

## Website Redesign Request for Proposal

[Smart Prosperity Institute](#) (SPI) is seeking proposals for the redesign and migration of its current websites. There is the potential for continued work with the selected vendor, for ongoing support of the websites in question, as well as for upcoming website projects that we are planning for across a partnership of organizations with [The Natural Step Canada](#) (TNS).

We invite interested parties to submit a proposal by **March 11, 2022** that includes timeline, cost, and deliverables, with more details below that outline our criteria for selection. The following RFP includes a background of our organization and describes the purpose of the redesign, its desired functionality, and specific requests relating to the proposal. We understand that details may be subject to change upon vendor recommendations and/or research of more optimal solutions.

Note that we also have a rebrand RFP issued at the same time, to help bring to life our newly co-developed, approved strategic plan for the TNS-SPI partnership. Agencies with exceptional competencies in both areas are invited to submit to both.

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## Websites

1. [Institute.smartprosperity.ca](#) (and [smartprosperity.ca](#), to be incorporated into the main SPI site)

## Contact Info

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Director of Marketing and Communications

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## Guide to this RFP

This document conveys our vision for the new SPI site and our different initiatives. It includes a background section about our organization, suggests an outline for organizing the content of the new site, and desired technologies. In providing these details, our intent is not to convey that we have all of the answers in creating the best possible site. The ideal and preferred vendor will bring its own ideas and vision based on industry expertise, best practices, technical capability, and client relations, guiding us to incorporate our goals into that vision.

Please [arrange a briefing meeting](#) in advance of submitting a proposal, with Alice Irene Whittaker ([awhittaker@smartprosperity.ca](mailto:awhittaker@smartprosperity.ca)).

## Project Overview

Our current websites are based on Drupal 7 which will no longer be supported by Drupal by November 2022. The purpose of this call for proposals is to ensure that our data will be secured on a stable platform that is to be efficient, flexible, and easy to use over the years for our growing organization, while improving the quality and interactivity of our websites. The project therefore aims to find the appropriate solution to our digital needs knowing that the SPI is only the first in a series of websites that we plan to redo in the course of 2022.

The idea is to create the foundation for a collection of branded websites that, over time, will have interconnectivity between our different websites to better share information with our audience and tell the story of our broader partnership of brands.

## Background

Smart Prosperity Institute is a national research network and environment-economy policy think tank based at the University of Ottawa. We deliver world-class research and work with public and private partners – all to advance practical policies and market solutions for a stronger, cleaner economy. SPI is a major player in the green recovery and clean growth in Canada. With more than 170,000 page views in 2020, and 254,678 in 2021, our website is an active hub for the environment-economy space in Canada, and we are growing every year as a key source of information and perspectives. We want to continue this momentum in order to allow decision-makers and other influential audiences to have in hand the objective information that will allow Canada to remain competitive while respecting nature.

Smart Prosperity Institute is in a formal partnership with [The Natural Step Canada](#), a national charity with over 25 years' experience advancing science, innovation and strategic leadership to foster a strong and inclusive economy that thrives within nature's limits. Across the partnership, we bring together policy research know-how with convening power to build this strong and inclusive economy. We are in the process of more closely integrating our organizations in a formal partnership, and creating a shared service communications team, including in-house website management. Key initiatives in this partnership include the [Energy Futures Lab](#),

[Canada Plastics Pact](#), and [Circular Economy Leadership Canada](#). As this partnership comes to life, we will seek greater unity across our brands and websites, and as such, the selected vendor for the SPI website project outlined in this proposal could lead to future work across the TNS-SPI partnership.

## Project Goals

Our primary goal is to redesign and merge the website for Smart Prosperity Institute (<https://institute.smartprosperity.ca/> and its initiative (<https://www.smartprosperity.ca>) with both English and French versions for each, to be **fully ready by August 31, 2022** for a launch in Fall 2022. Our goal is for the website to be modern, clean, and intuitive, with reinforced security and a clear organization of our content library which would allow in the medium term to share with our future sites the same type of content without having to ask a person-third party to recreate the content.

This factory website will clearly and accurately inform and engage our different internal and external audiences. The idea here is to ensure that decision-makers and influential audiences understand the stakes of the subjects being studied, including policy recommendations. Our goal is to ensure that our work is seen by those who make the decisions, and to firmly establish our organizations as the go-to source on environment-economy research and convening. Below are our key goals:

- Realize efficiency gains, tools and clear processes for efficient back-end management of websites, with growth potential for other initiatives across our partnership of brands
- Effectively inform engaged audiences about our niche, our areas of inquiry and our methods of bringing about change
- Instill pride in our public and stakeholders (including staff) on the projects we carry
- Clearly and convincingly tell the story of brands (individually and collectively) - demonstrating that we are one of the primary leaders in shaping programs for the environment and the economy in Canada
- Effectively engage experts, influencers and decision-makers in our original and initiative content and convening
- Develop the SPI site as a platform in order to highlight and amplify the content of partners

## Proposed Sitemap

The sitemap will be defined between our respective teams and will have to take into account the objectives listed above.

## Generic website

We define a generic website as a site that shares the same type of content. Some variations may exist depending on the specific objective of each initiative and its own identity.

A generic website should share the same requirements:

- The same content management system
- The technology to easily share the same type of content while being independent. The idea is not to have a single site (SPI) that controls all the other sites but that each site can develop its generic content and share it with other sites with a simple click under the content management system.
- Generic content types similar to SPI (Events, Publications, About, Media)
- A section on the generic website that clearly identifies the site as part of SPI identity

There are two parts to this project. The first is a common backend, and the second is branded front ends that the user interacts with and which can be customized to the brand identity and design of each brand.

## Scope of Work

The idea here is to create a factory site allowing intuitive research by topics, institute/brands, and type of publication. We are planning to build the SPI website on an open platform like Drupal 9, and we anticipate a public release of the new website in Fall 2022, **with the final website fully ready by August 31, 2022**. This will require a content management system offering the ability to publish content to websites automatically and cross-referenced, keeping in mind that we will have other websites to create in the short and medium term.

We are looking for a company that, on the one hand, will start from scratch, completely redesign new sites and make a seamless technology transition, but who will also provide annual support for any changes we deem necessary in order to keep the websites up to date to ensure their safety and proper functioning, as well as support should there be any security breaches. You will also be in charge of hosting the websites for the duration of the contract.

The main focus will be on Content Strategy, Visual Design/interface design, user experience, and Search Engine Optimization. Tagging systems and SEO are critical for our success and should be a central fo

## Examples

We invite you to visit the website of the [Stockholm Environment Institute](#), the [International Institute for Sustainable Development](#), and the [Green Growth Knowledge Platform](#) to better understand the space that we work in. A good example of a website that serves as a platform for several brands is <https://makeway.org/>.

## Technical Requirements

### Content Management Software

- As mentioned, we are using Drupal 7. The current CMS will not receive any updates by the end of 2022. Our main goal is to secure our data by migrating from Drupal 7 to Drupal 9.
- With the TNS-SPI partnership (see #3 – *Background* above), we will have seven websites to manage, with the same shared factory website backend. Some of them are on Drupal and the others are on WordPress. We will encourage using the same content management system to migrate the entire websites to a single host.
- We want to stay on an open source platform. We want to be able to migrate our sites to another provider or host if we wish (non-negotiable).

### Programming Language and Accessibility

- We want to make sure that our website will be accessible according to [W3C standards](#) and WCAG 2.2.
- We are based at the University of Ottawa which is a bilingual university. Our main website should be available in French and English as some staff and audiences are bilingual.

### Web Host

- The website must be on a server that will be permanently available to our employees. The idea is to be able to have access to the website at all times and to the database so that we are not blocked if we want to change providers.
- We anticipate hosting multiple websites on the same server, located in Canada. We want to make sure that our data will be hosted by a reliable provider that will have high bandwidth to allow rapid user response to our websites.

### Security

- We would like to have a strong level of security, as validated with an A on <https://observatory.mozilla.org/>.

## Browser Support & Mobile Responsive Design

- Our website should be supported by the most modern Web Browsers and Operating Systems below:
  - **Windows**
    - Internet Explorer 11.0
    - Mozilla Firefox 40.0
    - Google Chrome 65.0
    - Edge (Windows 10)
    - Opera 50.0
  - **Macintosh (MacOS)**
    - Mozilla Firefox 40.0
    - Google Chrome 65.0
    - Safari 11
  - **Linux**
    - Mozilla Firefox 40.0
    - Google Chrome 65.0
    - Opera 50.0
- Our website should be mobile-first responsive design that considers users on mobile, tablet and desktop devices

## Integrations

- SPI website is using 3rd party services for its newsletter, video and podcast, such as:
  - MailChimp
  - YouTube
  - Buzzsprout
  - Javascript
  - Social media integration (OpenGraph, Twitter....)

## Budget

We will evaluate the final budget based on the proposals received. Depending on the type of work and if additional resources are needed to migrate from Drupal 7 to our next content management system, we understand that you could segment the project into different phases. We also expect to receive a specific budget for the creation of a generic template website that would include the same type of content. We understand that the design of the user interface and the brand can vary the final amount of a generic website. Budget for photographs, illustrations, software licenses and additional services could be a different contract if needed. We have an additional budget for future work, as outlined.

## High-Level Project Timeline

We understand that the timeline may vary according to the different needs that will be assessed during our future meetings with the selected agency.

1. February 2022: RFP deadline of March 11, 2022. Selection of agency partner by March 18.
2. March 2022: Kick-off meeting between SPI and the agency. Develop project plan, workback, needs assessment, and other introductory conversations.
3. April 2022: Design of the interface based on the objectives and the sitemap
4. May 2022: Development of the CMS and securing of the various functionalities that the site will offer
5. End June 2022: Presentation of the new website to our staff for comments
6. July 2022: Integrating all the old content to the new website (if not imported automatically)
7. August 31 2022: Website tested and finalized, ready for public release.

## Proposal Next Steps

We request that you submit a proposal to Alice Irene Whittaker ([awhittaker@naturalstep.ca](mailto:awhittaker@naturalstep.ca)) by **March 11, 2022**. We invite all applicants to [set up a briefing](#) in advance of submitting a proposal. In your proposal, please include:

- Proposed approach with a sense of site mapping, wireframes, design concepts/options, detailed design, fully functional design/testing
- Biographies of the main employees who will work on the project
- Budget for the main site (Factory website), and a budget for a generic website based on the same type of content.
- Timelines
- Examples of past work and reference from past clients

## Criteria for Selection

The selection criteria will be assigned as follows:

- Proven experience with multi-dimensional websites/brands and complexity
- Ability to deliver a seamless user interface
- Ability to help us stand out in a crowded field
- Best-in-class design capabilities
- The ability to achieve objectives according to the given timeline, including project management capacity
- Ability of the vendor and staff to execute this project, and the potential to execute on future projects of greater scope
- Knowledge of environment-economy issue space (desired, not essential)

- Support after the website goes online
- Examples of previous successful work that instills confidence in the execution of this project
- Budget and services offered
- Canadian-based agencies

## Contact Information

**Agencies bidding on this RFP are strongly encouraged to [set up a briefing conversation](#) with Alice Irene Whittaker to discuss the project in advance of submitting a proposal.**

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