



Request for Proposal Biotech Corridor Website Feature Expansion

Questions and Answers

- Do you have a specific time the proposal is due at or any time on the 29th of December?/ Kindly confirm the deadline for questions and final submission./Is there a designated point of contact for RFP-related clarifications?

RFP-related clarifications and questions should be submitted to Amanda Bosland (amanda@rockvilleredi.org) by Friday, December 19, 2025 at 5:00pm EST.

The deadline for receiving proposals is Monday, December 29, 2025 at 5:00pm EST.

- Could you let us know if you have a local preference or are you open to a Canadian agency that has done similar work with clients across the United States, with some currently being the States of California, Colorado and Wyoming?/ Are India-based companies eligible to participate directly in this RFP, or is a local partner/entity required?/ Are there any country-specific tax, regulatory, or legal requirements applicable to offshore vendors?/ Is prior experience in your country/region mandatory or preferred?

There is no preference in working with local vendors. Companies submitting proposals must be authorized to conduct business in the United States and the State of Maryland.

- Are there any specific formatting or compliance requirements we should be aware of?

Sequencing responses to the proposal by order of items listed under Item 7 - "Proposal Requirements" in a PDF is preferred.



- Could you let us know what the budget is for this work?/ Could you please let us know whether there is an anticipated budget range for the overall project or for individual features?/ Could you provide an expected budget range for this project?

We have issued this RFP in large part to get an understanding of the cost. We are required to issue an RFP for contracts that are anticipated to be over \$25,000

- What CMS platform do you use currently?/ Please confirm the current content management system (CMS) and primary technology stack used by the Biotech Corridor website./ What is the current Content Management System (CMS) or framework being used? Is there a preferred CMS or framework for the new version?/ What platform or CMS is the current Biotech Corridor website built on, and will we have administrative access to it? Is REDI open to implementing WordPress (or a WordPress-based sub-system) for managing the new database-driven features if the current site is not WordPress?

The Biotech Corridor website uses Wordpress. The technology stack is Wordpress cluster. Linux hosting.

- What is the site's current hosting environment?/ What is the current hosting environment (provider, server type, and access level), and are custom plugins, databases, and API integrations permitted?/ Will the selected vendor be provided direct administrative access to the CMS and hosting environment, or will coordination with REDI's current web vendor be required for deployment and configuration?

Wordpress hosting environment specifically, MyKinsta. Administrative access to the CMS will be provided, and coordination with REDI's IT vendor will be required for access to the hosting environment. REDI's IT vendor will provide SFTP access to the



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hosting environment, and can provide a sandbox environment to develop the new website features.

- What is the current Website and Server Architecture? Is the infrastructure running “on-prem” or “on-cloud,” who is maintaining the website?

The Biotech Corridor is currently a single page website/landing page hosted on-cloud via Cloudflare. REDI’s IT vendor currently maintains the website.

- Should all proposed features be developed within the existing CMS and hosting environment, or is REDI open to alternative architectures provided they integrate seamlessly and preserve existing site functionality?

The preference would be to have the new features developed with the existing CMS and hosting environment.

- Are there data retention or archival policies which should be followed? Or would you like us to create these policies for you?

REDI is a public entity, so retention and archival policies should reflect what is required of Maryland public entities.

- Do you have a preference for the tech stack that would be used for these features?

There is no preference. Compatibility and integration with the Biotech Corridor website are priorities.

- Would you want maintenance and support for these features and/or the whole website, post completion of the work?

We are interested in the cost of maintenance and support for the additional features outlined in the RFP. Companies may include maintenance of the entire website with



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the added features as a separate item. It is helpful to break out services and their associated fees.

- Are there existing API gateways or network constraints we should be aware of?

There are no existing API gateways or network constraints.

- For the events, funding, and potential marketplace APIs, do you have preferred partners or existing agreements?/ Have specific APIs already been identified and approved by REDI for; biotech and life sciences events (e.g., BioBuzz, TEDCO), and; funding opportunities databases?/ Will REDI provide details/assist regarding API calls integration with external sources like BioBuzz, TEDCO, Montgomery County and funding opportunities sources./ Are there any confirmed third-party APIs already approved for events and funding data, or should those be identified and proposed by the selected vendor?/ For the company directory, you mention integration with partners. Do you have existing partnerships or data sources (e.g., BioBuzz, chamber of commerce databases) that could provide company information via API? If so, can you share details about these platforms and their API capabilities?/ For the company directory, you mention integration with partners. Do you have existing partnerships or data sources (e.g., BioBuzz, chamber of commerce databases) that could provide company information via API? If so, can you share details about these platforms and their API capabilities?

There are no existing APIs, partners or agreements.

- If external APIs have access limitations or inconsistent data availability, should respondents assume a hybrid model (automated ingestion supplemented by manual curation) as acceptable?

Yes, hybrid models or alternative automated ingestion methods are acceptable.

- What authentication mechanisms (OAuth, API keys) should we anticipate?



Because there are no existing APIs, this is to be determined.

- Can you describe the envisioned "tiered access" structure (free, paid, corporate, etc.) and any associated features or content restrictions?/ Does REDI currently have a defined tiered access model (user roles, permissions, premium vs. public access), or should respondents propose a recommended structure as part of the technical approach?/ Should tiered access be limited to content and feature visibility, or should respondents consider subscription or payment functionality within scope?/ What is your vision for the tiered access structure across Features 2, 3, and 4?

The free tier of the company database would provide access to a certain level of directory information. For all components, we would like the capability to build out additional levels of access to information. Subscriptions or payment functionality should be considered for premium tier content visibility and usage.

- Should respondents assume a clean launch with new data entry, or is there existing company, event, or funding data that will require migration into the new features?/ Will REDI provide initial data for the directories/databases, or is the population of content expected to be part of the development scope?

There is existing company data that will require migration into the company directory. We are open to solutions to populate the directory, events calendar and funding sources with additional content. The events calendar, funding database and biotech marketplace are likely to require new data entries.

- Is REDI expecting to Monetize the website now or in future? Is the idea of using premium tiers confirmed or is it exploratory for now? If implemented, will they be behind a paywall?/ Should users be able to create accounts, and if so, what information would they need to provide?

REDI anticipates monetizing the biotech marketplace feature of the website. The basic and premium tiers of the company directory are confirmed. The basic tier will limit company information and the premium tier will display a company's full profile.



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Access to the premium company directory listing will be granted when a user completes a company profile.

- What user roles exist, and which ones do you imagine will need to be created? We expect that there will be REDI Admin Users, Company Admin Users, General Company Users, and potentially Funding Source Users.

For site administration, REDI admin users. The premium tiers/features of the company directory and biotech marketplace will require company admin user roles.

- Will there be an existing user management system we need to integrate with, or should a new authentication layer be built?

Wordpress has built-in authentication and allows for user management.

- Is it not mandatory to follow WCAG 2.1 AA standard?

Meeting the WCAG 2.1 AA standard is preferred as it is the technical standard for state and local governments' web content.

- What level of technical proficiency does REDI staff have for maintaining the new features?

Assume basic proficiency, with a focus on content management and editing. We have an outsourced IT company that manages the site hosting, and updates WordPress and integrated plug-ins as they become available.

- Is the Biotech Marketplace intended to support financial transactions/payments, or is it limited to business discovery, matchmaking, and partnership inquiries?/ Can you provide more detail on the desired user flow for the marketplace? Specifically: Are companies purchasing services/products directly through the platform, or is this more of a matching/inquiry system?; What constitutes a "transaction" in this



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context?; Should the platform include payment processing capabilities, or is it primarily a discovery and connection tool?

The marketplace would be limited to discovery, matchmaking and partnership inquiries. Transactions would be limited to sharing information. No payments will be processed on the Biotech Corridor website.

- Does REDI anticipate requiring administrative review or approval of marketplace listings prior to publication?

Marketplace listings should require approval prior to publication.

- Are registered companies required to list their products or services? Or can they create an account without registering their products and services?

Companies that register on the biotech marketplace must either list their products or services that they are offering, or list the products or services that they are seeking.

- Do we need an event registration portal for the creation of events? Or will the calendar have links that will be used to take the user to the registration page for the event?

The event calendar should allow users to create listings including a field to allow links to registration pages hosted on their respective websites.

- Do you only want rules-based matching, or would you like to have intelligent matching (advanced)?

We are open to rules-based and intelligent matching, depending on cost.

- What metrics or dashboards are required for the marketplace and other features (e.g., user registrations, event registrations, funding applications)?



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The metrics for each feature are as follows:

- Events calendar: Number of event listings
 - Company directory: Total number of listings; number of basic tier listings; number of premium tier listings
 - Funding opportunities database: Total number of funding programs and grants; number of funding/grant listings by source (federal, state, venture capital, foundation, corporate, other)
 - Biotech Marketplace Platform: Total number of marketplace accounts; number of basic tier accounts; number of premium tier accounts; number of interactions on marketplace
- Who will constitute the steering committee for the marketplace design?

The steering committee may include REDI staff, REDI Board Members, and biotech/life science company representatives, but this is to be determined.

- How often will the steering committee meet, and who signs off on the following:
i. Design; ii. Features acceptance iii. Go Live

The frequency of steering committee meeting is to be determined. REDI staff will provide the final sign off of design, features acceptance and going live.

- What level of engagement will the committee have during the development process (marketplace design and functionality)?

The committee will provide initial guidance on the features and functionality of the marketplace, and feedback on the draft and final builds. Please address any other input you anticipate you would like for your process.

- When do you anticipate selecting a firm and project kickoff?



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Ideally, we anticipate firm selection in January 2026 and project kickoff in either late January 2026 or February 2026.

- Do you have any hard deadlines for feature rollout or a preferred phased release schedule?/ Does REDI expect all four features to be launched concurrently, or is a phased development and launch approach acceptable or preferred?

We are targeting early May 2026 for the completion of all features. The preferred order of release for features is:

1. Company Directory
2. Funding Opportunities Database
3. Events and Networking Calendar
4. Biotech Marketplace Platform

- Are there internal events or funding cycles that influence the launch timeline?

Staff capacity may affect the launch of the timeline.

- Beyond the required 30-day post-launch monitoring period, does REDI anticipate:
 - Optional as-needed maintenance, or
 - An ongoing support and enhancement engagement?

Per the RFP, please describe ongoing maintenance and associated costs.

- Are there specific evaluation priorities REDI would like respondents to emphasize (e.g., scalability, long-term maintainability, cost efficiency, marketplace experience)?



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Respondents proposals will be evaluated on technical approach and proposed functionality, front and back-end user experience by feature, pricing breakdown, prior related projects, scalability, and ongoing maintenance requirements.