Project Overview:
Outright Vermont (Outright) aims to have a dynamic and engaging website that delivers meaningful content to its audiences in an accessible, easy-to-use fashion while inspiring users to engage with the organization to support LGBTQ+ Youth in Vermont.

Outright is seeking a collaborative vendor to develop a new website in the following ways:

Front End
- UX design and architecture. Organize information to meet the needs of communications goals and to create an exceptional user experience that is seamless, intuitive and funnels users to action. Create a sitemap, informational architecture diagrams, wireframes, interactive prototypes and flow charts to express intended user engagement.
- UI design. Create an Outright brand experience for site visitors through visual design of the overall website and webpages, formatting and layout of content (written, photo, videos, graphics, etc). Utilize Outright brand guide and develop mock-ups, website style guide and pattern library.
- SEO friendly. Optimize headers, tags and content to support search success and ranking. Conduct keyword rank analysis, provide on-page optimization and create benchmarking.
- Written and photo editing. Assist with editing assets as needed to support the overall design of the website.
- Graphic design. Develop or provide specs for any graphic designs integrated in the overall design of the website.
- Functionality. Ensure functionality of all tools, plug-ins, links and intended engagement pathways for desktop, tablet and mobile experiences.
- Integration of content. Include internal links to articles, calendars and social media in the design.
Back End
- Third-party software integration. Link to CRM and application for financial transactions.
- Testing. Ensure goals are achieved for user experience and functionality before public launch. Provide a list of tools, documents or other elements of the website that will be tested and provide a testing summary report with steps on fixes, if necessary.
- Hosting. Determine the best hosting option for Outright’s needs. Provide a written recommendation with a compare and contrast summary of options.
- Maintenance and support. Provide regular quality checks on website functionality and security as well as ongoing support for design and technical needs.
- Identify website builder. Outright currently uses Wordpress and is seeking a recommendation on the best website builder or need for custom design. Requirements are that the Outright staff is able to easily make edits and updates, that it is user-friendly with drag-and-drop functionality, can host multimedia, detailed page layout options, landing page options and allows for a total brand experience. Other requirements include:
  - Allows donations
  - Possible ecommerce option
  - Secure
  - High SEO performance

Organizational Overview
Founded in 1989, the mission of Outright is to build a Vermont where all LGBTQ+ Youth have hope, equity and power. A central philosophy of Outright is that its staff team works alongside LGBTQ+ Youth who anchor the whole of the organization through leadership and action. Additionally, the staff team strives to intentionally question how it takes up space in the world, shares its resources, partners with others and responds to the ever-adjusting social and political landscapes that impact individuals harmed by dominant culture.

Outright’s theory of change is that to create hope, equity and power for LGBTQ+ Youth, the places and spaces where Youth live, learn and grow must be safe, welcoming, inclusive and celebrate the authentic existence of Queerness and queer joy. This drives the organization to work directly with LGBTQ+ Youth to develop their leadership and elevate their needs among educators, healthcare providers, decision and policy makers as well as parents and caregivers.
Core programming includes:
- LGBTQ+ Leadership Council
- Camp for LGBTQ+ Youth
- Social and support groups for LGBTQ+ Youth and their families
- Parent groups
- Education and training for education and health professionals
- Community building and fundraising through events and activities

Current Website Pain Points
The current website is long overdue for an update to reflect the present and moves toward the future of Outright. Although the Outright team updates aspects of the website, there is substantially outdated content that overwhelms site visitors and the team's ability to provide timely and relevant communications. Additionally, the visual layout and architectural design limit the organization's ability to fully convey its message, opportunities for Vermonters to engage and storytelling. Although the website features links to action, it lacks funnels that drive action. (i.e. The education page doesn’t drive people to sign up for training.) It does not connect with Outright’s social media platforms and confuses users. The expertise of Outright is valued by those who connect with the organization, however, the website fails to support its positioning as the “go to” organization on issues that impact LGBTQ+ Youth. Lastly, Outright has an expansive audience and multiple strategies to meet its mission, which is not conveyed.

Research
Over the course of the past year, Outright has conducted broad communications research and specific research concerning the website. Working in collaboration with a communications strategist, Outright is currently developing its vision statement, values, organizational key messages and messaging for target audiences. As a result, the team has a strong understanding of its website strategy, audience profile and desired outcome. The main outstanding question relevant for this project is that program changes are underway that will integrate a learning management system and there may be a need for an e-commerce component. The hired vendor for this project will collaboratively answer outstanding questions on tools as well as design and test the website to ensure that it supports the strategy.

New Website Objectives
In recent years, the organization has sharpened its purpose, strategic approach and operations. A significant component of this is improving its external communications to more accurately reflect the organization’s strategy, expand its reach, feature the voice and leadership of LGBTQ+ Youth and opportunities to engage for change.
The audiences of Outright is vast and are as follows:

1. LGBTQ+ Youth through their teens who need support
2. LGBTQ+ Youth who want to influence policies and systems
3. Supportive parents and family members of LGBTQ+ Youth
4. Uncertain parents and family members of LGBTQ+ Youth
5. Systems’ leaders & frontline education, health, & MH workers
6. State & local decision makers & thought leaders
7. Existing & potential partners
8. Donors & sponsors
9. General public

Although the website includes content for LGBTQ+ Youth, the website is geared toward older audiences as other platforms support LGBTQ+ Youth and there is an intention to expand to additional youth-focused platforms. The website’s primary audiences are 3-9, listed above.

The objectives of the website are to:

- Comprehensively and seamlessly convey Outright’s story brand
- Project Outright mission, vision, values, theory of change and impact
- Enhance storytelling through design and content
- Inspire action through storytelling and drive user to engage
- Act as a platform for positioning Outright as the “go to” organization on LGBTQ+ Youth issues
- Provide accessible, downloadable tools for change
- Provide easy navigation for users to find resources and clear steps to take action
- Welcome site visitors, regardless of where they are on their journey

**Total Budget**

20,000

**Response Instructions, Vendor Selection and Project Timeline:**

**Instructions for response**

1. Indicate intention to respond to RFP and submission deadline for RFP questions.
   - Monday, June 13th by 12pm
   - Email Robyn Freedner-Maguire at freednermaguire@gmail.com.

2. Response to questions delivered from the hiring organization to prospective vendors.
   - Wednesday, June 15th by 5pm

3. Submission deadline for proposals.
   - Friday, June 24th by 5pm
4. Must be available during the following time frame for a 1 hour interview, TBD if your proposal advances forward:
   Wednesday, July 13th between 9am-12pm
   Thursday, July 14th between 9am-12pm

6. Vendor Selected
   Friday, July 15th

7. Kick-off Meeting
   Mid-August

8. Website Launch
   Thursday, December 1st

Proposal Requirements

Formatting:
- Project content no more than 5 pages
- Headers for sections, Arial, 14 point font
- Written content, Arial, 12 point font
- Single line spacing
- 1/2 inch margins
- Page numbers at bottom right, beginning on first page and including company name

Content
- Company background
- Explain why your company is interested in this project
- Description of team members dedicated to this project, why they will be an asset and indicate point person
- Indicate what, if anything aspect of this project will be outsourced
- Overview of project steps, budget allocation, deliverables supporting front and back end steps and timeline of milestones and deliverables based on project deadline
- 3 examples of past projects with brief description of your company’s role in success of the projects
- Indicate other non-profit or queer organizations your company has worked with
- Please provide 3 references