pages, adding new content)
- Feature several types of multimedia products, including publications, multimedia, photos, and podcasts/audio
- Have embedded animated graphics and data visualizations
- Integrate social media, incorporate pop-ups where appropriate, and connect with Salesforce/Campaign Monitor for audience management
- Display written content in an easy-to-read format with both skimmable and detailed elements
- Be easily navigated and accessible on both desktop and mobile devices
- Cogently integrate, distill, and organize our existing library of resources, publications, and multiple brand-associated websites in ways that are clear, intuitive, and require relatively few clicks for a wide range of audiences

Our goal is for the website to present new content, embed existing multimedia products, and aggregate navigation to several existing platforms in order to create a single, cohesive user experience.

Across both elements of this project, we are looking for a strong partner who will tell us what we do not know, forecast challenges we might encounter, interrogate what we are hoping to achieve, and use their expertise to guide us toward our aims.

2. BUDGET

The price quoted for the full development of a brand architecture, visual identity, and full development of the website; all prices should be inclusive of any fees or charges.

3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Bellwether may provide feedback or request revised proposals from vendors before selection. Bellwether will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract that outlines terms, scope, budget, and other necessary items.

If no satisfactory proposals are received, Bellwether may opt to make no selection and/or circulate a revised RFP.

4. BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION

Bellwether Education Partners is a national nonprofit focused on dramatically improving education and life outcomes for systemically marginalized young people and their communities. Our focus, and the focus of organizations we serve, is to improve outcomes for low-income and underserved students in grades PK-20 (e.g., school districts, content providers, charter management organizations, service organizations, foundations, and more). The firm delivers results through both thought leadership (policy, research, and publications) and strategic advising to strengthen the education sector and close the achievement gap. Our areas of expertise as well as our ability to work across them are explained in greater detail on [Bellwether's website](#).

Bellwether envisions a world in which race, ethnicity, and income no longer predict opportunities for students, and the American education system affords all individuals the ability to determine their own path and lead a productive and fulfilling life.

Our Core Values

- **Mission Mindset:** We are dedicated to dramatically improving outcomes for underserved students. Our nonprofit status allows us to focus on this mission and guides the people we hire and the clients and projects we support.
- **Tailored Excellence:** We work with our clients to develop customized, innovative solutions. We direct our unwavering focus on quality toward successful outcomes for our clients.
- **Synergy:** We believe the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, and that our teams make each other better.
- **Integrity:** We exemplify the highest standards of individual and organizational ethics. We carefully balance client confidentiality with transparency to other clients and the public.

- **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:** We believe that to achieve our mission, we must be a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization broadly reflecting the various communities we serve.
- **Flexibility:** We believe in the philosophy of “working smarter, not harder.” We trust our co-workers and teams to do excellent work in the manner they see fit.
- **Candor With Care:** We believe open, honest conversation, paired with trusting relationships, is vital to our work and growth. We respectfully and proactively deal with frustrations, disagreements, and unexpected hurdles with each other and with clients and external stakeholders.

It is our expectation that the team or individual selected will work alongside Bellwether staff in alignment with our core values.

5. DELIVERABLES

The final deliverable is a refreshed brand architecture, visual identity, and complete website.

Brand Architecture and Visual Identity Deliverables

- Provide recommendations for how Bellwether presents ourselves, our approach, and our offerings to drive greater understanding and engagement
- Create a powerful visual identity and signature system to bring Bellwether’s brand to life, including a logo, color palette, type, graphic elements, imagery, brand application rules, inspiration for applying the brand, template materials (letterhead, PowerPoint deck, etc.), and more
- Perform due diligence as necessary and appropriate with respect to trademarks and copyrights related to Bellwether’s new visual identity

Website Deliverable: The final deliverable is a website that will present new content, embed existing multimedia products, and aggregate navigation to several existing platforms in order to create a single, cohesive user experience.

a. **Work for Hire**

All work completed under this RFP will be completed as work for hire and will be owned by Bellwether Education Partners with a limited license to the consultant for portfolio and reference purposes.

b. **Final Product Delivery Date**

No later than June 30, 2022.

c. **Anticipated Challenges**

Bellwether is not a media company and strongly prefers a partner that is

able to invest time to brainstorm and plan collaboratively, and then translate the vision into draft iterations and a final product by proactively and directly seeking specific input and feedback. The Bellwether team for this project will be made up of members from the Bellwether External Relations team, as well as partners and other key leaders at Bellwether, who are eager and passionate about the representation of Bellwether to our external audiences but who are not positioned to provide technical expertise. Bellwether expects to be able to rely on the vendor selected to present options, trade-offs, and implications as they arise.

d. Pricing Considerations

If similar proposals are received, we will consider price competition when selecting a vendor.

6. STAFF RESOURCES

Point of contact:

Valentina Payne
Chief of Staff to Andy Rotherham
valentina.payne@bellwethereducation.org

Valentina can answer any additional questions about this RFP. She will be working directly with the vendor to prepare the deliverables and will exercise day-to-day leadership over the work.

7. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION: All proposals will be evaluated on the following elements:

- a. Responsiveness to the request
- b. Breadth and depth of proposed scope of work, including ability to provide effective and proactive project management
- c. Creativity and innovation
- d. Price
- e. Relevant experience and portfolio
- f. Personal and organizational connection to the continued improvement of American education systems

8. TIMELINE

- a. **January 14, 2022, 5 p.m. ET:** Last day to submit all questions about the RFP via email to valentina.payne@bellwethereducation.org and/or to provide notice of your intent to apply if you would like to be included on

any follow-up emails, including those that aggregate questions received and their answers.

- b. February 4, 2022, 5 p.m. ET:** Proposals due to valentina.payne@bellwethereducation.org.

9. RECOMMENDED FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

- a. Approach:** Description of your overall vision for this project and an explanation of how that vision will inform your approach.
- b. Project Management**
- i. Explain the process you will follow to create each iteration of the brand architecture, visual identity, and new Bellwether website, including major milestones and feedback cycles.
 - ii. Explain how you and/or your team will work with us, including expectations for the Bellwether team, frequency of check-ins, etc.
 - iii. Schedule of deliverables, including major milestones and opportunities for feedback.
- c. Project Team Members**
- i. Description of any project team and short biographies of each member. Where relevant, we encourage you to include information about their connections to education.
 - ii. Organizational structure (if there is more than one team member) and communication process, including lines of reporting and any special tools used.
- d. Budget**
- i. Breakdown of costs by production hours, tools, and/or functionalities. We prefer to see a “Not to Exceed” cost structure.
 - ii. Maintenance and support: Identify any costs that should be assumed, including but not limited to ongoing costs for maintenance and support we will or may need in the future.
- e. Attachments**
- i. Qualifications and experience: Relevant prior engagements (including any nonprofit and/or advocacy clients) and relevant work samples.
 - ii. Professional references.
 - iii. A description of your organization values, particularly as they are related to diversity, equity and inclusion, and how they show up in your policies and practices.
 - iv. An overview of your organization’s current diversity across teams and levels. If you have not achieved the diversity to which you

aspire, please share any plans or goals that your organization has to get to where you aim to be.

- v. Additional relevant materials at your discretion.